



Alaska Avalanche School

Level 1 Avalanche Course

The Alaska Avalanche School (AAS) is based in Anchorage, Alaska. AAS has been providing cutting-edge education about avalanches, avalanche hazard, and avalanche rescue for over 45 years. The mission of the Alaska Avalanche School is to provide exceptional hands-on snow and avalanche education to all snow athletes at all levels. Each season, AAS teaches hundreds of students, youth and adults, with an independent curriculum that meets American Avalanche Association guidelines. Our commitment is to provide the highest quality training possible. What you learn will depend upon how hard you work prior to and during your course. We'll provide you with innovative materials, quality instruction, and a safe learning environment. The rest is up to you. Please read the following information carefully.

Details

Course Duration: 4-hours of self-paced online learning, 3 field days meeting 10am-4pm

Tuition Includes

- Instruction (online videos/exercises and field instruction)

Tuition Does Not Include

- Round trip transportation to and from the class site.
- Food during the course
- Personal gear and clothing (see the Course Gear List below).
- Suggested Reading: *Avalanche Essentials* by Bruce Tremper

Pre-Requisites

- Students are required to watch the online learning videos and complete a quiz prior to the course start date. You must score a 80% or higher on the final online quiz to be issued a certificate of completion for the online portion of your course. Please print or have an image of this certificate on your phone to show to your instructors in the field the first morning of your field course.
- Participants must be able to travel up and downhill in variable terrain and changing snow conditions (snowboarders need to use snowshoes or splitboard with skins).
- We will be requiring all students who have been out of the country or state to follow state travel mandates (which may include self isolating for 14 days prior to attending a course). Students should not attend a course if they have been in contact with someone who is showing symptoms of COVID-19 without isolating for 14 days prior. Students and instructors should not attend a course if they have COVID-19 symptoms. We will send a Declaration of Health self-screening form to you a few days before the course.

Curriculum

This course is geared towards skiers, boarders, climbers, and other backcountry enthusiasts and is an intensive, hands-on course, which will provide students with the skills necessary to recognize and evaluate potential avalanche hazard. This course consists of 30 hours of online learning and field training. Program curriculum consists of: avalanche rescue beacon use, terrain analysis, snow stability evaluation, decision-making, route selection, and safe travel procedures.

Risk Acknowledgment and Waiver Form

While the Alaska Avalanche School's 45+ year track record in safety has been exceptional, each student must still sign a waiver of liability. Signing the AAS waiver form means that you acknowledge the inherent risks associated with the activities you will be undertaking, accept responsibility for your actions, and waive any claim for damages against the Alaska Avalanche School, its staff, and board for accidents suffered while participating in the workshop. Participation in all in-person courses hosted by the Alaska Avalanche School also poses similar risks as interacting with society at large, including contracting communicable diseases, such as COVID-19. **Please print, read, and sign the form attached below and bring to the first day of the course.**

If you are a minor, you must have the waiver signed by your legal guardian before you arrive at the course. If you do not wish to sign the waiver, your tuition will be refunded less a \$50 processing fee, (as long as you notify us at least 14 days prior to the start of the course) and you will not be permitted to attend the workshop. Please read the registration and cancellation policies on the AAS registration form for more information and details regarding our policies.

Cancellation, Refund and Transfer Policies

We highly encourage all students to review the Cancellation, Refund, and Transfer Policies below. Unexpected events happen- please protect your investment by purchasing travel insurance.

Cancellation

If an AAS student chooses to cancel their enrollment in an AAS course, workshop or lecture series, they must make the request 14 days or more prior to the course start date. Program cancellations will receive a refund less a fee of \$50. Cancellations made 13 days or less to the course start date will not receive a refund unless the program is full and their spot can be filled from a program waitlist. If the open space is filled 50% of the total tuition will be refunded. Students are not allowed to transfer their tuition to a friend or family member. Our courses follow a waitlist procedure.

Modified Cancellation Policy in Effect until April 15, 2021: Our 2020-21 course offerings are designed for students committed to learning. Doing so requires a balance of flexibility and commitment from students and our school. We have modified our cancellation policy in light of COVID-19 uncertainty until April 15, 2021. If we are required to cancel a course due to COVID-19 we will refund 100% of course fees and tuition. We know this will incur costs for our nonprofit organization and students may elect to donate any portion of their tuition back to the organization to allow us to further reach our mission of community snow safety in perpetuity.

Declaration of Health: All students will be required to complete a Declaration of Health statement prior to and at the start of the course. If a student is unable to attend the course due to the health declaration, they will be provided with a full refund.

