

Program	Audience	Recommended outcomes	Recommended content	Recommended prerequisites	Recommended format	Recommended performance measures	Recommended Instructor qualifications Student:inst. ratio
Avalanche Awareness	Interested public	Awareness of avalanche hazards	General information about avalanche hazard, how to avoid it, and proper equipment for traveling in avalanche terrain.	None	1 – 2 hr	None	Knowledgeable and entertaining
Introduction to Avalanches	Any winter backcountry user May be adapted for groups like Public Safety, Search & rescue, Snowmobilers, etc.	1) Recognize & avoid obvious avalanche hazard. 2) Understand and apply current avalanche advisory	A brief introduction to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avalanche statistics and human factors • Avalanche terminology • Avalanche terrain • Snowpack and weather factors • Obvious clues and red flags • Avalanche bulletins • Simple decision tools (ALP TRUTH, FACETS, RYG Light, clear communication, etc.) • Travel protocols • Companion recovery 	None	2-3 hr presentation	None	Member Affiliate AAA or higher
Introduction to Avalanches Field Course	Any winter backcountry user May be adapted for groups like Public Safety, Search & rescue, Snowmobilers, etc.	1) Recognize avalanche terrain and understand safe motorized travel protocols. 2) Understand how layered snow contributes to avalanching 3) Understand basic companion rescue	Field examples & hands-on training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avalanche terrain, avalanche run out zones and terrain traps • Basic route selection • Motorized travel protocols (one at a time, hand signals, manner in which you park, don't help stuck partner on slope) • Snowpack layering • Basic stability tests (performing safe slope cuts to identify instabilities, small column tests) • Current snowpack conditions and weather effects (bulletin) • Companion recovery including probing, shoveling, beacon use 	None	7 hrs field	Attendance & participation	Primary Instructor: Member Affiliate AAA or higher. Exemplary riding skills and enthusiastic about riding. Assistants: Sufficient personal experience Maximum 7:1
Companion Rescue Clinic	Any winter backcountry user	1) Wear & operate an avalanche beacon. 2) Perform a mock companion recovery including single and multiple burial search 3) Understand challenges involving multiple rescuer and learn basic group management	Hands-on training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of beacon skills (burial time-survival statistics) • Beacon operation and search principles • Demonstration and practice of signal, coarse, fine, and pinpoint search • Rescue practice scenarios including group management, probing & shoveling • Overview of first aid and emergency skills needed in actual rescues 	None	4 hrs field	Attendance & participation	Sufficient personal experience. *[Format and teaching tips available] Maximum 8:1

Program	Audience	Recommended outcomes	Recommended content	Recommended pre-requisites	Recommended format	Recommended performance measures	Recommended Instructor qualifications Student:inst. ratio
Level 1: Avalanche Fundamentals	Current and aspiring back-country travel companions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Apply the current avalanche bulletin in tour planning and travel. 2) Recognize avalanche terrain and understand safe motorized travel protocols. 3) Interpret snow conditions and weather on different aspects and elevations in relation to slope stability 4) Apply simple decision tools in avalanche terrain. 5) Conduct a mock companion recovery and understand basic group management. 	<p>Avalanche types and anatomy</p> <p>Basic slab mechanics</p> <p>Terrain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrain evaluation and route selection • Travel protocols & group communication -ie. one at a time, don't help stuck partner on slope, manner in which one parks, preloading communication, hand signals, etc.. • High marking guidelines <p>Snowpack and Weather</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountain snowpack development leading to instability or stability • Field observations, tests and judging instability • Perform safe slope cuts to identify instability • Use of avalanche & snow pit tools: inclinometer, compass, probe, saw • Introduce elementary pits with hand hardness profiles, basic grain type symbols and stability tests. Expose to recording field notes. • Avalanche & snow climates <p>Decision-support Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human factors and the need for systematic decision tools • Application & limitations of decision tools • Avalanche bulletins <p>Rescue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companion rescue including scene size up, organization, beacon use, probing, shoveling • Recovery of victims not wearing beacons • Common mistakes in avalanche rescue • Single and multiple beacon search techniques • Role of first aid and emergency response in real avalanche rescues 	<p>No formal prerequisites</p> <p>Strongly Recommended:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Winter Travel and First Aid Skills 2) Introduction to Avalanches programs 3) Course provider's recommended reading 	24 hours Minimum 60% field	Attendance & participation	<p>Primary or lead instructor: AAA Pro Member with exemplary riding skills and enthusiastic about riding.</p> <p>Assistants: AAA Member Affiliates</p> <p>Continuing education within previous 4 years</p> <p>Instructors must be excellent role models for the skills they teach.</p> <p>Preferred 5:1 Maximum 7:1</p>

AAA Guidelines Purpose and Disclaimer of Liability: The purpose of the AAA Guidelines for U.S. Avalanche Education (“Guidelines”) is to provide a general benchmark for skill progressions between different levels of avalanche education, for the public’s benefit. AAA believes that avalanche education can be more thoughtfully, consistently, and responsibly conducted and can achieve more constructive outcomes for students when course providers and avalanche instructors in the United States strive to embrace common guidelines and practices. In developing and issuing these Guidelines, AAA does not intend to act as - or become - a regulatory body for the avalanche industry. Compliance with the AAA Guidelines does not guarantee that a course provider’s courses or programs will be safe, or that participation in that course or program will be free from harm. In choosing to voluntarily engage in avalanche courses or programs or recreate in outdoor, backcountry and/or wilderness settings, individuals must understand that they accept and assume the inherent risks of these activities. AAA does not oversee, control or warrant the character or quality of any individual or entity’s avalanche programs, including those of any listed course providers, and is not responsible for the content of their specific courses or programs. Those interested in taking avalanche courses from course providers listed on AAA’s website or otherwise, should independently investigate and assess these course providers and their specific courses and programs. The American Association for Avalanche Professionals, Inc., d/b/a the American Avalanche Association, and its officers, directors, employees, agents, volunteers and representatives, including those individuals who assist in managing our websites at americanavalancheassociation.org and avalanche.org (collectively “AAA”), disclaim all duty, responsibility or liability (including for negligence) to any individuals or entities for any injury, death or other loss resulting from any cause, including losses caused, or claimed to be caused, in whole or in part, because an individual or entity, including a listed course provider, adhered to – or failed to comply with - any aspect of the AAA Guidelines.