

Making Sense - Boot Cuff Pressure

Why Sense Making? I strongly believe that 'sense making' is important to learning. When you make sense of something, you can then use it creatively, grow and expand. If you don't make sense of something that you are doing, then you just do "things" because someone told you to.

1. Sacred cow - "Always pressure you boot cuffs...."

Yes and no... certainly not always 'pushing' or 'leaning' on the front of the boot cuff. You want to keep your feet under you. This means that your shin bone angle will vary as you bend and unbend to... sometimes your shin will be more vertical and sometimes more sloped forward. Sometimes your shin will be lightly touching and sometimes more firmly touching the cuff. Just squat a little and stand up to understand this. We don't always squat while we ski!

You need to be able to move to stay in balance, balancing... centered and moving with your skis.

In addition, the shin bone will not always be pushing on the center of the cuff. When you are tipping your shins to the side while edging the skis, the shins will be pressing more off center. Your shin bone should be very active!



2. Sacred cow - "Always pressure you boot cuffs to pressure the ski tips to enter a turn...."

Second, you do not want to, or need to, pressure the tips to start a turn... you want to keep your 'center', moving with the skis. Skis have a sweet spot. Our feet have a sweet spot.... centered, balancing, 'grounded' in and with the forces... (*more in other "Making Sense" articles.*)

3. Sacred cow - stiff boots... Because some folk believe that they want to pressure the tips of their skis, they want very stiff boots - and have a crazy idea that this will "transfer the pressure from the boot to the tip of the ski"... Which makes it hard for them to stand balanced, so they often end up 'going over the handle bars' or skiing in the back seat because they cannot bend their boots! - e.g. their feet are a bit in front of them, with them levering, out of balance... stressing their quads and knees...)



This brings up a very important point, do your ski boots fit properly?

Your ski boots are the most important part of your equipment. Most people have boots too big and too stiff.

You want to be able to bend your ankles! You need to be able to bend the boots cuff. You are the one who adjusts how far forward you bend, not just the stiffness of your boots! You should not expect the boot to just

hold you up. It's not about camping out on the boot cuff... It's about keeping your feet under you, moving and balancing centered on your skis. To do this, you need boots that fit properly and move.

So, how should they fit? Typically the shell size of your boots should be one to two sizes smaller than your street shoe size. Your toes should barely touch the end when you stand upright and slightly pull back from the end when you flex your ankles.

Start by shell sizing your boot to get the correct length. Pull the liner out and stand in the boot with your toes lightly touching the end and flex your ankles (bend). You should have one or two fingers space behind your heel.

Then you need to check the width and the height of your foot. A good boot fitter is the best place to start!