

SKIING'S WORDS¹

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Skiers have their own language. Trying to communicate with skiers can be equally difficult as communicating with computer technologists or political antagonists. To advance understanding, I supply skiing definitions below.

APRÈS SKI: From the French. An after-skiing meeting place, that is, a bar, where skiers socialize and tell about their skiing exploits. At après ski, people discuss their skiing with those who were not present and therefore cannot challenge the truth of narrators' presentations. An example: a skier, perhaps from Scotland, might say: "I skied through the trees of Birnam Wood, a murderous path," not revealing that he or she entered the woods by mistake following prophesies of witches the skier met when entering the path. The skier might also not reveal that he/she walked from the expert trail through the woods onto a cleared green trail named Duncan's Beginners' Slope and skied to the base on the green slope.

ART GALLERY: A place where after skiing or on rain days skiers go to look at art, including paintings, woodworks and other upscale things to buy. At art galleries, skiers find unduly expensive pieces to which they form instant attachments. They regret if they buy the claimed museum quality art (because of its price and uncertain provenance) and if they do not (because they want the work). Airlines being what they are, it pays to negotiate not only art prices, but also shipping.

AVANT SKI: Before skiing. People can participate in *Avant Skiing* when they fail to timely leave *Après Ski* venues.

BUMPS: 1. Same as Moguls. 2. Moguls are a series of bumps on a ski slope formed when skiers push snow into mounds when making sharp turns. Artistic and creative ski resorts make Moguls to lure allegedly advanced skiers onto dangerous paths. Once formed, Moguls grow as skiers follow similar paths around snow mounds deepening indentations or grooves. 3. Places on ski slopes conducive to falling. (See definition for "Terror.")

CARVED TURN: 1. A ski turning technique in which the skiers shift their ski edges from one side to the other. When edged, the side-cut geometry causes the ski to bend into an arc, and the ski naturally follows this arc shape to produce a turning motion. (Google definitions.) 2. A parallel turn where a skier manages to make a smooth arc. 3. If a skier making a *carved turn* skis into another skier, good skiing etiquette requires that after the skier completes his/her arc, the skier help the other skier up.

CELL PHONE: 1. A portable phone that is smarter than its user. Smart phones can be used for communications except answering telephone calls. When skiers' cell phones ring, the phones are invariably in a jacket pocket that they cannot find or timely unzip. See definition for "Ski Jacket."

CHAIR LIFT: 1. A motor-driven conveyor that can transport multiple skiers up a mountain, usually on bench seats hanging from a cable. The chairs from which skiers cannot escape until they reach the top of the ski run swing in cold, often extremely cold, blowing wind. 2. Chairlifts are safe *except* (a) when two or more people attempt to find a seat at the same spot on a chair, which occurs often; (b) when skiers unsuccessfully look back to see when their moving, turning chair (the chair on which they will have to sit) is coming; (c) when skiers remember that they did not detach their ski poles from their wrists just as they attempt to sit in a chair; (d) when the wind blows as the chair moves over an abyss; (e) when the electricity stops with the chair midway up the lift, nightfall is coming and a religious skier realizes that she cannot remain on the chair unchaperoned (this has happened); (f) when getting off the chair, a skier glides onto ice, grass or a completely horizontal or vertical exit path; (g) when a skier's clothing gets caught in the chair as the lift operator incredulously regards the twisting, then hanging, skier attached to the chair, but fails to stop the lift; (g) and when skiers exit a chair onto fallen skiers ahead (or afoot), who downloaded from a prior chair. 3. Skiers often drop items from chairlifts such as ski poles, cell phones and clothing onto ungroomed terrain below causing them to have to find challenging slopes to recover items.

CHUTE: 1. A steep, narrow super-black trail, which some skiers think that they can ski. Some skiers direct other skiers down Chutes, saying, "Follow me." See definition for "Ski Patrol."

CLAYTON AND SHERMAN ANTITRUST ACTS: Laws that were once enforced governing permissible competitive conduct in skiing and other industries. They prohibit mergers that lessen competition, monopolization in restraint of trade and certain discriminatory pricing. In skiing, a prime antitrust application occurred after Aspen Skiing acquired three of the four Aspen ski mountains. The courts prevented Aspen Skiing from ending its joint lift ticket arrangements with the fourth. If they were applied, the antitrust laws would govern the spate of recent ski resort mergers and joint ski area ticket arrangements, which exclude nearby competing ski areas. See definitions for "Epic Ski Pass" and "Ikon Ski Pass."

