

Safety, Health & Fitness—

Consumers Union Dings Boeri—

For the first time, Consumers Union has tested ski and snowboard helmets. The results of their stringent tests are less than flattering for industry giant Boeri Helmets. According to Consumers Union, the Boeri Rage (high gloss shell) is rated "not acceptable" because it failed their impact test which involved dropping helmets from a height onto a flat anvil. Also appearing on the magazine's "not recommended" list are the W Helmets, Wski with slide vent, and the Boeri Rage (matte-black shell). Giro rated spots #1 and #2 with their Nine.9 and Fuse models. Leedom's Scream and Limit models landed spots #3 and #4, followed by K2's Automatic in fifth place.

Tips for Powder Skiing

If you go fast, you'll turn easier. You need to use momentum to change directions.

Skiing slowly in powder is like jogging through the surf at the beach. Not only does it feel wrong, but its a ton of work.

Effortless powder skiing is fast powder skiing. You need speed to power through and rise above the snowpack. If you drive your boards under the snow without enough momentum, they'll nosedive until you slow to a stop.

Most people think powder skiing means hard work. They drop in and get low in an effort to manhandle their skis around. Forget muscling the turn. The key is to be on top of the snow before you start turning.

Begin by standing tall (no bending at the waist) with your skis shoulder width apart and your weight slightly in the backseat.

Let your skis run down the fall line until you start floating. Be patient and let yourself go faster than might seem wise.

Keep your weight on the center of the skis for balance, then roll both skis onto edge in the direction of your first turn. Your skis will compress the snow beneath them, turn, and bounce up into the transition between turns.

Make a solid pole plant down the fall line and use the momentum you've gained to roll the skis into the next turn.

With speed and simple edge rolls, you'll have energy to ski fresh all day.

Three Basic Factors That Affect Avalanche Probability

Terrain

Most avalanches run on 30 to 45° slopes, but plenty can get moving on even gentler terrain. Of the two types of avalanches, a point release avalanche, one that starts at a point and sloughs down the hillside, is not very dangerous, and might even indicate stability. The type to be more concerned with is a slab avalanche, one where the snow fails in several places, and even a small amount of weight can trigger it.

Weather

Unfortunately for powder hounds, a heavy snowfall can often mean increased avalanche danger, especially if more than one inch of new snow falls each hour. High winds can add several inches to the snowpack in places, and lay bare other areas, adding instability to the former. Colorado's cold temperatures lock up the snowpack, holding the instabilities in place. Rapid warming can increase instability. But temperature is never a factory by itself- there can be dozens of temperature history combinations that produce stable or unstable conditions.

Snowpack

There are many layers in snowpack- it is not homogenous. There are many methods of evaluating the snowpack, through various tests. Among other things, the rate at which the temperature changes throughout the height of the snowpack gives an indication of stability. The thing to remember is the snowpack could be completely different just a few feet away on the same slope.

Kid Snow Safety—Things to Bring Skiing & Snowboarding for Warm, Happy Kids

Keeping small children happy while skiing depends on staying warm & dry all day. Besides having the right ski clothes, enrolling in a children's ski program helps kids enjoy skiing with a group of peers, and often paces their learning with breaks and indoor activities. Before you go on that family ski vacation, make sure your child has these basic necessities - labeled with their name of course!

Waterproof, Breathable, Insulated Jacket

Kids need to be protected from the elements. Waterproof protection, reinforced or taped seams are a must for active winter kids. Light insulation is recommended, but layering underneath properly helps fight the cold. Breathable materials and vents help kids

regulate their temperature. Look for ski jackets with drawstring cords at waist or hem, or powder skirts to keep snow out.

Waterproof, Breathable, Insulated Ski Pants

Shop for the same elements as in childrens ski jackets, but also look for a little more insulation, reinforced knees and rear ends that may be on the snow quite a bit while learning to ski or snowboard. Also stretch cuffs to keep snow from getting inside.

Moisture Wicking Long Underwear

Your first layer of defense against being cold and wet. "Moisture-Wicking" fabrics pull sweat away from the body and keep skin from getting cold and clammy, and keep outside moisture from getting past. Popular blends include silk, merino wool, lighter microfleece and polypropylene layers.

Children's Ski Helmets

Well worth the investment to help protect against head injuries and fatal accidents. Today's lightweight helmets are also warm. Check with the ski resort before your trip, as many ski schools are now requiring helmets for various ages. Most ski areas now provide day helmet rentals (\$5-\$15), but buying one to properly fit your child is important and kids love decorating their own with stickers.

Warm Hat

Even if using a ski helmet, children should have one to tuck in their pocket for other outdoor activities, or wear under the helmet for a more secure fit. Hats that are worn under helmets should be smooth and close fitting, to allow the helmet to rest properly.

Junior Anti-Fog Goggles

Double lenses are best for preventing fog, helping kids see clearly and watching out for obstacles ahead. Junior ski goggles are smaller to fit children's faces, but you should have your child try on several styles to get the best fit. Most of today's kids ski goggles are helmet compatible, but you should test them together indoors for comfort and make sure your child has good peripheral vision.

Waterproof, Insulated Gloves

Many of today's ski gloves are coming with zip out liners, which makes them easy to wash the inner layer, but also easy to lose. You may want to have a back-up pair with you as well. Look for gloves with extended wrists and a pull cord to keep snow out.

Fleece Neck & Face Warmer

Also known as "neck gaiters", or one-piece "balaclavas" are great fleece items to protect skin from the cold and windburn. WinterKids.com has a selection of TurtleFurKids® in cool tie-dye patterns, to view click link below.

Moisture Wicking Ski Socks

There's that moisture-wicking word again. Look for blends and insulating fibers. Ski boots are much warmer these days, but cotton socks are not a good choice, because they lack warmth and stay wet if they get wet from sweat or snow that creeps in. Cold, wet feet are the first thing to stop a good ski day.

Last but not least, A Positive Attitude!

Learning to ski or snowboard should be a fun experience for kids. Start their days out right with a good breakfast for energy, and use this checklist as a guide to keep them well prepared for the ski slopes. When skiing with your kids outside of children's ski school, listen to how they are feeling. Take breaks often and don't push them too hard - they'll let you know when they're ready for more.