Symptoms on Course: Students who present symptoms associated with COVID-19 while on the course will be removed from the course environment at the sole discretion of AAS staff. Symptomatic students will be unable to return to class once removed and will be issued at 100% tuition refund. The continuation of the course for the remaining instructors and students will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Refund

AAS reserves the right to cancel or reschedule a course, workshop or lecture series, in which case tuition will be fully refunded. AAS is not responsible for additional personal costs associated with these cancellations or program changes. If a student leaves during the AAS program due to an injury or for

personal reasons there will be no refund of any kind. AAS also reserves the right to expel a student if the instructors find that student to be unfit mentally or physically. In these cases there will be no refund and AAS is not responsible for associated or unexpected costs over which it has no control.

Nonprofit School

Student tuition alone does not cover the total course cost. Funding for these programs is derived from individual donations, in-kind contributions, and program receipts from educational workshops. If you desire to contribute to the school, we graciously accept donations.

Food

Students are responsible for all of their food during the course. All lunches will be in the field, so plan accordingly.

Course Schedule

Please allow at least 4-hours of dedicated study time before your course to complete online learning content. Field sessions are generally from 10am- 4 pm. This schedule may be adjusted by your instructors.

AAS Avalanche Course Gear List

AAS students must be prepared for a variety of challenging conditions during the outside field portions of our courses. Depending on conditions, you may not need or use every single item listed below. Your time outside may fluctuate between periods of inactivity (standing for a demonstration, viewing, and discussions of terrain and snow conditions) and high activity for backcountry travel to relevant terrain. Courses head out into the field in all weather conditions. Be prepared for snow, rain, wind, sun, arctic temperatures and everything in between.

Please feel free to contact the AAS office if you have any questions about this list. Our AAS office in Anchorage has a small avalanche specialty retail store. **All proceeds for the sale of items at our shop directly support our non-profit mission. Gear we sell is denoted with an asterisk (*).** Our office staff can assist you with the pros and cons of gear on the market to help you find the correct items for the backcountry. We also rent beacons, shovels, and probes.

Technical Equipment: required for all field portions of the course

___ **Beacon***: Digital with direction arrows and marking feature. **Must be less than 5 years old.** AAS choice: Pieps Powder BT.

___ **Batteries**: Always carry an extra set of batteries for your beacon. Only a few beacon models accept lithium or rechargeable so please consult your owners manual.

___ **Probe***: Must be at least 280cm. A quality probe will have cable instead of string to hold it together and a quick and easy locking mechanism. AAS choice: Black Diamond Quickdraw Carbon 280 or 320 Probe. Ski pole probes are not acceptable.

___ **Shovel***: Must be a metal backcountry avalanche shovel. **No plastic shovels.** Avoid cheap shovels such as brands sold at Costco and Fred Meyer. AAS choice: Black Diamond Evac or Voile Telepro.

___ **Snow Saw***: Required. AAS choice: G3 Bonesaw, Primomo El Profesional, or MSR Beta Saw.

___ **Inclinometer***: Any type. This may be included in a compass, as a swinging weight on a plastic card or bubble type. AAS choice: AAS inclinometer card or BCA slope meter.

___ **Extended Column Test Cord*** 3 meters (10') of 3mm cord with overhand knots every 15cm (6")

Travel: practice and be familiar with your gear before the course

Note: you can use skis, snowshoes, splitboard or snowshoes combined with a snowboard.

___ **Skis:** Alpine touring or telemark skis with bindings and skins for uphill travel. Make sure your boots and bindings are sized to match and the DIN is set appropriately.

___ **Snowshoes:** They must have metal teeth for ascending and descending steep slopes. AAS choice: MSR Lightning Ascent.

___ **Snowboard:** If you bring a snowboard for descents, please bring snowshoes and collapsible ski poles.

___ **Split Board:** In combination with a pair of skins for traveling uphill.

___ **Skins:** For use with your skis or split-board. Skins are essential for uphill travel. Make sure they are trimmed to your boards and that they work before arriving to your class. AAS choice: Black Diamond Ascension or G3 Alpinist.

___ **Ski Poles:** Mandatory for everyone. Everyone needs these for quick tests. AAS choice: Black Diamond Traverse for skier/snowshoe and the Expedition or Compactor for snowboard/split-board.

___ **Helmet:** Optional but recommended. Ski or snowboard helmet.

___ **Elastic Ski Strap:** Recommended to hold your skis and poles together. Also useful for emergency repair. AAS choice: Titan strap.

