

Winter Instructor Volunteer Pathways

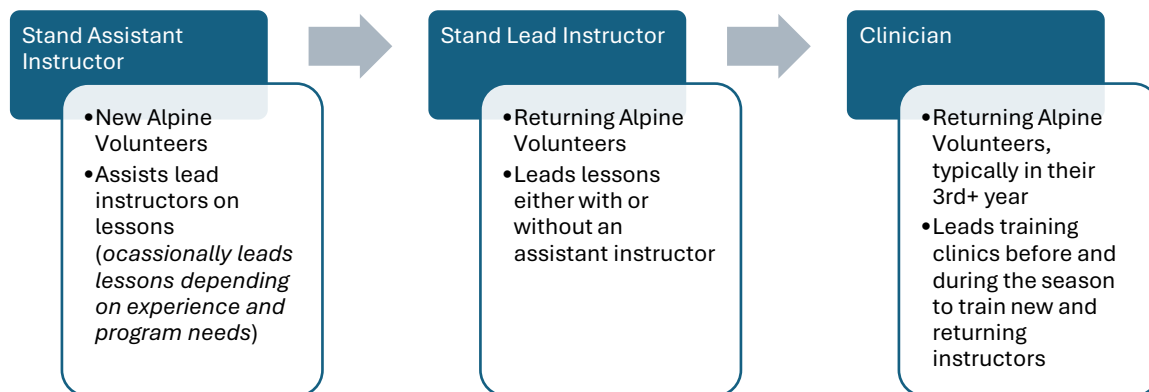
Purpose

This document is intended to serve as a reference and roadmap for Winter Instructor volunteers as they develop their skills and progress into new roles. Use this guide to understand volunteer pathways, training requirements, progression options, and continuing education opportunities.

The pathways and timelines described here are intended as general guidance rather than a rigid, one-size-fits-all process. Every volunteer brings different experiences, strengths, and goals, and progression may vary based on individual readiness, available opportunities, and program needs.

If you have questions, reach out to volunteer@outdoorsforall.org.

Alpine Instructors



Continuing Education Options: Specialty training (3/4 track, VI guiding, adaptive tools) and PSIA level 1 certification

Sign up for our in-season clinics and look out for more information about how to apply to take our PSIA certification courses.

New Alpine Instructors:

Pre-requisites:

- 14 years or older
- Intermediate to advanced skier or snowboarder (confident on blue terrain)

Note: if you have previous experience teaching adaptive skiing/boarding or if you have PSIA/AASI certifications, reach out to us as we can assess what role and starting point makes the most sense for you.

Training Requirements:

Online training

In person – 3 days

New alpine instructors start as assistant stand instructors (occasionally new instructors lead lessons depending on experience and program needs)

Returning Alpine Instructors:

In person training requirement

2nd year as an alpine instructor – 2 days

3rd+ year as an alpine instructor – 1 day

Returning alpine instructors either continue serving as assistant stand instructors, move to serving as lead stand instructors or move to being a sit assistant instructor

Sit Instructors



Continuing education options: Specialty training (independent bi/mono skiing and instruction) and PSIA certification

Sign up for our in-season clinics and look out for more information about how to apply to take our PSIA certification courses.

Sit Assistant Instructor

Pre-requisites: 1 year as an alpine stand instructor

In person training requirement - 3 days of sit assistant training

Progression: Sit Assistant Instructor -> Sit Lead Instructor-in-Training -> Sit Lead Instructor

Sit Lead Instructor-in-Training

Pre-requisites:

- Intermediate to advanced skier or snowboarder (proficient on all blue terrain in variable conditions, ideally comfortable in black terrain), snowboarders must also be able to ride switch comfortably on all blue terrain in variable conditions
- Able to lift and load a sit ski with a skier onto a chairlift as part of a two-person team
- Attend a Wednesday night sit clinic and pass an initial ski/snowboard skills check

Training Progression:

Attend Wednesday night sit clinics to gain training to develop the skills needed to be a Sit Lead Instructor.

The progression and timeline for learning to tether sit equipment varies greatly from person to person. Sit Lead Instructors-in-Training start with tethering sit equipment loaded with weights to learn initial skills and must put in significant mileage and practice before moving to tethering other volunteers and instructors.

Sit Lead Instructor

Pre-requisites: pass a final skills check as a sit lead instructor-in-training to be able to start tethering participants during lessons

In person training requirement - 3 days of sit lead training

FAQs

I have previous experience teaching skiing/snowboarding with a nationally recognized ski school, a different adaptive organization, and/or I have PSIA/AASI certifications – is there a way to fast track into starting as a Lead Instructor or a Sit Assistant Instructor my first year of volunteering?

If you have prior relevant experience, reach out to us and we can assess together what kind of volunteer role and starting point makes the most sense for you!

I see that “skills checks” are required for being a Sit Lead Instructor-in-Training and are required before you can become a Sit Lead Instructor on lessons. What do these involve and how do I get checked off?

As a Sit Lead Instructor, you'll be responsible for safely managing a sit ski in a variety of terrain, snow conditions, and lesson scenarios. To help ensure instructors are prepared for that role, we assess skiing/snowboarding skills as part of the progression to becoming a Sit Lead Instructor. To get checked off, we'll have you attend our Wednesday night clinics where our clinician instructors will work with you to assess your skiing, give feedback, and determine if there are things you need to work on prior to moving to the next step in the progression.

I'm not an intermediate to advanced skier/snowboarder and don't have the ability to pass your skills check to be a Sit Lead Instructor-in-Training, what are my options?

Due to the technical nature and risk management considerations of tethering a sit ski, we require Sit Lead Instructors to have certain level of skiing/snowboarding ability. That said, we have a growing sit program and would love to get as many volunteers involved as possible. Options for working on your personal skiing/riding skills include: taking our Wednesday night skier improvement clinics, sign up for ski lessons with Summit or Stevens, or reach out to us and we'll get you connected to our awesome team of instructors who can help mentor you!

In the progression of training to become a Sit Lead Instructor, it states that I need to attend Wednesday night sit clinics in order to gain the skills needed to get checked off to be a Sit Lead on lessons, what does that entail?

Attending Wednesday night sit clinics will give you the opportunity to work with our sit clinicians and the training and mileage needed to be a Sit Lead Instructor. As an Instructor-in-Training you'll start with tethering sit equipment loaded with weights to learn initial skills. It takes significant mileage and practice before moving to tethering other volunteers and instructors, and then eventually being able to move

to tethering participants in lessons. This progression of skills and timeline for learning varies greatly from person to person.