



WINTER SKILLS

COURSE OVERVIEW

Our Winter Skills courses cover the essential mountain skills required to stay safe during winter. They are aimed at people who have some summer hill walking experience but limited winter experience and people who have more winter experience but require a refreshment of their skills.

WHAT IS COVERED?

COURSE HIGHLIGHTS:

- Learn how to use crampons & ice axes
- Develop avalanche awareness
- Self arrests
- Improve your navigation skills
- Emergency procedures
- Understand the winter environment better
- Qualified & experienced guides

A typical itinerary would be;

Meet in the pub the evening before the first day for a quick introduction and to ask any questions.

- Day one we look at how we prepare for winter, what we carry, how we carry it and why we carry it, we look at weather forecasts and avalanche forecasts and what that means to us. Once on the mountain it's all about safe and efficient travel, good footwork, simple uses of ice axes, self-arrests and avalanche awareness.
- We continue to develop our good footwork skills on day two which includes cramponing and moving on steeper terrain, different types of self-arrests, more avalanche awareness and snowpack analysis, and emergency procedures.
- Day three of the course is our navigation day using maps, compasses, identifying features, taking bearings, timing and pacing. Being able to navigate is essential if you plan to spend time in the mountains, it's not difficult, it just requires practice and a bit of coaching.
- On day four you have responsibility for decision making, route choice and navigating as we put all that we have learned into practice when we go on a mountain journey. This is a great way to experience the dynamic winter environment and helps contextualise what has been covered earlier in the course.

- Our final day is a review of everything covered, refining techniques and an opportunity for you to be completely satisfied with your winter skills.

We normally have an evening session during the course where we look at first aid on the mountains, food and hydration or any other relevant topics of choice.

HOW LONG SHOULD I GO FOR?

The courses run from a minimum of two days to a maximum of five days. The two day courses are mainly for people who are having a 'refresher' and for people with limited time. The three, four and five day courses are for people with less experience and people who would like to cover winter skills in more depth.

We believe you can never practice Winter Skills enough and would encourage people to attend for as long as they can.

WILL I BE SAFE?

Mountaineering requires an acceptance of risk as the mountains are a dynamic environment where serious risks and dangers do exist. Our guides are experienced and qualified and your safety is paramount. The course progresses with your skills and we use locations on the mountains that suit you. In this way we manage risks to make the course as safe as possible.

WHERE DO THE COURSES RUN?

We run most of our courses in the Cairngorms National Park and Aviemore is the closest town.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST AND WHAT DOES THAT INCLUDE?

The course costs £65 per person per day, which includes instruction, transport from Aviemore and free crampon, ice axe and helmet hire. It does not include accommodation, lunch or personal equipment, however we can recommend good local places to stay and eat.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to meeting you,
The Cairngorm Adventure Guides Team

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