

How to Ride a Rope Tow

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If you've been lucky enough to learn how to ski during the past 10 n years, you may have missed one of the most exciting parts of skiing--learning how to ride a rope tow.

While high speed, detachable quad lifts are now the norm, there are still a number of smaller resorts that depend on rope tows to carry their guests to the top of the mountain. Rope tows are simple and inexpensive, but they are challenging if you've never been taught how to ride them.

Difficulty: Moderate

Instructions

things you'll need:

- Ski equipment
- A lift ticket
- Durable gloves
- Moderate upper body strength
- Lots of patience and balance

- 1 Walk to the end of the line by shuffling your skis straight ahead and wait for your turn to ride the lift.
- 2 Standing within an arm's length from the rope, take small "pizza" steps to the left or the right so that your skis are pointing straight uphill. You should be standing with your side next to the rope. If you begin to slide backward, increase the distance between the tips of your skis while keeping the tails together. This should prevent you from sliding backward.
- 3 Place your hands in an overhand grip over the moving rope. Allow the rope to slide through your hands until the person in front of you has begun to move uphill.
- 4 Gradually close your grip over the moving rope with both of your hands until you begin to slowly move uphill. Do not grab onto the rope--allow your grip to slowly close over the rope.
- 5 Once you've begun to slide uphill, relax, keep your knees bent and look ahead of you. Enjoy the ride.
- 6 When you reach to top of the lift, slowly release the rope. At the same time, step away from the rope using small "pizza steps." Move away from the lift so that you are not in the way of the people behind you. Stand perpendicular to the fall line until you are ready to ski down the hill.

Tips & Warnings

- Allow plenty of room between yourself and the rider ahead of you. Be ready to step away from the lift in case they

accidentally fall in front of you.

- If the person ahead of you does fall, either let the rope slide through your hands until they move out of the way or step off to the side.
- Buy glove protectors to save wear and tear on your expensive equipment.
- Never grab onto the rope tow until your skis are facing uphill and you are ready to move.
- Avoid wearing your best gloves--rope tows are very hard on leather gloves.