



# CANADIAN OLYMPIC ACTIVITY CHALLENGE



## FREESTYLE SKIING

Doing tricks on skis dates back to the early 1900s in Europe. However, the sport really took off when it came to the USA in the 1960s. Freestyle skiing, nicknamed “hotdogging”, was popular for its wild tricks and jumps. Freestyle skiing was a demonstration sport in the Calgary 1988 Olympic Winter Games, and became a full medal sport in 1992. Freestyle has five different events, four of which are judged based on technique.

The first one is moguls in which athletes ski over large bumps at a fast pace, testing their speed, technique, and jumps. Each of these plays a part in an overall score that determines the placing. The aerial competition is like acrobatics for skiers. The athlete will go off a steep jump, doing flips, twists, and tricks before landing. Points are awarded based on their takeoff, form while in the air and landing.

Halfpipe and slopestyle made their Olympic debut at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games. Halfpipe athletes ski a 150m x 22m pipe while performing a series of tricks. Slopestyle athletes make their way through and over a course comprised of a variety of obstacles including rails, jumps and other terrain park features. Both halfpipe and slopestyle athletes are judged on how much air they get off jumps, the degree of difficulty of the tricks and how well they perform their tricks. The winner has the overall highest score.

In ski cross, skiers race down a snowy course with jumps and turns. Four skiers race head-to-head to see who can get to the finish line the fastest. The top skiers then proceed to the next round. This continues until the best racers face off in the final.

Canada has won 18 Olympic medals, and is considered one of the strongest freestyle skiing countries in the world. In fact, Canada won 4 golds, 4 silvers and a bronze medal at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

Learn more about freestyle skiing at [www.freestylecanada.ski](http://www.freestylecanada.ski).



# FREESTYLE SKIING TRIVIA

## HIGHLIGHTS



- Alexandre Bilodeau became the first freestyle skier to defend his Olympic gold in 2014. He was also the first Canadian to ever win an Olympic gold in Canada at the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. Approximately 22,000 people crowded into BC Place Stadium to watch his medal presentation.
- Canadian Dara Howell was the first woman to ever win an Olympic gold medal in slopestyle.
- Ski Ballet was a former competitive freestyle skiing discipline until 2000. It involved choreographed routines of flips, rolls, leg crossings, jumps, and spins performed on a smooth slope. Today, many slopestyle tricks are inspired by ski ballet movements.
- In the summer months' freestyle skiers train on water ramps, landing in swimming pools. Summer training also includes cross-training, trampoline work and various gymnast routines.

## FEATURED ATHLETE



### MIKAËL KINGSBURY

OLYMPIAN, SOCHI 2014

When Mikaël Kingsbury went skiing as a young boy, he was always going over bumps and jumps and weaving between trees. It wasn't long before he started doing freestyle skiing. Now at age 25, he is one of the best moguls skier in the world. Freestyle skiers compete on the World Cup circuit, a demanding series of races where they earn points at each event based on their results. Not only is Mikaël the reigning World Cup champion, he has won the World Cup for six straight years. His dominance is like no other skier, having won 42 World Cup races and an Olympic silver medal in Sochi 2014.

Learn more about Mikaël Kingsbury [mikaelkingsbury.ca](http://mikaelkingsbury.ca) or at [olympic.ca](http://olympic.ca)


# FREESTYLE SKIING ACTIVITIES

Described below are freestyle skiing daily physical activities that can be used in the classroom and gym. Have fun!

## SUPER STRENGTH FREESTYLE CHALLENGE

Freestyle skiers need exceptional strength and agility. In the off-season, they whip themselves into shape, focusing on core and leg strength, and agility. These are some dryland workouts that freestyle athletes do to build strength and agility. How much can you improve in a week?

 **Participants** : Student

 **Space** : classroom, hallway, or gym

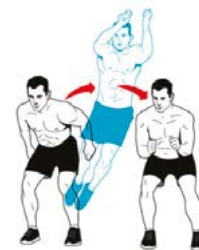
 **Equipment** : Cones (or chalk or tape)

### SET-UP:

**Wall sit challenge** - Stand with your back against the wall.



**Lateral jump challenge** - Spread-out so that you are at least three-arm's length away from anyone. Place two cones at least 70cm apart (or make a line with chalk or tape).



### ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

#### Wall sit challenge

- Gradually lower your back down the wall, bending your legs at the knees.
- When your legs are bent at the knees in a 90° angle, stop and hold the position.
- The challenge is to hold the position for as long as possible.
- Have students try this every day for a week, recording their best times.

