

Sierra Avalanche Center
Avalanche Rescue for Motorized Users
2021 Course Syllabus

Course Summary

This course provides avalanche rescue practice for motorized users. Learning will occur through a mix of an online session and one day of field practice. Because avalanche avoidance skills should be prioritized over avalanche rescue skills, it is strongly recommended - but not required - that only graduates of a Level 1 register for this class (the Level 1 can be motorized or non-motorized). This class follows the guidelines for Avalanche Rescue as established by the American Avalanche Association.

Schedule

Both classes for a given weekend begin with a combined mandatory online session prior to the field day. The field day will run from 9am-5pm *either* Saturday or Sunday, depending on which class you register for. Instructors will communicate specific plans prior to and throughout the class. Attendance and participation in the full class is mandatory.

Course Requirements:

Participants must:

- Have the ability to ride off-trail in variable conditions. Riding ability is less important on Rescue classes than on Level 1 and Level 2 classes, but participants still need to be able to ride off-trail in variable conditions.
- Bring a functioning beacon, shovel, and probe. Beacons should be modern three-antennae, shovels should be made specifically for avalanche rescue, and probes should be 270cm or longer. Avalanche gear must be worn/carried on self, and not in tunnel bag. An extra shovel in tunnel bag is recommended.
- Wear a DOT approved helmet and weather-appropriate gear.
- Ride a reliable, well maintained snowmobile/snowbike, capable of off-trail travel. Machines must be registered with visible registration markings. Spare belts and repair kits are strongly recommended. Poorly maintained machines and/or machines not intended for off-trail travel may jeopardize the experience of others.
- Read the required materials and apply the Daily Flow and Alerts stickers to machines for easy reference while riding.
- Bring a radio capable of operating on [FRS/GMRS frequencies](#).

Required Text and Materials:

- [The SAC Daily Flow](#) video and details pages. A paper copy of *The SAC Daily Flow* book will be provided in class.
- Daily Flow and Alerts stickers, available for free at most regional powersports dealers. Additional stickers will be provided in class.
- Handouts and/or weblinks as provided.
- Due to Covid-19, all participants must wear a face covering when in close proximity to others. Consider a neck gaiter or balaclava (without nose or mouth holes) that would be appropriate for riding regardless of Covid-19.

Learning Outcomes

The successful student will be able to:

- Recognize that companion rescue skills are necessary for travel in avalanche terrain.
- Follow travel protocols as taught on Level 1 classes, including trailhead checks for rescue and emergency gear.
- Demonstrate familiarity with rescue gear.
- Improve skills by completing companion rescue scenarios.
- Facilitate continued companion rescue practice with riding partners.
- Describe medical and traumatic problems associated with avalanche accidents.
- Plan for a self evacuation and/or transition to an evacuation led by a SAR team.
- Assist with an organized rescue led by a SAR team.

Proposed Itinerary

The exact itinerary may change, depending on weather, avalanche conditions, and other factors. Due to Covid-19, indoor classroom sessions are not planned for 2021.

Online Session (pre-course reading: [The SAC Daily Flow](#) video and details pages):

- Instructor introductions
- Preview of proposed course itinerary and discussion of syllabus, including Covid-19 mitigation
- Where does this course fit within the American Avalanche Association's educational matrix, and what can students expect from formal avalanche education?
- General risk management systems, and the SAC Daily Flow
- Necessary equipment for companion rescue
- Additional equipment considerations
- Overview of avalanche companion rescue

(proposed itinerary continued)

Field Session (either Saturday or Sunday, depending on which class you register for):

- Instructor-led *Stop to Talk* at trailhead
- *Manage Your Group* to rescue practice site
- Instructor demo of a single victim rescue scenario
- Within groups of 5, practice components of a single-victim rescue:
 - Group shoveling
 - Individual probing
 - Individual fine search
 - Individual search including signal, course, fine, and pinpoint
 - Group scenario including rescue organization
- Within groups of 2 or 3, repetition of individual search including signal, course, fine, and pinpoint
- Regroup and debrief over lunch
- Within groups of 5 (switch instructors), practice multiple victim searches:
 - Non-overlapping signals (discuss)
 - Overlapping signals
 - Close proximity signals
- Within groups of 5, prepare for Hasty Team practice
 - What to do if your riding group encounters someone else's accident
 - Spot probing demo
 - Create scenario for other group
 - Scenario practice and debrief
- Within group of 10:
 - Review ICS
 - Stage 1 course probing
 - Stage 2 fine probing
 - Debrief
- Preparing victims for further care:
 - Common injuries and concerns
 - Self evac
 - SAR evac
- *Manage Your Group* back to trailhead
- *Debrief* course