CONSIGNMENT SHOP: A store where skiers can purchase allegedly inexpensive used items that before entering the store that they didn't know they needed.

CREATIVITY: 1. Skiers' description of their skiing activities and abilities. See definition for "Après Ski." 2. Preferred definition: deleted as too political for this Skiing Dictionary.

CREDIT CARD: Useful for defined items herein, especially Consignment Shops and Infirmaries.

DEER VALLEY: What skiers think about when they are looking at *other* expensive, dried food at ski cafeteria lunch offerings. "A leisurely Deer Valley lunch followed by an afternoon's skiing is an experience that is truly hard to beat." (Inspired by the Oxford English Dictionary).

DOWNHILL SKIING: 1. A form of skiing where electricity takes skiers to the top of a mountain and gravity takes them down. Downhill skiing is to be preferred to Cross-Country Skiing, where going uphill and downhill are work.

EASY: A ski trail that a skier wants someone else to ski.

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EDGE: The side of skis, which skiers use to make beautiful turns or to press in order to stop. If skiers edge too much, see definition for “Fall.” Falling is more effective for stopping than edging except on steep mogul fields. On such fields skiers who fall may slide, backwards, to the bottom of the hill.

EPIC SKI PASS: A ski pass under which skiers can ski at 79 mountains for a single, seasonal price. These include Vail, Park City, Heavenly, Okemo, Whistler, Stowe, among others, but not Deer Valley or Killington. Ski pass participation may be encouraged by participating areas increasing their single lift ticket prices and providing reduced prorated prices under ski pass arrangements, but only for participating areas. See definition for “Clayton and Sherman Antitrust Acts.”

FALL: 1. To descend freely by the force of gravity (Merriam-Webster). 2. To leave an erect position suddenly and involuntarily. (*Id.*) Falling is distinguished from crashing. Crashing occurs when snowboarders come from uphill or out of the woods hitting skiers and when, without signaling, trees turn hitting skiers, leaving skiers on the ground.

FALL LINE: 1. An aptly named hypothetical line that goes most directly downhill, for example, the line down which water or a ball would travel driven by gravity absent impediments. Expert skiers and ski instructors follow the fall line; others *Panic* and *Traverse*. Because when they are traversing across mountains towards the woods, skiers must turn downhill crossing the fall line to stop their acceleration (see definition for “Traverse”), skiers must turn downhill and cross the fall line. See definitions for “Panic” and “Lessons.”

FOOD: A primary reason to ski. See definition for “Deer Valley.”

GET UP: What skiers are supposed to do (a) in the morning so that they can ski and (b) when they have been skiing, but are now lying face down in the snow without knowing how they got there. See definition for “Fall.”

GOGGLES: 1. Eyewear covering the eyes with protection and vents to prevent fogging. 2. Eyewear that fogs.

ICE: A hard, frozen snow surface on which it is difficult for skiers to slow down by turning. Eastern ski areas have ice. Western ski areas deny that they have ice.

IKON SKI PASS: A ski pass under which skiers can ski at 39 mountains for a single, seasonal price. These include Aspen, Deer Valley, Solitude, Taos, Killington, but not Park City or Okemo. Ski pass participation may be encouraged by participating areas increasing their single lift ticket prices and providing reduced prorated prices under ski pass arrangements, but only for participating areas. See definition for “Clayton and Sherman Antitrust Acts.”

INFIRMARY: See definitions for “Fall” and “Ice.” Also see definition for “Credit Card.”

JÄGERTEE: An Austrian *Après Ski* drink to be imbibed only after skiing unless one wants to induce added skiing courage and smoother turning mechanics. When consumed freely, *Jägertee* can enable skiers to go straight down the *fall line*. The Austrian Government describes *Jägertee*: as “One of the popular après-ski drinks...[which] will not fail to warm you on the slopes or at home.” If one enters a room in which *Jägertee* is served, the vapors clear nasal passages, but they sometimes fog eyesight. The drink includes: • 250 ml red wine • 250 ml tea • 250 ml spiced rum • 250 ml plum brandy, schnapps or any other liqueur to hand • 250 ml orange juice • 2 to 3 whole cloves • 1/4 of cinnamon stick • 2 lemon slices • Sugar (substitutes should work). *Jägertee* is made (according to Austria) by heating the tea, wine, rum, brandy, orange juice, spices, and lemons in a pot; letting it come to a gentle simmer for around five minutes; removing from heat; adding a little sugar [sucralose? Aspartame?] to taste. Austria says drink responsibly. The National Rifle Association says use assault weapons responsibly. *Jägertee* has an assault weapon wallop although this lexicographer does not know for a fact if the NRA said use assault weapons responsibly or if this or if *Jägertee* can be drunk responsibly.

