Instructor’s Suggested Outline:
“Beginner Snowshoes” Clinics
Instructors, please send any suggestions or comments to cmcdgdmic@gmail.com

Notes to Leaders:
1. Clinic instructor must have completed Avalanche Terrain Avoidance class and otherwise comply with Denver Group general winter trip leading rules.
2. Remember this is a trip, not just a teach. After the TH talk, you will lead them on an OB trip as described at the Trip Details webpage.
3. Take spare SS & poles if you have them -- leave in car if no one needs them
4. Carry spare snow baskets, handwarmers and SS straps in backpack if you have them
5. Bring a slope meter for avy demonstration
6. Italic means pre-reading material was provided through links in the trip detail sheet. However, we cannot assume every student has read anything or everything – just hoping we can move along without too much delay. You should view the materials. They are included at the end of this Outline.

Segment 1 -- Parts and Types of Snowshoes (5 minutes at the TH or meeting location) Quick review because presume all covered in pre-reading/videos.

- Components
- Shapes
- Sizes, widths
- Purposes, Places: generic, packed trails, powder, running/racing, mountaineering
- “By weight” includes your pack clothes, boots
- Heel Elevators
- Attachable Tails
- MSR types (unique)
- Atlas types (unique)
- Poles, Snow baskets
- Rent before you buy
- Recommend $70 set at Costco for beginners

Segment 2 -- Preparation (10 minutes at the TH or meeting location)
Quick review because presume all covered in pre-reading/videos

- Classifications of SS trips
- Off trail means…
- Pace means…
- New SS’ers should begin with easy SS until comfy
- Gear: 10 essentials plus Winter gear:
  - insulation -- snow pants, down jacket, wool cap, neck gaiter, thin gloves & mittens
  - Insulated /waterproof (winter) boots
  - Knee-high gaiters
  - Wind protection --hard shell,
  - Chemical hand warmers
  - Traction devices
  - Backpack ties for SS (practice tying SS to pack at home)
  - Insulated water

Segment 3 -- Techniques (5-10 minutes before and as leaving the TH)
Quick review because presume all covered in pre-reading/videos. Students check one another with fitting and foot placement. Instructor focuses on movement.

- Mounting the SS to the pack
- Mounting the SS to your foot (placement of the ball of the foot on pivot point)
- Typical problems with different mounting systems and how to deal with them
- Traversing, demo and practice
- Breaking trail, alone and as a team. Make them do it.
- Use of pole straps
- Trail etiquette
- Crossing logs, streams
- Post-holing, Tree wells
- Trekking Uphill, demo and practice
- Trekking Downhill, demo and practice
Segment 4 -- Recovering from Falls (5-10 minutes at first appropriate stop)
1. [Ideally, a snow drift at least 3 feet deep but work with what you have]
2. Maneuver to get feet downhill and butt over at least one foot
3. Cross poles on snow in front of you
4. Push down on poles while rising on leg(s)
5. Post-holing considerations

Segment 5 -- Practice on Trail, the Actual Trip. Practice first and second person breaking trail thru snow and those behind finishing trail by stamping down snow still not trampled upon, to make a completely smoothed trail.

Segment 6 -- Avy Considerations (5-10 minutes at next appropriate stop)
Emphasize that most trips will plan to NOT be in avy territory, but everyone should know something. Quick Review of italicized items because all covered in pre-reading.

- Be familiar with CAIC.org website and the CAIC danger rose and danger terms
- YOU should read CAIC forecasts before every winter SS trip
- All trip leaders must have ATA or AIARE training
- Recommend ATA and/or AIARE for non-leaders too

1. Identifying avy paths and runouts
2. Point out slope angles and how to measure them (show tool)
3. When crossing avy runout, take 30-50 yard spacing, depending on conditions
4. One crossing at a time is recommended. Does not mitigate terrain risk.
   Simply lowers the number who are caught
5. Discuss rescue techniques, shovels, snowshoes, etc.
6. Urge that everyone invest in the one-day ATA course

Finish the trip, Back at the TH

Segment 6 – Wrap-up (5 minutes back at TH)
Recap 5 segments as needed
1. Parts and types of SS
2. Preparation
3. Techniques
4. Fall and Recovery
5. Avy Considerations

Final Questions
Here are some helpful illustrations and videos about how to snowshoe. You may have to copy these links and paste them into your browser:

- Wikihow: How to choose Snowshoes: https://www.wikihow.com/Choose-Snowshoes
- Wikihow: How to snowshoe: https://www.wikihow.com/Snowshoe
- Attaching snowshoes to a backpack: https://sectionhiker.com/how-to-attach-snowshoes-to-a-backpack/
- Avalanche: Always check your route at the Colorado Avalanche Information Center: https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=CAIC.org&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8
  - Consider taking CMC Avalanche Terrain Avoidance (1-day) or AIARE (3-day)
  - Instructor will discuss avy paths, avy crossing, avy rescue
- Wikihow: Dressing for the Cold: https://www.wikihow.com/Dress-for-the-Cold