

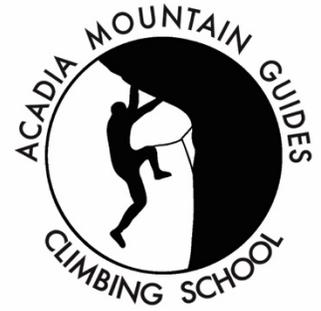
AIARE Level I Decision Making in Avalanche Terrain

Avalanche Education Course

Detailed Course Information

Description:

Our AIARE Level I avalanche education course provides a dynamic introduction to understanding avalanche activity. The course combines an interactive classroom with focused field sessions to help you learn how to make good decisions in avalanche terrain. You will learn a myriad of knowledge and skills including terrain recognition; types of avalanche problems; travel strategies; understanding human factors; the influence of weather; companion rescue skills including use of the transceiver, probe, and shovel; tour planning; snow pit testing and analysis; and use of the AIARE Decision Making Framework.



- **Who's it for?** Anyone who travels in potential avalanche terrain – skiers, snowshoers, climbers, or snowmobilers.
- **How we go?** Participants may take this course on backcountry skis, split board, or snowshoes.
- **Where do we go?** Most courses utilize terrain on or near Mt. Washington and the northern Presidential Range.
- **Why go with AMG?** Acadia Mountain Guides is New England's original and most experienced AIARE provider and is led by IFMGA Mountain Guide Jon Tierney. Many well-known New England avalanche educators first started with an AMG course. Our curriculum meets and exceeds the AIARE Level 1 curriculum.
- **Pre-requisites:** Fitness, clothing, and equipment to ski or hike up to 8 miles round trip with a 10-pound pack. If skiing or riding, you should be advanced enough to ski ungraded intermediate terrain at major northeast ski resorts safely.



The course will help you to answer these questions better:

***Where is the danger? When is it dangerous? How is it trending?
Should we go on? What do I do if caught in an avalanche?***

Starting with either an interactive online classroom or an in-person classroom, you will learn about what creates an avalanche-prone slope, where they may occur, red flag snowpack and weather observations, how to interpret and work with the "human factor," and elements of preparation and tour planning. We will then head outside onto the snow to begin working on terrain recognition, assessing snowpack layers and interphases, practicing travel techniques to improve safety margins, and practice rescue skills, including the use of avalanche transceivers, probing techniques, strategic shoveling, and rescue organization. The final day will consist of a more extended tour focused on identifying avalanche terrain, evaluating snowpack layers, applying and interpreting necessary snowpit tests, and a real-life rescue scenario, all while developing essential tools to make smart route-finding decisions. Throughout the course, you will have the opportunity to "pick the brain" of guides who have spent many years skiing and climbing in the mountains all over the world.

Tuition

\$500.00 – includes AIARE L1 text hardcopy and PDF, AIARE Field Book, beacon, probe and shovel, and no hidden fees.

Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School

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228 Main Street • Bar Harbor • ME

AcadiaMountainGuides.com • AlpenglowGear.com

AMGA & PCIA ACCREDITED CLIMBING SCHOOL



2023 Sample Itinerary

Acadia Mountain Guides *Standard In-person* course is a three day/24-hour course. This course follows our historical model of AIARE instruction with an afternoon and evening of in-person classroom instruction on day one and the morning of day two, followed by an afternoon field experience. Day three is a full field day in which we aim to access avalanche terrain. Each day this course will meet at the designated classroom and begin from there.

Sample Itinerary

- **Day 1 (3:30 PM - 9:00 PM);** The three-day standard program begins at 3:30 PM to allow travel or a day of fun on day 1 for an in-person class at the Quality Inn Conference Room on Route 2 in Gorham, NH unless otherwise noted. You are welcome to bring food and drink (an adult beverage is ok). We will not take an extended dinner break. Ends at 9:00 PM. Introductions, complete registration paperwork. Introduction to major topics; terrain, avalanche problems, human factors, planning and preparation.
- **Day 2 & 3 (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM);** Meet to review tour plans and decision-making framework. Travel/work on companion rescue scenarios, terrain selection, weather and snowpack observations, and travel techniques. At the end of the day, we meet to debrief the day and course. Typically, the third day is a more extended tour in which we apply the knowledge obtained throughout the course.

