

Skiing Simplified: Right, Left and Down

Right Left and Down

The purpose of this document is to define three new skiing terms: **right**, **left** and **down**. When we think of skiing as a series of turns, **right** and **left** are the **transitions** between turns and “**down**” is the **turn**. This document could be called “Skiing Simplified – Right, Left and Down”. Over the sixty years I have been skiing, most of the big changes have happened in the transition between turns. In the **down** or **turn** part we are either slowing down or accelerating and in my opinion those techniques have not changed much over the years. I like to divide the **transitions** into **right** and **left** because these days I like to think “**right** on the right foot and **left** on the left foot” in **transition**.

Right on the right foot, left on the left in transition

Gravity tells you when to move across your skis or change feet. Some of my readers are very interested in slowing down, some in speeding up, and some in both. All these things are done when the skis are being pointed **down** in relation to gravity or the fall line. Here we are focused on when they are pointed **left** or **right** in the **transition**. So, whether you want to slow down or speed up, you do the same thing in the transition: you move across your skis changing feet and edges to steer right on the right foot and left on the left foot. If you have been slowing down in the **turn**, then you need to change feet to go **right** on the right foot and **left** on the left. If you have been accelerating in the **turn**, you changed feet earlier to use gravity by skiing on both skis through the turn, but because of the change in the feel of gravity you still need to move across your skis to steer **right** with the right foot and **left** with the left foot in **transition**.

Gravity tells you when to begin the transition

When you want to slow down you use gravity. Use gravity to slow down by moving up into the terrain and away from gravity, so you do not feel it. When the feeling of gravity comes back because of the **turn**, it tells us when to begin the transition. In other words, the change in pressure (forces in the turn (gravity, momentum and center forces) especially gravity) tells us when the turn is ended. So, we end the turn by moving over our feet or changing feet. For example: when you want to slow on your left foot, it is much easier to do if you are already on your **left** foot in **transition** (You just use gravity and your ski boot to turn the ski into the terrain without changing the direction of your momentum. In doing this you change edges and your edges crossing the momentum break your speed without fighting gravity). Then gravity will pull you into the **turn**. When you begin to feel it again it is time to move (across your skis in the direction of the turn) while it is easy to move. Similarly, when you want to speed up in a turn (for example: when you want to speed up on your right foot after a left transition) it is much easier to do if you push off the **left transition** foot into the fall line towards gravity (like we did to slow down, using gravity but not feeling it to speed up). Then when the feeling of gravity comes back, you move to transition: **right** on the right foot and **left** on the left in **transition**.

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Summary: Right Left and Down

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