LIFT TICKET: An easily lost, technologically advancing, proof of payment that allows skiers to use ski lifts. If lost, ski resorts often provide backup proofs of payment. These can also be lost. Lift tickets may be kept inside zipped ski jackets and become difficult to access or outside ski jackets and blow in skiers’ faces before they (both lift tickets and skiers’ faces) fall to the ground. Except when they don’t work, the most advanced lift tickets conveniently open ski gates by magic or magnetism regardless where skiers place *lift tickets*.

LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY: Legal statements of all who sell anything connected with skiing that they are not liable for anything at any time no matter what and that the Skier is. See definition for “Off Piste.”

MOGULS: 1. Same as “Bumps.” See definition above. 2. The term *moguls* is used instead of *bumps* by those who want to convey that they have attended good schools; those who ski in New England tournaments; those who take New England group lessons; and those who want to avoid prurient connotations of the word “bumps.”

MONEY: That which is skiers no longer possess after skiing, including the purchase of *lift tickets*, *ski jackets* and well-deserved *après skiing* wine and drink. See definitions for “Credit Card.” In Skiing economics see accelerator effect, whose definition is found in economic treatises.

OFF PISTE: Ski terrain that skiers find on their own. Law and medicine dictates that ski resorts should groom or at least mark Off Piste terrain. Therefore, ski resorts and Infirmaries incorporate *limitations of liabilities* on ski tickets and treatment forms.

PANIC: 1. Skiing the *fall line*. 2. Traversing to avoid skiing the *fall line*.

PARALLEL SKIING: 1. Skiing with skis parallel to each other at all times. 2. Snowboarding. See definitions for “Fall” and “Snowboard.”

POLES: 1. Metal sticks that attach skiers to the ground so that they cannot fall. (Skiers may not know that their poles can become unattached from the ground.) 2. Sticks skiers hold to prevent falling.

RAIN: 1. See definition for “Skiing Conditions – Spring Skiing.” 2. More recently, see definition for “Skiing Conditions – Winter Skiing.”

SEX: Definitions are found in unabridged dictionaries. If done in the snow, cause of frightful colds.

SIDE STEP: A call for help.

SIDE SLIP: A *side step* that doesn’t work.

SKIS: 1. Long boards allowing skiers to pursue a form of walking. 2. Long boards allowing skiers to pursue a form of sliding. 3. Long boards allowing skiers to pursue a form of falling. 4. Long boards allowing skiers to pursue a form of flying. A ski is “[o]ne of a pair

of long slender pieces of wood fastened to the foot and used as a snow-shoe, enabling the wearer to slide down hill with great speed.” (Oxford English Dictionary (1971, unabridged ed.). Illustrated: “I have seen an expert skier go down a long steep hill with the swiftness scarcely equaled by a bird, “[s]eeming to touch or reach the sky.” (1895 *Chicago Advance*). 4. Gliding down mountains symbolizing goodness, purity, and cleanness. Skiing on the snow is like a bird in the air. (Ernest Hemingway, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*).

SKI BOOTS: Boots carefully designed to be hard to get into and out of. Ski boots are difficult to use for walking, especially on ice where they are used. When locked into Skis, skiers can glide down the snow, but see Definition for “Skis, #3.”

SKI BINDINGS: Ski bindings are intended to lock skiers’ boots into skis and to release when necessary for safety and, skiers hope, only when necessary for safety. See Definition for “Ski Boots.”

SKIING CONDITIONS – PACKED POWDER: non-existent ski conditions reported by ski areas to those who cannot easily check.

SKIING CONDITIONS – GRANULAR: Ice.

SKIING CONDITIONS – SPRING SKIING: Rain.

SKIING CONDITIONS – WINTER SKIING: Used to be snow-laden and often cold. Now Spring Skiing. Skiers go to ski resorts every winter. They hope and believe.

SKI JACKET: Outer garment made from down or the most recent artificial fiber to keep skiers warm. Ski Jacket materials are usually claimed to have been developed for astronauts. They have many pockets with zippers that sometimes work. Ski Jacket pockets must be able to hold credit cards and money unless these are exhausted due to the price of the *ski jacket*. They also must be able to hold lesson and *lift tickets*; cell phones with instructions for cell phone use and necessary telephone and cell phone numbers; ski maps; restaurant contacts; medical information, including ski patrol numbers, insurance cards, needed medicine, and lists of drugs skier is currently taking (before skiing accidents); sun screen; medicated sun burn ointment for when sun screen does not work; a room key and, lest one forget, the name of the lodge where the skier is staying; a duplicate room key and a duplicate name of the lodge where the skier is staying; needed food and drink; ski goggles and glasses; appointment information; cameras to photograph the expensive ski jacket and prove that the skier has made it to the slopes; and oil to grease zippers that will not open. When purchasing *ski jackets*, one must be careful because one can get fleeced. But see definition of “Consignment Shop.”