About the American Institute of Avalanche Research and Education

AIARE courses are recognized across the country and are consistent with the international standards and recording methods. AIARE instructors participate in annual training and network continuously with each other to learn about the latest information in avalanche science. Courses flow sequentially regardless of where you take your class. AIARE courses teach you a way of thinking about snow travel rather than a protocol-based approach to learning. Save lives through education

Learning Objectives

At the end of the AIARE 1 course, the student should be able to:

- Develop a plan for travel in avalanche terrain
- Demonstrate the ability to identify avalanche terrain
- Recognize red flag weather and snowpack factors
- Effectively use *The AIARE Risk Management Framework* to make terrain choices in a group setting
- Implement travel techniques
- Demonstrate effective companion rescue.

Lodging and Food

Acadia Mountain Guides has partnered with [Quality Inn, Gorham New Hampshire](#) to offer lodging right at the same venue as the classroom location. Quality Inn offers single/double occupancy rooms for \$99/night, an additional \$5/night will be charged for above double occupancy, room charge also includes continental breakfast.

Gorham has several options for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. All are within walking distance of the classroom.

We encourage you to join us there, we are delighted to continue conversing about snow, mountains and more even after the class has ended!

COVID-19 Requirement

Acadia Mountain Guides will be following the local and national CDC recommendations for COVID-19 mitigation.

Preparing for Your Course

Please complete the following as pre-course work and be prepared to discuss in class.

Online learning: The AIARE online learning component is excellent for getting a basic understanding of avalanche terrain, avalanche problems and how to recognize suspect areas. We strongly suggest looking at this in advance. Plan about 2 – 3 hours to work on the online content ahead of the class.

Step 1: Access the course at <http://avtraining.org>

Step 2: Create Account

Step 3: Launch online training and apply coupon code: **AMGA1**

Download and begin reviewing The AIARE 1 Student Manual - [CLICK HERE FOR THE DIGITAL MANUAL](#)

Case Studies:

- If you are a skier / boarder, please read the [Tunnel Creek Avalanche](#) case study.
- If you are a climber or hiker, please look over the local case study from [Tuckerman Ravine](#).

Be prepared to chat about the given case studies:

- What went wrong, could you see yourself making similar decisions, what may have changed to outcome?

Tour Planning:

- Tour planning is how you prepare to go into the back country.
- A tour plan is generated by using the avalanche bulletin, combined with maps (both hard copy and electronic versions) and a weather forecast to understand how the weather will influence your plan.
- It is easy to create reliable computer/phone-based tour plans to bring to the backcountry. You should always have a hard map and compass.
- Your tour plan should give you an idea of the vertical gain, the distance, compass bearings, run options, areas to be careful of. Attached is a sample tour plan template.
- Electronic tour planning is great, but you need to understand some basics as well. We will review tour planning basics in class but keep in mind it is not a navigation class. Please bring a compass, ideally with a base plate.
- We will be doing some sample tour planning during the course. It is helpful if you are able to bring a laptop computer. We suggest downloading the following programs and apps which are useful for digital mapping:

To your laptop: [Caltopo](#)

To your smartphone: the mapping apps onX Backcountry, Avenza, Caltopo, Gaia and the Windy app for weather.

Tour planning resources:

- <https://caltopo.com/map.html#l=38.8,-98.4&z=5&b=mbt>
- <https://www.google.com/earth/>
- <https://www.gaiagps.com/>
- <https://www.stockalpine.com/posts/google-earth-gaia-gps.html>
- <http://www.mountainschoolnews.com/2010/04/route-planning-how-to.html>

Inclusions

- AIARE Level I Student Manual
- AIARE *Rite in the Rain* field notebook
- AIARE Online Pre-Course Preparation
- Beacon, probe, and shovel for use during the course
- Acadia Mountain Guides avalanche decision-making field card
- Professionally guided by AMGA trained or certified ski guides.

