



Contact:

Jessyca Keeler, Executive Director, Ski NH
jessyca@skinh.com (603) 745-9396 x203

Kris Neilsen, NH Division of Travel & Tourism
Kris.Neilsen@dred.nh.gov (603) 271-2665

Learn to Ski or Ride in the New Year

Beginners can learn to ski, snowboard without hurting their wallets by taking advantage of some great deals at New Hampshire ski areas this year

January is Learn to Ski & Snowboard Month, and many New Hampshire ski areas are offering ski and ride packages that make it easy and affordable to learn a fun winter sport.

Following the recent snowfall, there is lots of beginner terrain to explore. There is also plenty of winter left, making January a perfect time to learn how to ski and ride. For first-time skiers and riders, professional instruction can have a long-lasting impact on their enjoyment on the slopes.

“Taking a lesson is unquestionably the best way to start skiing or snowboarding,” said Jessyca Keeler of Ski NH. “You will gain some essential skills to being safe as soon as you start learning, like how to make a turn and how to stop. The one- to two-hour investment in time is just that - an investment. It's an investment in learning a new activity that you can enjoy for the rest of your life, and one you can easily participate in with friends and family.”

Across New Hampshire, many ski areas are offering a \$39 lift, lesson and rentals beginner package for downhill skiing and riding, and a \$19 trail pass, lesson and rentals beginner package at cross-country ski areas throughout the month of January. Availability of the offer varies at each participating ski area and reservations must be made in advance, so call or view online the resort of your choice for lesson times, etc. Resorts participating in the January Learn to Ski & Ride Month offer and links to their programs and/or phone numbers can be found at www.skinh.com/learn/january-learn-to-ski-snowboard-month.

For families who want to get their little ones on the slopes for the first time, or adults who have always longed to ski or ride but never tried, ski areas around the state are also offering a number of learn to ski and ride deals that last all season long.

Ragged Mountain's Bebe Wood Free Learn to Ski & Ride program is a new, season-long program for anyone over the age of 7 who wants to learn to ski or ride. The offer includes three lessons, lower mountain lift tickets, and the use of brand new Rossignol rental equipment – all for free. Mount Cranmore's Rossignol Get Skiing Package for true beginners includes three lessons, lift tickets and ski rentals for \$349. With the completion of the third lesson, students receive a new pair of Rossignol Experience 74 skis with bindings and a discount card for ski boots at Sport Thoma ski shop.

Loon Mountain is offering its First Class Beginner's Weekends in January and March. These intensive weekends lay a strong foundation for beginners over the age of 13, and include lessons, the use of a private slope-side learning lounge, morning coffee, lunch, après ski gatherings and a free pair of HEAD skis, boots and bindings for each participant for \$375.

Other resorts are offering season-long discounts for those who want to learn to ski and ride. At Mount Sunapee, the three-day Start Here Learn to Ski/Snowboard package includes rentals, two-hour lesson, a day-long ticket to the South Peak Learning Area, and discounts on a second and third day of skiing. This offer also applies to telemark skis for those who want to learn a new style of skiing. Gunstock Mountain Resort offers a Mountain Magic 3 Lesson Package, which includes three lessons, lower mountain lift ticket and rentals. Graduates of the program not only get discounts on future lessons, rentals and certain lift ticket packages, but Gunstock also guarantees that students will learn the basics of skiing or riding after three lessons or the resort will provide additional instruction.

To learn more about Learn to Ski & Ride Deals in January and throughout the season, go to <http://www.skinh.com/deals/Learn-to-Deals>.

Ski NH is the statewide association representing 34 alpine and cross country resorts in New Hampshire. For more information on ski areas, trail conditions, vacation planning, and updated winter events at Ski NH resorts, call Ski NH at [603.745.9396](tel:603.745.9396) or visit the Ski NH website at www.SkiNH.com. For statewide travel info, visit www.visitNH.gov.

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