

Vancouver Island Society for Adaptive Snowsports

A GUIDE FOR NEW STUDENTS - PARENTS - CAREGIVERS

Vancouver Island Society for Adaptive Snowsports (VISAS) is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that provides Canadian Adaptive Snowsports (CADS) certified instructors to teach people with diverse abilities, 6 years and older, to cross-country ski, downhill ski, sit-ski or snowboard. Mt. Washington Alpine Resort (MWAR) is a huge supporter of the VISAS Adaptive program, providing half price lift tickets and free snowsports equipment from their rental department. VISAS provides instruction and adaptive equipment for those requiring it, free of charge.

All instructors and students must be members of BC Adaptive Snowsports (BCAS) **but** for **first-timers** wanting to try skiing or snowboarding, VISAS offers a **“Have-a-Go”** Program for a \$10 temporary BCAS membership fee which covers a one-time session which includes lift ticket, equipment and instruction free of charge. To have a chance to try more than one snowsport, we offer TWO (2) Have-a-Go days, with the caveat that each day must be a different snowsport (cross country skiing, downhill skiing, sit-skiing or snowboarding).

For more information, go to the VISAS website www.visasweb.ca and click on “Have-A-Go Program”. A \$10 fee is charged for each “Have-a-Go” day. Nordic (cross country) information is also located on the website.

The following information pertains mostly to Alpine skiing and boarding.

To book a “Have-a-Go” Session:

1. Call the VISAS office at Mt. Washington at **250-334-5755** or email adaptive@mountwashington.ca.
(Please ensure you have confirmation of a lesson before travelling to the Resort).
2. You can book one “Have-a-Go” session for skiing or snowboarding (or one of each depending on availability). Sessions are from 10:00-12:00 and 1:00-3:00 and can be booked as a full day OR morning OR afternoon.
3. The VISAS Duty Day Supervisor (DDS) will ask for the student’s name, age, gender, height, weight, abilities or limitations (disability) and whether for skiing or snowboarding, plus a contact phone number or email. The last page of this guide is an information template you can complete to be ready with most of the required information.

For each “Have-a-Go” session you will need to bring:

1. \$10 cash for temporary membership in BCAS
2. Strongly Recommended: Appropriate winter clothing – snow pants, jacket (*appropriate for movement in snow*), waterproof gloves or mitts (*large enough to accommodate wrist guards if snowboarding*), face cover (*balaclava, buff, scarf, etc.*), thin toque (*for under helmet if required and for travel between parking lot and lodge*), ski socks (*not ankle socks, for warmth & wicking*), long johns – top & bottoms or equivalent, fleece or sweater (*layering for differences in temperatures*)
3. Footwear appropriate for traveling between the parking lot and the lodge
4. Extra mitts and socks, in case they get wet
5. A big lunch, including water, with enough for snacks at the end of the day
6. A large bag for carrying extras; big enough to carry extra items at the end of the day
7. A copy of the completed template (*see end of this document*)
8. For students who are children, youth or adults needing support, a caregiver is required for supervision at lunchtime and if the lesson is shorter than anticipated and for signatures, payment, etc.

Generously provided by Mt. Washington Alpine Resort and VISAS:

1. Ski or Snowboard Boots
2. Skis & poles or Snowboard
3. Helmet & goggles

4. Wrist guards for snowboarding
5. Any adaptive equipment required

VISAS Regular Program:

If the student enjoyed their experience in “Have-a-Go”, they are welcome to continue taking lessons with VISAS when they choose, subject to availability of dates and instructors. For this program, the child must have a membership with BC Adaptive Snowsports which is currently \$53 for the year. The \$10 for each temporary membership fee for “Have-a-Go” will be refunded by the VISAS DDS upon proof of BCAS membership. To register on VISAS website www.visasweb.ca click on Programs, scroll down to “Becoming a Student Member”.

Note: It is not necessary to participate in the Have-a-Go” program to join the regular program.

Booking for our regular program is the same as for “Have-a-Go” except you will need to present your BCAS Membership number (only need to do this the first time each year). You are then eligible for a **half price lift ticket** courtesy of Mt. Washington Alpine Resort, free rentals and instruction. For beginners, the Easy Acres pass which gives you access to the Magic Carpets but not the chairlifts, is the best option to start.

See the Mt. Washington website <https://www.mountwashington.ca> for pricing.