Exclusions

- Transportation to/from classroom venue
- Trailhead parking fees if any
- Transportation to/from trailheads
- Evening beverages / pub visits
- Lodging / Meals
- Instructor / Guide Gratuities

Parking and / or Single Ride Lift Fee

We seek to find the best snow and learning conditions possible for each course and to provide different venues for each field day. If we travel to the west side of Mount Washington a nominal parking fee may be charged at the Cog Railway

base station parking area. Occasionally we utilize lift access at Wildcat to access terrain and this may require purchasing a single ride lift pass.

Suggested Optional Texts

- **Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain, 3rd Edition. Bruce Tremper**
 - This edition features a wholly new chapter in which Bruce pulls all the pieces together to create an organized, step-by-step system for making decisions off, and on, the mountain.
- **Avalanche Essentials: A Step-by-Step System for Safety & Survival, Bruce Tremper**
 - This is the companion to Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain the bestselling avalanche text in the U.S - with easy-to-understand safety tips and checklists to help anyone stay safer in avalanche terrain. It is a small, take-along resource to reference in the field and assist decision making. Winter athletes don't necessarily want to be snow scientists but playing in avalanche country does require basic knowledge of the risks in order to stay safe.
- **Thinking, Fast and Slow, Daniel Kahneman**
 - This book explores the ways we think and make decisions under pressure, we find it valuable as we are exploring the idea of leading a group or being an active part of decision making in the backcountry.

Books may be ordered from Alpenglow [\(207\) 866-7562](tel:2078667562) or online at AlpenglowGear.com. at the time of your registration.

Course Topics

The following is a summary of topics presented. The classroom presentations are mostly instructor led presentations and discussion then reinforced by a variety of videos and case studies – many of actual incidents.

Introduction to Avalanche Phenomena

- Types and characteristics of avalanche problems
- Avalanche motion and classification
- The mountain snowpack: an introduction to metamorphism and layering
- The influence of weather and time

Observations and Information Gathering

- Avalanche danger scale
- Field observation techniques
- Snowpack tests: layering, compression test, extended column tests
- Avalanche danger factors or "Red Flags"
- Observation checklist

Trip Planning and Preparation

- Avalanche terrain recognition, assessment, and selection
- Route finding and travel techniques
- Decision making and Human Factors
- Basic familiarization with common mapping software, map use and navigation
- Creating a tour plan

Companion Rescue and Equipment

- Rescue organization
- Use of transceiver, probe and shovel
- Strategic shoveling
- Basic care of injury

Meet your instructors

Our courses are instructed by a team of professionals – all of whom have been vetted and approved through AIARE. Each course will have at least one instructor per six students. Occasionally we also have interns and guide assistants who have been through AIARE 1 and 2 courses and are there to provide additional assistance which allows us to get even more accomplished.

[Visit our team page to learn more about your instructors!](#)

Tipping your instructor

People often ask if it's appropriate to tip the instructor. Tipping is never expected but always greatly appreciated. This is your course. The more you let your instructor know what your needs are, the more he or she can help you. If you don't understand, ask questions. If you have special interests, let your instructor know. If your instructor has provided you with a great experience and shared his or her knowledge and joy of the mountain world with you, a thank-you note or gratuity is always well received. If they have not, we would like to know about it.

What Gear Do You Need - Personal Equipment Checklist * = rental available

Participants receive a 20% discount on any avalanche related purchases made between registration and seven days after the course (15% thereafter for lifetime). Avalanche gear will be available for purchase at the course as well. (online at AlpenglowGear.com)

Ski Clothing; (your normal backcountry skiing kit w/ added insulation for standing around and learning)

- Soft shell jacket
- Soft shell pants
- 1 mid weight base layer
- 1 light top or similar base layer
- Base layers
- 2 prs of ski socks
- Heavy gloves
- light gloves (soft shell, wind stopper)
- Ski hat/helmet
- Down coat/puffy/insulation layer
- Goggles
- Sunglasses
- Balaclava

Lunch Food, Snacks and Drinks (as desired);

- Cliff bars/energy bars
- Jerky
- Mixed nuts
- Chocolate
- Hot chocolate/tea/coffee/etc.

