

Why everyone should take an avalanche course

By Abbie Barronian, Powder

I recently spent a weekend with 20 strangers in a classroom and on a couple slow, icy tours, clocking about five minutes of cruddy downhill skiing in the back country around Stevens Pass, Wash.

The AIARE Level One course is a pretty incredible way to spend a weekend.

Deciding to take an avalanche course can be tough for a lot of reasons. It's a sacrifice of precious free time, and it can be tough for folks working typical ski town jobs—waiting tables, bumping lifts, bartending—to get two and a half days off, period. It's a big expense, as much as some season passes.

For skiers new to the back country, it can be intimidating.

The thing is, anyone traveling in the backcountry should take an Avy 1. No matter your experience level, everyone—from avalanche safety professionals to casual snowshoers—can learn life-saving skills and science from the weekend-long intensive course.

Read the whole story