PLEASE NOTE: If for any reason you are unable to attend on your pre-booked day, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE call the VISAS desk at **250-334-5755** or email adaptive@mountwashington.ca

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Please aim to arrive 30 minutes before the lesson is scheduled to begin (e.g. 9:30am). First time - allow a little extra time for parking, walking to the lodge and locating the VISAS room. The parking lot is often busy in the morning.
- Check DriveBC for current road conditions from your starting point to Mount Washington Alpine Resort. If the conditions are such that you are not comfortable driving, it’s okay to cancel – but please call the VISAS office at **250-334-5755** as soon as you know you need to cancel.
- Have sufficient gas in the car for the return trip. There are no vehicle fueling stations on the mountain.
- You must have winter tires and carry chains. Have sufficient windshield washer fluid, etc. Be prepared for winter conditions, snow, rain, dense fog, etc. – things can change from morning to afternoon when you go to leave!
- Driving up from the Inland Island Hwy (Hwy 19), follow signs for Mt. Washington- continue to the Alpine Lodge parking lot at the top (on the left). (There is a parking lot above that for Deer Lodge and Bear Lodge – don’t go there).
- Parking is free. If required, you can drive up close to the lodge for unloading of the student and any equipment. There are also some accessible parking spots near the lodge if you have the decal.

Arriving:

- If you require physical assistance to get from your vehicle to the VISAS room, please call us and a VISAS instructor will happily bring up a sit-ski to assist you to the VISAS room, via the snow.
- To locate the VISAS room: Enter the building through the double doors at the end of the lodge closest to the parking lot, go down a flight of stairs and turn right into the “Marmot Lounge”, go past the “Hungry Marmot Express” café and tables & chairs to the back of the building. The VISAS room is located next to the Security Office & Lost & Found. There are washrooms as you first come into the Marmot area and if you continue to the left from there, you will find the entrance hallway to the equipment rental area where you will go after you have checked in with VISAS.
- Enter the VISAS room and introduce yourself to the Duty Day Supervisor (DDS) at the reception desk. You will need to present student’s details, even if you have already done so before (by email or phone). This is where the completed template at the end of this document comes in handy – give it to the DDS. If you do not have a BCAS membership number to present, you will pay the \$10 cash for a temporary BCAS membership here.

Equipment and Lesson Information for parents and caregivers:

- After the paper work is done you will walk with your child and their Instructor(s) to the equipment rental area, to be fitted and sign a rental waiver agreement. If this is not a "Have-a-Go", this is where you can also pay for the half price lift pass.
- An instructor will assist the student to get the appropriate equipment
- Wait with the Instructor until they have confirmed your child is "good to go." This may take up to half an hour.
- You are now free to hang out and check out the amenities in the lodge. You may also want to bring snacks, coffee, back-up power bar for electronics, etc.
- There is the Hungry Marmot Express on the Marmot level, The Eagles View Bistro and Ted's Bar & Grill plus a small store and washrooms on the main level and the Alpine Lodge Café - a cafeteria, on the upper level. The Marmot area has a microwave, water fountain and washrooms and is a good place to sit while waiting, and also for eating lunch with your child. Make sure your cell phone is **on** in case the Instructors need to reach you and be available if needed. Weather conditions and the student's stamina may mean an early finish to the day.
- **Lunch Hour** – By 11:45, please be at or just outside the VISAS room to meet your child.
NOTE: This is required even if they are doing a full day.
- If your child is doing an afternoon session as well, please ensure they have eaten well, has used the washroom and are back at the VISAS room by 1:00 pm, ready to go out on the snow.
- **End of Day** - Be at the VISAS room by 2:45 PM to meet your child. They will likely be happy and very tired! Allow lots of time for their transition.
- Book your next session(s). One person can have up to three bookings in the computer at a time.
- Take the "white return rental equipment slip" and all the rental equipment and accompany your child to the rental area. Their own boots/shoes should be in the boot rental area unless you took them to the Marmot level with you earlier. Skis/board and helmet will be returned to the designated area. Return the white slip to an attendant or if none is available, drop the white rental return slip in a box on the counter.

You're all set for home! Drive safe! Hope to see you again!

Student Information

Complete this form and print ONE COPY to bring with you for your first lesson

BCAS NUMBER (if available) _____

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____

Gender _____ HEIGHT _____ WEIGHT _____ DATE of BIRTH _____
(yyyy/mm/dd)

If Applicable: Parent/Support Worker NAME: _____

SHOE/BOOT SIZE Street wear (for ski boot/snowboard boot sizing) _____

PHONE NUMBER/S _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ POSTAL CODE _____

EMAIL _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT PHONE _____

ON HILL CELL CONTACT _____

DISABILITIES _____

STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS (for conversation topics, other sports etc. with Instructors):

COMMUNICATION (Include: Method/Strategies/Tools) what helps student to learn new things? e.g., humour, patience, silliness, seriousness, fewer words, more words, demonstration):

CONCERNS AND STRATEGIES (Include: Safety concerns; Anything to avoid/Triggers; Effective support strategies) Learning Challenges or Needs (e.g. slow processing time, needs to see teacher's lips to process well, quiet voice, fewer words, etc.)

SPECIAL NEEDS EQUIPMENT _____

MEDICATIONS AND TIMES (if applicable) _____

ALLERGIES/FOOD INTOLERANCES (if applicable) _____