

Rocky Mountain Ramblers require participants on trips into avalanche terrain to have completed, at a minimum, a two-day AST 1 course which covers avalanche risk management topics as described below. Members can enter the date they took such a course into the appropriate box of their personal information page on the website (<https://www.ramblers.ab.ca/MembershipList/SelfMemberEdit>).

Some members may not have taken AST 1. But they may have taken similar courses that pre-date AST 1 or may have made a significant number of trips into avalanche terrain that enabled them to acquire similar skills to those taught in the course. In these cases, the relevant information (such as number of avalanche terrain trips, guides involvement, etc.) may be listed in the box labeled “AST 1 equivalent experience”. A one day or less avalanche refresher is not considered equivalent.

There will also be a requirement that participants have undertaken a transceiver practice/avalanche discussion refresher session within the last 2 years. The date and refresher provider (e.g. RMR, other club, backcountry guide, etc.) can also be entered by the member on the personal information page.

Avalanche Skills Training Level 1 (AST 1)

From the <http://www.avalanche.ca/training#ast1> website:

This course teaches how to recognize avalanche terrain and how to self rescue. An AST 1 is a minimum of two days with both classroom and field components. What you will learn in an AST 1:

- avalanche formation and release
 - identify avalanche terrain
 - the basics of trip planning
 - optimal use of tools and resources like the avalanche forecasts to mitigate your avalanche risk
 - use appropriate travel techniques in avalanche terrain
 - intro to companion rescue
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Shoveling technique: Shoveling can be the longest duration part of a rescue, a video by Backcountry Canada describes an efficient way to minimize this time:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVKx8YqVYK4>

Other courses further to AST 1 shown on avalanche.ca (not required, but AST 2 may be listed by member)

AST 2 course builds on the foundations of AST 1, and provides a more advanced decision-making framework for travelling in avalanche terrain. An AST 2 course comprises a minimum of 9.5 hours of classroom instruction with a minimum of three days in the field.

What you will learn in an AST 2:

- progressive planning and travel techniques are required to travel safely through various types of terrain
- key techniques for using the Danger Rating on a local scale
- key techniques for applying the Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale (ATES) technical model to develop personal, local terrain ratings
- proficiently carry out a companion rescue

Companion Rescue Skills

A Companion Rescue Skills (CRS) course teaches life-saving search and rescue techniques.

The CRS course is an important refresher for those with previous training or a great way to dial the rescue skills you learned in your AST 1. This hands-on, one-day CRS course takes place in the field.

What you will learn in CRS: prioritize, organize, and hone your search, probe and shovel skills

Managing Avalanche Terrain

After taking AST 1, the MAT is a very focused field-based course designed to expand on the terrain management taught in the AST 1 course, and to develop more advanced winter backcountry travel skills. This course will help you mitigate your risk by honing your terrain evaluation and travel skills.