In the field

- Touring skis, poles, boots, splitboard, or snowshoes.
- Probe, transceiver, shovel*
- Skin wax glob stopper
- Skins*
- Ski pack (30 L or bigger)
- Thermos
- Compass with baseplate
- Sunscreen / lip balm

Risk and Rescue

Enjoying the outdoors necessitates a certain degree of risk-taking. You are participating in this trip and entering the winter backcountry environment at your own risk. You are choosing to engage in an activity in which participants have been injured and killed. While such accidents are rare, they may occur at any time and be out of our control. Our guides draw upon solid guide education coupled with extensive experience to manage significant hazards inherent to mountain travel. Some of the hazards that can lead to injury or death associated with this trip include but are not limited to extreme weather, demanding physical travel, avalanche, vehicle transportation and falls or collisions while skiing or snowboarding. Please be sure that you are fully aware of such risks. It is our goal to interpret the environmental, situational and group variables and to make educated decisions to minimize dangers to you while at the same time providing an enjoyable and memorable experience.

Self-reliance in the face of adversity is expected on the part of the wilderness traveler entering the wilderness. Rescue is not automatic. For all practical purposes, our party is alone and must depend upon our own resources for self-rescue and be equipped for an extended emergency. Cellular phones and radios should not be relied upon in an emergency.

Finally, this is a group trip and good expedition behavior is critical. Participants are asked to stay with the group until everyone has safely exited the backcountry.

Medical and Rescue Concerns

No one starts out the day expecting to get hurt in the backcountry. However, despite all we know and all we do, accidents can still happen. At AMG, we take your medical care seriously. Like many guide services our leaders are trained as Wilderness First Responders, many are WEMTs. Additionally, all our regular employees participate in periodic medical skills review with our owner Jon who is a flight paramedic and lead instructor in wilderness medicine. Additionally on courses traveling to remote areas such as Katahdin, Chic Chocs or Mount Washington you can expect our guides to have pain and sedation medications available if needed.

Summit or Bust

The goals and objectives of this program are to learn avalanche skills. It is unlikely that we will pursue any summits during the course. Commonly we ascend into areas around Tuckerman Ravine, Gulf of Slide and ravines adjacent to the cog railway. We will make every reasonable effort to reach these areas, however, extreme weather, avalanche conditions, inadequate personal fitness, difficult terrain, or park weather / travel closures may make it impossible to achieve our desired terrain objectives.

Reservation and Payment

A 100% deposit is required for registration. [Click here to register!](#)

Cancellation

When you book a course with Acadia Mountain Guides you are agreeing to our cancellation policy. Please realize that if your travel does not go according to plan in any way and for any reason, we are unable to provide credits or refunds outside of what is described below. We strongly recommend that you purchase trip insurance to protect your activity purchase against unforeseeable circumstances which include but are not limited to:

- Anticipation of Inclement Weather
- Flight and Travel Delays and Conditions
- Personal or work schedule changes
- Injury or Illness of self or family member

If you cancel more than 21 days in advance you may put the deposit toward a future course or receive a refund of 50% of your deposit. Cancellations made within twenty-one (21) days of program forfeit full tuition rate. Alternatively, if you find a replacement you will receive a 100% refund. A full refund will be given if Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School must cancel the course.

Covid Specific Cancellations:

If you are symptomatic or found positive for COVID, have been exposed to COVID + person(s) in the past 14 days you may request to be either rescheduled or receive a full refund.

Minimum Registration Requirements

A minimum of four (4) participants is needed to run this program and there is a maximum of twelve (12). The decision to run the program will be made three weeks prior to the start date. In the case of low registration, you will have the options of joining another trip, receiving a refund or possibly paying an additional amount to allow the trip to run with low numbers.

Have a group?

Are you part of a college organization, ski club, etc.? We are happy to schedule a customized course for organizations, small groups, and individuals through New England and Eastern Canada. Of course, if you would like to schedule a course or trip in Iceland, Colorado, or Japan, etc. we would be very pleased to work with you.

Acadia Mountain Guides Difference

Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School is certified through the American Mountain Guide Association and the Professional Climbing Instructor Association. Acadia Mountain Guides actively supports furthering their guide's development throughout their career. That means our guides are constantly taking steps to progress their skills and will provide you with an exceptional experience. AMG is also a proponent of helping clients reach their goals, whether it's having an epic day in the mountains or gaining skills to get into other terrain, Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School can get you there!