Day Pack Essentials

___ **Backpack:** 30 to 45 liters. This needs to be big enough to carry all of your gear inside your pack for the field portions of the course. AAS choice: BCA Stash 40.

___ **Lunch Food:** This should be field type snack food that does not freeze. Bring plenty. There is not typically a designated lunch break. Instead we eat at short breaks throughout the day.

___ **Water Bottle:** 1+ liters or a thermos. AAS choice: Nalgene 32-oz wide mouth.

___ **Sunglasses:** Good to have even in mid-winter as a backup to your goggles.

___ **Headlamp:** Bring extra batteries. AAA alkaline to match your beacon batteries?

___ **Extra Clothing:** Gloves/mittens and warm puffy jacket. Be prepared for all types of weather: rain, snow, wind or sun.

___ **Notebook and Pencil:** To take notes. Bring extra pencils. AAS pick: Rite in the Rain weatherproof paper.

___ **Goggles or Sunglasses**

___ **Hand Sanitizer**

___ **Hand/Foot Warmers:** Optional. These are helpful during blustery cold days.

___ **First Aid Kit:** Optional. A small simple kit for blisters and cuts. Ibuprofen, Tylenol, personal prescriptions, etc. Instructors will have a larger kit on hand.

Clothing

Do not bring cotton. It holds moisture and dries slowly leaving the user cold and wet. Synthetic and wool layers dry out quickly and they do not lose their warmth even when damp. A winter environment is conducive to hypothermia, and you will miss out on class time if you are sitting inside because you are cold.

___ **Long Underwear Top and Bottom:** Light to mid-weight synthetic or wool.

___ **Mid-Weight Top and Bottom:** Polartec or light fleece top. Bottoms for extra cold conditions.

___ **Hard Shell Top and Bottom:** Wind and waterproof/breathable with Gore-Tex or equivalent. Pants should fit over boots.

___ **Gaiters:** To keep snow out of your boots. Most ski/snowboard pants have these built in.

___ **Warm socks:** Synthetic or wool. Make sure they fit comfortably with the boots you will be wearing. A common mistake is to wear two pairs of socks that are too thick, which constricts blood flow and creates cold feet.

___ **Warm Hat*:** Fleece or wool. AAS choice: AAS logo wear!

___ **Face Mask*:** 2 or more disposable procedure masks or a 2-layer mask with a changeable filter. AAS choice: Outdoor Research Adrenaline Sports FaceMask Kit

___ **Warm Gloves/Mittens*:** Bring a few pairs of varying warmth. AAS pick: Freezy Freaky mittens.

___ **Glove liners:** A good combination for with heavy gloves/mittens. Important for warmth when taking notes, packing, etc.

___ **Insulated Parka:** Synthetic or down puffy with hood. Your parka should fit over all of your other layers and be warm. This is helpful when standing around outdoors on the field portion of the

course. Bring two if it is to be extra cold or if you tend to get cold easily. AAS choice: Patagonia Micro puff or DAS parka, Wild Things Belay Parka.

___ **Puffy Pants:** Or puff skirt. Optional. This is a parka for your legs. Good for sub-zero temps.
AAS choice: Mountain Hardwear Compressor pant or Patagonia DAS pant.

___ **Boots:** Assure they are warm and comfortable enough to stand around in the cold for an hour or more. No leather hiking boots as they are not warm enough. A good pair of boots is essential to being happy outside on cold days. If you have any doubts, spend a day outside in cold temperatures testing them before the course. Please break in your boots to avoid cold feet and blisters. **These are your ski boots or snowboard boots if you are touring in this set-up.**

Food

You are required to bring all of your food for the full duration of the course. Trail food is best suited for lunch.

Optional for Level 1 Courses

___ **Field Data Notebook*:** AAS recommends the Snowpit Technologies Field Notebook.

___ **SWAG Book*:** Snow, Weather and Avalanche Observation Guidelines (SWAG)

___ **Compass:** Some compasses have an inclinometer built in. AAS choice: Silva Ranger.

___ **Magnifying Lens/Loupe*:** AAS recommends Carson LL-10 LumiLoupe 10.

___ **Crystal Card*:** AAS recommends the Snowmetrics blus card.

___ **Folding Ruler or Marked Probe*:** marked in centimeters.

Face Masks

You are only required to wear a 2-layer face mask when within 6-feet of other participants during your field day or during indoor lectures when we resume normal classroom operations. Time within close proximity to other participants should be pretty limited to things like transceiver checks, some shoveling, or snowlayer/grain ID in snow pits. Buffs alone won't work and need to be paired with a procedure mask.



