

SKI ARTICLE

How to carry your skis like a "œski pro" and not kill anyone!

As simple as it might appear to the uninitiated, injuries due to the way we carry skis and poles, both to and from resorts, can be avoided - here is how professionals do it.

The first thing to know is that travelling with skis, boots and poles is not an easy thing to accomplish even for the best of skiers.

With this in mind, we will keep safety and ease of transport as our goal, and trying to look like the real "œski pro"™ that you are.

• Preparation phase: Place your skis with the ski tips up and the bottoms, the base that is, facing each other. You can obtain inexpensive Velcro ski strips (you will need a pair) from your ski hire shop, and you will place them on the top and on the bottom of both skis to strap them together, ski bindings to the outside.

• Take your ski poles at the straps (the loops that go around your wrists) and place the loop on each respective ski then tie them together with a short piece of cord around the "œwaist"™ or middle of the ski.

• The following is very important for travel by car or plane. You will need to purchase a ski bag of good quality to protect the integrity of the binding mechanism. You want to avoid road dirt or salt entering and affecting the safety features of your bindings. It is always a good idea to have the ski shop adjust and verify your bindings before starting to ski on the first day of your ski holidays. Ski bags, along with protecting your equipment, will also be a place that you can put extra socks, hats, gloves and other non-breakable items as there is always room to do so.

• Last word of advice put your socks, gloves and hat in a plastic bag so it doesn't get wet, on the way to the ski area. Boots go into a boot bag along with other essentials, tooth paste, shaving cream, and ski goggles (so they don't get squashed) because you will always want to take your boot bag with you on the plane. If your ski bag and luggage are lost, you can always hire skis, but your own boots are difficult to replace.

• Your clothes and kit will go into a backpack, the size and shape is a personal thing, but you need a good one with dorsal support and pockets on the side. This leaves your hands free and you will need them. Make sure that all bags and pack have the same identifying mark (like a flag or patch or even a badge of your old school) and all your contact info sewn in the material and in plain view around the handles or pick up straps.

• At the airport: Best bet is to get a trolley and wheel your stuff over to the ticket counter, take a stretchy tie-down strap with hooks on both ends - this will help keep things in place on the caddy and comes in handy for a lot of things.

• At the ski area: After you have taken all your ski gear out of the ski bag have it checked at the local ski shop and arrange to pick it up in the morning if work needs to be done on the skis. Don't forget to take your boots as the ski technicians can't adjust your bindings without them. The fun part is carrying your skis over your shoulder in a way that everyone thinks you're a real "œski pro"™.

• Carrying skis: Place your skis standing ski tips straight up, (Velcro straps on) and after looking behind you swing the tails of your skis behind you. Bring your skis to a somewhat horizontal position with the toe piece front part of your binding behind your shoulder. Let the skis rest on the shoulder with the tails at an angle that allows them to be over your head with the tips pointed down in front of you! You will carry your ski poles together in the other hand. Make sure that every time you turn around; be sure there is no one behind you that could be hurt.

• Now that you know how to do it be very careful around others that may not.

• Mike Beaudet, a former Colorado native, also known as 'Megeve Mike,' is the founder/Director of Ski Pros Megeve, a "œvery private American ski school" in Megeve, the French Alps, at the foot of Mt. Blanc, just a short one hour drive from Geneva International Airport.