

How to Herringbone Uphill on Alpine Skis

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One of the most important skills to master when learning how to ski is how to get around when there's no chair lift in sight. What do you do if you drop your pole 15 yards uphill?

While there are many different ways to walk uphill (such as sidestepping or taking off your skis and walking), using the herringbone technique is the fastest, easiest and most efficient. And if you know how to do a snowplow, you're halfway there!

Difficulty: Moderate

Instructions

things you'll need:

- A flat to moderately steep hill with no skier traffic
- A pair of skis and poles
- A little energy

- 1 Begin by standing on your skis with your weight evenly distributed over both skis. Your poles should be at your side, but slightly behind your body.
- 2 Roll your uphill edges into the hill and transfer your weight onto your downhill ski. If the uphill edges of your downhill ski are dug into the snow, you shouldn't move.
- 3 Swing your uphill ski toward your uphill side, using small "pizza steps." Pizza steps are small steps that cause small triangular marks in the snow. Once your uphill ski is on the snow, roll your knees together, causing the inside edges to dig into the snow.
- 4 Bring your downhill ski towards your uphill ski using small pizza steps. Repeat until you are facing directly uphill with your knees "knock kneed" and the inside edges rolled into the snow. The tails of your skis should be relatively close together with your ski tips wider apart--sort of like a reverse snowplow position. Lean against the tops of your ski poles to help arrest any backward sliding.
- 5 One foot at a time, lift up your ski and place it back down on the snow while digging the inside edge of the ski into the snow. Remembering to roll your knees inward should help. Repeat the step with the opposite ski.
- 6 Continue walking uphill "like a duck" until you reach your destination. When you are as high as you need to go, reverse Steps 3 and 4 until you are standing on the snow with your skis parallel and pointing across the fall line.

Tips & Warnings

- Although you can use the herringbone to walk up steeper hills, begin on the flat or a moderately steep hill.
- Use your ski poles to keep from sliding backwards.
- If you find that your skis are sliding backwards or to the sides, try rolling your knees together until you are "knock-kneed."
- Take small steps.
- Avoid practicing on steep slopes with a lot of skier traffic.
- Try not to take too big a step. It's more efficient to use a series of smaller, more frequent steps than it is to take fewer, larger steps.