Pre-Trip Medical History

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Course Dates: _____

The environment and physical requirements of courses provided by the Alaska Avalanche School requires that participants be healthy and physically fit. The information provided on this form is held confidentially. Please answer the questions honestly – a history of a medical illness or traumatic injury will not be cause to exclude a participant from a course: however, this information is imperative to properly prepare for any contingencies. In the event you are involved in an accident or medical emergency, your history form will be attached to an incident report and will be passed along to medical personnel. Please alert the AAS staff of any changes that occur prior to the start of your program. If AAS has any follow up questions for you, or if we would like clarification from you, an AAS representative might contact you prior to the start of the course. This is for your health and safety.

Please answer each question and provide explanations as requested.

1) People who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 as defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) should carefully consider, in conjunction with their health care provider, whether to attend an avalanche course at this time. Do you have any conditions that put you in this higher risk category?

2) Mask usage is an integral part of our risk reduction strategy for in-person courses this season. If you are unable to tolerate wearing a mask for up to four hours at a time, you should delay your attendance until your condition changes or the requirement is removed. Can you tolerate wearing a mask for up to 4-hours?

3) Do you currently have any medical condition for which you are under the care of a medical provider? If yes, please explain.

4) Are you taking any medications for this, either daily or as needed? (include inhalers and over the counter medications).

5) Have you been hospitalized in the last 12 months? If yes, please explain.

6) If you currently have any of the conditions identified below, please check the box:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy or a seizure disorder | <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma or chronic respiratory illness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes | <input type="checkbox"/> High blood pressure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allergies | <input type="checkbox"/> Frostbite or Reynauds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiac disease (including angina, heart failure, palpitations, rhythm problems) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other illness or condition that may affect your well-being during this course. | |

If you checked any of the above boxes, please describe your condition below and let us know what steps you take to manage the condition.

7) Please list any allergies to medications or food. Include the reaction you had. Please include food restrictions here.

Emergency Contact Information:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Relation: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

If you have any questions about this form – please contact AAS. A senior staff member will address your concerns and if necessary we will forward your questions to our Medical Advisor.
Thank you for your time and assistance.

Participant Agreement, Release and Assumption of Risk

In consideration of the services of Alaska Avalanche School, their agents, owners, officers, volunteers, participants, employees, and all other persons or entities acting in any capacity on their behalf (hereinafter collectively referred to as "AAS"), I hereby agree to release, indemnify, and discharge AAS, on behalf of myself, my spouse, my children, my parents, my heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate as follows:

1. I acknowledge that my participation in an avalanche training course entails known and unanticipated risks that could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis, death, or damage to myself, to property, or to third parties. Participation in all in-person courses hosted by the Alaska Avalanche School also poses similar risks as interacting with society at large, including contracting communicable diseases, such as COVID-19. I understand that such risks simply cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity. **The risks include, among other things:** falling, temperature exposure (hypothermia, frostbite, frostnip, sunburn), collision, striking obstructions or other persons, unsafe speed of travel for conditions or experience, equipment failure, failure to wear protective clothing, elevation changes, weather conditions including electrical storms, avalanches and unfavorable snow conditions. Furthermore, AAS employees have difficult jobs to perform. They seek safety, but they are not infallible. They might be unaware of a participant's health status, fitness, or abilities. They might misjudge the weather or other environmental conditions. They may give incomplete warnings or instructions, and the equipment being used might malfunction.
2. I expressly agree and promise to accept and assume all of the risks existing in this activity. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary, and I elect to participate in spite of the risks.
3. I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless AAS from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in this activity or my use of AAS's equipment or facilities, **including any such claims which allege negligent acts or omissions of AAS.**
4. Should AAS or anyone acting on their behalf, be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.
5. I certify that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I may cause or suffer while participating, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or damage myself. I further certify that I am willing to assume the risk of any medical or physical condition I may have.
6. In the event that I file a lawsuit against AAS, I agree to do so solely in the state of Alaska, and I further agree that the substantive law of Alaska shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state. I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining document shall remain in full force and effect.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in this activity, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against AAS on the basis of any claim from which I have released them herein. I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by its terms.

Signature of Participant _____ Print Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ Date _____

PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S ADDITIONAL INDEMNIFICATION (Must be completed for participants under the age of 18)

In consideration of _____ (print minor's name) ("Minor") being permitted by AAS to participate in its activities and to use its equipment and facilities, I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless AAS from any and all claims which are brought by, or on behalf of Minor, and which are in any way connected with such use or participation by Minor.

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Emergency Contact Information

(Name and Phone): _____