

# OENZ 4 Day Intro to Alpine and Avalanche Course Outline

**7:30am - Meet your group and Instructor/s** at “Darfield Bakery” in Darfield, a small town 30 mins from Christchurch on SH73 (good food and good coffee).

*Note: if you're travelling from the West Coast please contact us to arrange our instructor to meet you in Castle Hill Village instead.*

## **Day 1 Overview**

Today is all about getting to grips with the essential skills and equipment that allows you to travel in the mountains safely.

### **08:30am - Arrive at Mt Cheeseman Ski area.**

- Gear check & hand out OENZ supplied gear
- Packing and selecting gear appropriate for use in the NZ mountains
- Fitting crampons to boots
- Avalanche transceiver checks

### **Ice axe and walking techniques**

- Holding an ice axe
- Kicking Steps/forming steps with boots
- Primary anchor/self-belay (stopping a slide before it starts)
- Step cutting

### **12:30 – Lunch**

- Walking in crampons
- Flat foot technique
- Front pointing
- Mixed technique
- Self-arresting (stopping yourself when sliding using your ice axe)

**5:30-6pm - Arrive at our lodge in Arthurs pass (45 mins from ski area carpark).**

## **Evening**

- Cook your dinner at the lodge or head down to the pub for food and a drink.
- How to plan an alpine trip. Guide books, maps and the NZ mountain grading system
- Make a plan for day 2 - Choose an objective.

## **Day 2 Overview**

Today our aim is to consolidate our new skills by putting it all together and attempting to climb to a peak or high point in the Craigieburn range. Please note the word “attempt” as the mountains will decide whether we are successful in summiting and most climbers say that a 50% success rate is good.

**6:30-7am Breakfast (bring your own as nothing is open this early in Arthurs Pass)**

**9-930am – Arrive at Broken River Ski area carpark**

- Access snow via track and ski field or Allan’s basin.
- Build/talk through emergency shelters in the mountains
- Make our way up using safe travel/avalanche avoidance techniques

**12:30pm Lunch (along the way)**

- Get to our highest point (maybe a summit)
- Cover any skills that need refinement on the way down

**5:30-6pm - Arrive at our lodge in Arthurs pass (45 mins from ski area carpark).**

## Day 3 Overview

**6:30-7am Breakfast (bring your own as nothing is open this early in Arthurs Pass)**

**08:30am - Arrive at Mt Cheeseman Ski area or Broken River ski area**

- Gear check
- How to pack and carry avalanche and alpine equipment.
- Check avalanche transceivers (before you go)
- Assembling and using a probe- Spiral probing
- Avalanche transceiver search practice

**12:30ish – Lunch (out in the field)**

- Avalanche scenario search (single burial- single searcher)
- Identifying Avalanche terrain. Terrain - Angle, Aspect, Altitude Trigger points, Traps
- Observations. Weather and snow pack – Recent activity, Cracking/whooping, rapid loading, wind, temperature

**2:30pm – 3:30 pm** Back at Vehicles, drive to Arthurs Pass lodge

**4:00-6:00 pm** – Theory session, PowerPoint

### Evening

- Cook your dinner at lodge or head down to the pub for food and a drink.

## Day 4 Overview

**6:30-7:30am Breakfast (bring your own as nothing is open this early in Arthurs Pass)**

**7:30-8am – pack and clean lodge.**

- Check avalanche forecast, talk through implications and considerations based on this forecast and previous days observations.
- Trip planning –plan our day

**9:30-10:00 am – Arrive at practical training location**

- Make our way up using safe travel & avalanche avoidance techniques
  - Spacing
  - Visual contact
  - Islands of safety
  - Safe travel routes
  - Communication
  - Escape routes

**12:30pm Lunch (along the way)**

- Avalanche search practice
- Rescue digging
- Team digging scenario (deep burial)
- Full Avalanche rescue scenarios- multiple burials, multiple searchers

**3:30-4:30pm – Back at vehicles, time to say good bye**

*Note: form the ski area carpark it is approx. 1.5-2hrs back to Christchurch (we usually get back into Christchurch between 5:00-6:00pm)*

*\*Please note that this is just a guide to how the course normally run and your instructor may run the course in a different order to best fit in with local conditions and the abilities or the group.*