SKI LESSONS: 1. Paid skiing instructions that tell skiers that prior instructors’ were wrong. 2. Ski Lesson instructors tell skier (a) to be relaxed; (b) to stand straight without swinging his or her upper body; (c) to follow the “Fall Line;” (d) to let the skis to work and (e) to complete turns. Instructors do not teach highly effective “*V-turns*.”

SKI LODGE: A place to lodge and dine on ski trips. *Ski lodges* have an advantage to cruise ships in that they are likely to be in the same place after skiing that they were before skiing.

SKI MAP: A map of all ski trails on a mountain (some on an insert above or on the back), which skiers cannot use when skiing, because the map is stuck, tangled or torn in a pocket of a *ski jacket*.

SKI OUTFITS: See definitions for “Credit Card.”

SKI PATROL: Necessary to allow skiers to ride down the mountain on a motorized sleigh. See definition for “Chute.”

SKI SHOP: A store often at or near a ski lodge where one goes to buy something and returns with something else. See definition for “Money.”

SLOPE: In mathematics, the slope or gradient of a line is a number that describes both the *direction* and the *steepness* of the line. (Source: Wikipedia and reputable dictionaries.) In skiing, the gradient is covered with snow or ice; the skier is locked into waxed boards; and destiny pushes him or her downwards, gliding towards heaven or ...

SNOW: 1. Atmospheric water vapor frozen into ice crystals and falling in light white flakes or lying on the ground as a white layer. (Source: Oxford English Dictionary- Americanized). 2. Something soft to fall onto and rest, lying down. 3. Colorado and Oregon definition only: powder.

SNOW BOARD: Skis formed into a single ski or board to go downhill on the snow. See definition for “Parallel Skiing.”

STOP: A means of ceasing forward motion when a skier is going downhill. Stopping is best achieved by falling. If a skier is skilled, stops are also achieved by turning and edging; by executing a hockey stop; by hitting or holding onto a tree; and, in extreme circumstances, by taking Lessons. Snowboarders stop by crashing into skiers.

TREE SKIING: Skiing between trees, best done where trees are far apart. May be accomplished by first stopping to drink martinis, but if this method is used, helmets are required.

TERROR: Extreme fear. See definition for “Fall Line.”

TRAIL – GREEN: An easy ski trail except for ice and risks created by expert skiers racing towards the base.

TRAIL – BLUE: An intermediate ski trail used to get to ski lodges, restaurants and lunch.

TRAIL – BLACK: An expert ski trail easily reached from green and blue trails, especially by mistake.

TRAIL – DOUBLE BLACK: A ski trail entered in desperation when a skier cannot otherwise find the Ski Patrol. The Ski Patrol attends most to skiers who cannot get up after being knocked over by expert skiers on Green Trails and skiers who are panicked in the middle of Chutes.

TRAVERSE: According to *AZCentral*, traversing involves skiing perpendicular to the slope. Once a skier traverses to the far side of the trail, he or she performs a 180-degree turn and skis back to the opposite side of the trail. Traversing allows covering more of the mountainside at a leisurely pace, while traversing on more difficult slopes is a great method for maintaining control throughout the run. However, when one gets to the far side of the trail, one may be panicked and unable to turn the other way. In that case, one skis into the trees and waits for the *ski patrol*, falls by the side and waits for the *ski patrol* or manages to turn and cross the *fall line*, then falls and waits for the *ski patrol*. See definition for “Panic.”¹

WEDGE: 1. A skiing term that is presented for here completeness. Wedged ski turns refer to turns that are used solely by experts or beginners. 2. As in golf, a *wedge* is used when one is in a trap. However, in golf players use only one pole to get out. 3. In a *wedge* the front ski tips are together and the tails are wide apart with the knees rolled slightly inwards. By applying pressure against the snow

with the inside edges of the skis, skiers hope that their speed is reduced. (Modified from Wikipedia). To be contrasted with the V turn, which is this lexicographer's favorite turn, where in turning at the last minute one jerks, forming a perfect V. See Definition for "Lessons."

WINTER: Ski time.