



AVALANCHE LEVEL I SEMINAR

The MAS [Avalanche Level 1 Seminar](#) provides a complete introduction to the avalanche phenomenon, avalanche terrain, decision making, and rescue. This is an ideal first course for those new to travel in avalanche terrain and a great review or upgrade for anyone who has some experience or prior training but feels they need a skills "tune-up." The Level 1 is designed as a stand-alone course for backcountry travellers; it also serves as an introduction to avalanches and is a lead in to the AIARE Level 2 Course for those who wish to progress.

Participants on a Level 1 Course can expect a minimum of about six hours of classroom instruction and about 10 to 12 hours of field instruction in the following subjects:

- Types of avalanches
- Characteristics of avalanches
- An introduction to how avalanches form and release
- Avalanche terrain
- Trip planning and preparation
- Travel techniques
- Decision making
- Avalanche rescue

LOCATION

[Bear Valley](#), CA (elevation 7093 ft.) in the central Sierra between Tahoe and Yosemite approximately 2 hours east of Stockton along [Highway 4](#).

PREREQUISITES

- Good physical fitness
- Ability to hike and travel on snow via snowshoes or skis (randonee, AT or telemark). MAS will provide snowshoes if needed.
- [Avalanche Awareness Lecture](#) recommended

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Understand how weather, terrain, and snowpack affect avalanche hazards
- Learn and practice search techniques with avalanche transceivers
- Understand protocol for efficient search and rescue of avalanche victims
- Gain skills to analyze the snow pack and perform stability tests
- Identify human factors which contribute to avalanche hazard
- Learn how to choose safe routes in avalanche-potential terrain

MEETING TIME & PLACE

Day 1 starts at 9 AM in the MAS office in Bear Valley, CA. Day 2 & 3 will likely start a bit earlier depending on conditions and group plan. Be prepared for both indoor lectures and outside sessions each day please arrive each morning prepared.

LODGING OPTIONS

Although MAS does not provide lodging here are some options and discounts for MAS course participants:

[Bear Valley Lodge](#): 10% off while taking an MAS course + 10% AAA discount (20% total)
(209) 753-2327 • www.bearvalleylodge.com

[Bear Valley Vacation Rentals](#): Condo and house rentals in the Bear Valley Village
(209) 753-2334 • www.bearvalleyvacationrentals.com

[Dorrington & Arnold Lodges](#): 30 minutes driving time from Bear Valley (slightly more affordable)
www.bearvalley.com/plan/lodging/lodges.asp

EQUIPMENT LIST ON REVERSE SIDE

AVALANCHE FIELD COURSE EQUIPMENT LIST

SKIERS

- Boots*: high-top waterproof leather or plastic Nordic boots; plastic randonee or light alpine boots
- Skis*: metal edged skis are recommended. Modern waxable telemark skis, alpine touring, or nordic backcountry skis with patterned bases.
- Bindings*: either 3-pin, cable, NNN BC, randonee or alpine bindings with touring adapters. Make sure bindings are secure and fit boots properly. Check your binding screws.
- Climbing skins*: close to the width of the skis' waist. Skis with an aggressive pattern may not require skins. Available for rent through the MAS office by advanced reservation only.

SNOWSHOERS

- Sturdy waterproof leather hiking boots or snowboard boots; "Moon boots" and Sorel's, although adequate, are a bit heavy and sloppy for snowshoeing.
- Snowshoes (modern 22-32 inch snowshoes are usually big enough). M.A.S. will provide if needed.

EQUIPMENT

- Poles*: telescoping probe poles are the best, but regular ski poles will suffice.
- Waterproof gaiters may not be needed depending on your boot and pant system
- Avalanche beacon (457 MHz), probe pole, and shovel (MAS will provide these if you don't have them)
- Snow study kit with slope meter, crystal card, and magnifying glass (optional)
- Day pack to hold extra clothing, lunch, and avalanche safety equipment.

CLOTHING

- 1 pair synthetic liner socks and two pair heavier synthetic or wool blend socks, hiking style.
- Long underwear top and bottom. Polypropylene or some other synthetic is most desirable.
- Warm pants: tights or expedition polypropylene or similar weight.
- Warm shirt: expedition polypropylene or light fleece type.
- Fleece jacket, light down or synthetic fill jacket.
- Good quality rain/wind waterproof/breathable jacket and pants.
- Warm hat, sun hat, and neck gaiter
- Warm winter gloves: an extra pair during stormy weather is recommended
- Casual clothing and slippers for back at the farm

ETC...

- Sunglasses and goggles (very useful in foul weather)
- Toiletries, personal medications and first aid supplies you know you might need (e.g. moleskin, ibuprofen)
- Heavy-duty sunscreen and lip protection
- Two 1 liter water bottles
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Bathrobe & slippers for hallways (BaseCamp lodging)
- Camera and film (optional)
- Writing material for taking notes
- Two lunches and snacks

MAS PROVIDES

- Avalanche safety equipment (beacon, shovel & probe)
- First aid kit, repair and contingency supplies
- Professional instruction
- AIARE (American Institute for Avalanche Research & Education) Level I course material, handouts & curriculum

* gear rentable from a mountaineering shop