#### Lateral jump challenge


- The challenge is to laterally jump over the area marked by the cones as many times as you can in 45 seconds.
- Be sure to count each time your feet touch the ground.
- Have students try this every day for a week, recording their personal bests.


### ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:


- Reduce the time to 30 seconds if students find laterally jumping too challenging or increase the time if students want to further challenge themselves.

# SLOPESTYLE CIRCUIT

Slopestyle athletes require balance, strength and creativity to navigate a series of big air jumps and rails. This activity builds strength and balance while allowing you to be creative with your movements and course design.

 **Participants:** 2-4 equaled numbered teams

 **Space:** Large open field area or gym

 **Equipment:** Hula hoops (or tape of chalk to make jump sites), cones and benches (or rope).

## SET-UP:

- Setup a slopestyle course by arranging hula hoops as the jump sites (or tape of chalk to make jump sites) and benches (or ropes) as rails. One jump site should be for vertical jumping. The other jump site should be for horizontal jumping (i.e., standing long jump). Establish a “start” and “finish” point. Designate a start/finish line.

## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- Teams line up behind the start/finish line.
- On the start command, the first students must run to the vertical jump site, and jump as high as they can. Students then run to the bench (or rope), and side shuffle across its length, simulating grinding a rail. They finish by running to the horizontal jump site, and jumping as far forward from a standing position as they can.
- Once the first students complete the course, they turnaround and sprint back to start/finish line and tag their team’s second runner. The relay continues until all of the team has been through the course once.




## ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:


- Add cones before or after jump sites to prompt a “switch”. For example, once students reach a cone they must run backwards to the next station. The switch can be any movement (e.g., hopping, crawling, etc.).
- Add more jump sites or “rails”. Allow students to create their own slopestyle park.
- Groups can try each others’ parks.
- Encourage students to be creative with their movements. Example: students perform a 360 at the vertical jump station or jump backwards at the horizontals jump station.
- Combine mini versions of moguls circuit and slopestyle circuit.

# JUMPS & BUMPS MOGUL CIRCUIT

Moguls skiing requires speed and creativity. The athletes must quickly navigate the bumps or moguls, but must also complete creative tricks in the air at each of the two jumps. This activity builds strength and agility, and lets the students experience what moguls athletes go through on-snow.

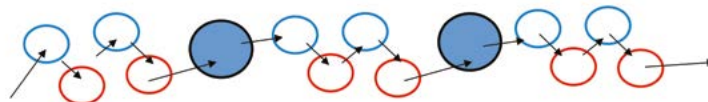
 **Participants:** Student or teams

 **Space:** Large open field area or gym

 **Equipment:** Hula hoops, Bosu balls (or chalk or tape to mark space for “jump zone”)

## SET-UP:

- Setup up a mogul course by staggering four hula hoops leading up to the first Bosu ball.
- Stagger another four hula hoops leading up the second Bosu ball.
- Add one more set of four staggered hula hoops. You can use chalk or tape instead of hula hoops or Bosu balls.
- Clearly establish a start/finish line.



## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- The student or teams line up behind the start line.
- On the starting command, the students hop diagonally from hula hoop to hula hoop (simulating moguls skiing) and then jump onto and off the Bosu ball, simulating a jump site.
- Once a student finishes the circuit, they must run back to the end of the line and the next student must start the circuit, like a relay.
- **NOTE:** It is not recommended to use a Bosu ball within a gym due to the risk of it sliding when jumped on. Within a gym setting, the teacher should mark the jump site with either tape or cones.

## ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:

- Move hula hoops further apart.
- Time each student or relay group.
- Award points based on time and “best trick” of jump. Tricks might include a 360, star jump, or grabs.

# BRINGING IT TO THE CLASSROOM

Freestyle skiers compete on the World Cup circuit, a demanding series of races where they earn points at each event based on their results. Use the Internet to learn what countries and cities have World Cup Freestyle events. Draw a postcard from one of these places. Pretend you went to the event to cheer on the Canadian freestyle skiing team. On the back of the card, write a letter describing the event and how the team did.

## INSTANT ACTIVITY:

Only have a minute of classroom time to get up and be active? This activity will get the heart pumping. Jump Ups give freestyle skiers the explosive leg strength they need to ski over the moguls and jumps.

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Jump up, bringing your knees up to your waist. Land with your feet shoulder width apart. How many Jump Ups can you do in 30 seconds?