



Avalanche Skills Training Level 2 Course Information

BanffLIFE:	403-760-2423	banfflife@banff.ca
Start time Day 1:	9:30am	
Finish time Day 1:	Around 4pm	
Departure Day 2-4:	TBD by instructor on day 1	
Returning: Day 2-4:	Around 5pm	
Transportation:	12-passenger van	
Equipment:	See Gear List below...	
Food:	Please provide water, snacks and lunch	

What is it?

Avalanches are the single greatest hazard facing backcountry skiers. You will learn about terrain, snowpack, weather, human decision-making and how they all interact together to cause avalanches. We do spend a lot of time learning the safest routes to travel, and deciding when the time is right to step further out and ski those appealing lines you have your eye on. It will be a valuable investment to your back country experiences! Cost includes: 4 days of instruction, books, use of safety and snow study equipment, and transportation to field location. An AST 2 certificate will be issued on successful completion.

Who should go?

If you are a back country enthusiast (Back country skiing or mountaineering) and want to strengthen your knowledge base so that you can travel safely and expand your back country adventures then this is the course for you. The AST 2 course will give you what you need for safe winter travel in the mountains. *To be eligible for the AST 2 certificate participants must first have taken the AST level 1

Safety

Safety is our first priority on all BanffLIFE trips and courses. Instructors on all courses are members of the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides with the appropriate certification. These guides have gone through a rigorous training and certification process to ensure the trip is as safe as possible. Please listen and pay attention to the guides and follow their instructions. It is important that you understand that you are skiing with a group and that you have to work with the team to make the day safe for everyone. Safety equipment is provided and you are required to use it as instructed at all times.



A Little about Banff

Welcome to Banff National Park! Established in 1885, Banff is Canada's first and best known national park. It is a part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site that covers 20,000km² of some of the most spectacular and ecologically significant areas in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. From the beginning, Banff National Park has provided inspiration, rejuvenation, and relaxation to millions of people each year. It is a place where residents and visitors can participate in activities that help them understand and respect Canada's natural and cultural heritage. Banff National Park is truly a sacred and special place where the richness of Canada's mountain heritage is respected, experienced and celebrated for all time. As new members of the Banff community, you are about to embark on your very own Banff National Park adventure. BanffLIFE is happy to be a part of your adventure and we are looking forward to introducing you to your back yard!

Risk

All mountaineering and skiing activities involve some element of risk. You will be required to sign a waiver where you assume that risk, waive your right to sue, and releases the guides, BanffLIFE and the Canadian Avalanche Centre of all liability in case of an accident.

Course Outline

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the basics of avalanche formation and release.
- Identify avalanche terrain.
- Know the steps required to plan and carry out a trip.
- Use the Avaluator™ as a decision-making tool in areas where trips are rated using the Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale (ATES) and where Avalanche Danger Ratings and Avalanche Bulletins are available.
- Find resources for obtaining ATES terrain ratings if their trip is not rated.
- Find resources for obtaining Avalanche Danger Ratings and Avalanche Bulletins.
- Use appropriate travel techniques in avalanche terrain.
- Carry out a companion rescue.
- Understand the limits of their training.



Gear List

Clothing Systems

- Bring lots of warm clothes! You may be outside for most or all of the second day and we will be stopped for periods of time to make snow and weather observations.
- The clothing you use at the ski hill will work well.
- Layering works best for the stop and go activity of ski touring. Plan on bringing several thin and medium layers rather than only a couple of thick ones.
- Synthetic fabrics should be chosen if possible, avoid cotton. Participants need to provide the following:

Long underwear top and bottoms Wool or synthetic is best.

Pants - Your regular ski or snowboard pants will work well. If you have softshell pants or thinner hardshell pants we often like to use those as well, especially in warmer conditions.

Softshell or fleece jacket - We like a hooded jacket, but it's not absolutely necessary.

Insulated parka - A thick insulated parka is great for when you are stopped for a break or having lunch out in the field. Down filled or synthetic materials are both fine.

Shell jacket - A jacket that keeps the wind and wet out. Again, your ski or snowboard jacket should work fine.

Hats - We like having a warm toque for the downhills and a lighter weight one for walking uphill.

Gloves - Bring warm ski-type gloves. A lightweight pair of gloves should also be brought for warm conditions and/or for walking uphill. If you have mitts bring them too if the weather forecast is for cold conditions.

Boots - Your regular ski or snowboard boots will be fine as the uphills are short. If you have access to ski touring boots you can bring them if you wish but they are not essential.

Touring Gear - You will need to provide the following equipment. All of this may be rented at The Banff Ski Lounge (Banff), Wilson Sports (Lake Louise) or Gear Up (Canmore). Contact the BanffLIFE office to ask if there is a group trip to get rental gear for your course.

Skiers

- Skis with alpine touring bindings, or "Alpine Trekkers", or telemark bindings
- Skins
- Avalanche transceiver

Snowboarders

- Split board or snowshoes
- Poles (for walking uphill)
- Skins
- Avalanche transceiver



Other Safety Gear

We will provide the rest of your safety gear (collapsible shovel and avalanche probe). The guides will carry rescue and first aid equipment as well as a radio and/or cell phone for emergency communications.

Other Stuff

You also need to provide the following:

- Lunch and water
- We recommend a thermos with a hot drink.
- Note paper and pen for indoor sessions and notebook and pencil for outdoor sessions
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, sun block for your lips
- Heat packs for your gloves come in handy
- Toilet kit - There will not be toilet facilities in the backcountry! It's best if you avoid defecating out in the field. But if you really need to then have toilet paper and a plastic bag handy. Defecate at least 60 m away from water sources and well off trail. Toilet paper needs to be packed out in the plastic bag.

Backpack - Bring a pack big enough to fit all this gear and clothing into!

You will need to bring the transceiver on the first day.