

WORST-CASE SCENARIO.

HOW TO SKI OFF A 100-FOOT DROP

1 Look for danger below.

Just before you ski off the edge of the cliff, look down and out over the slope. If your projected path takes you toward rocks, trees, or another cliff, change your takeoff angle by jumping to the left or right so you will head toward safer, wide-open terrain.

2 Jump up and off the ledge.

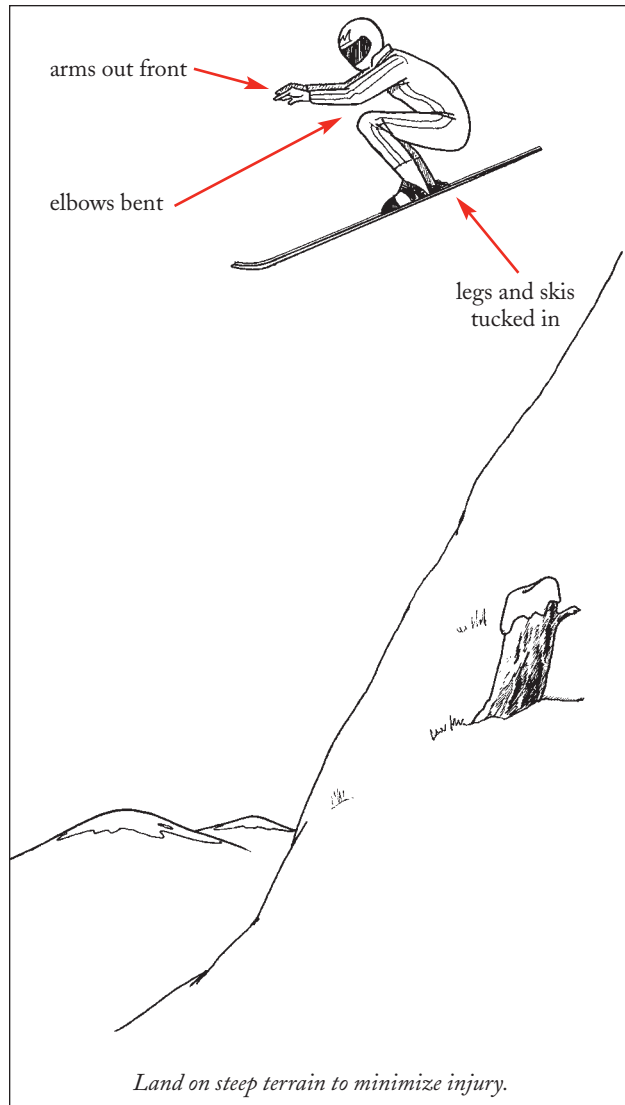
Just as you are leaving the ground, hop up and slightly forward to help you clear any rocks or other obstructions that may be hidden just below the ledge and that could knock you off balance.

3 Pull your legs and skis up and tuck them under your rear end.

This compressed “ball” position will help you maintain balance while airborne and help you to land safely.

4 Thrust both arms out in front of you, elbows slightly bent.

Avoid the “cat out the window” position, where your arms and hands are splayed out above your head. That position will put you off balance when you land.



5 Look out, not down.

Looking down at the ground will lead to a “door hinge” landing, where you bend forward at the waist and plant your face in the slope. Look out over the mountain.

6 Focus on a suitable landing site.

Land on very steep terrain. Avoid a low-angled slope or, worse, a flat section of the mountain. As long as the snow is powder and at least one foot deep, you should be able to land without serious injury.

7 Bend your knees as you land.

As you approach the side of the mountain, keep your knees bent to absorb the force of the impact with the ground. Avoid leaning back, which will cause a “tail first” landing and probable back injury. If you cannot ski away from a landing, land on your hip. Do not lean too far forward or you will fall on your face.

8 Extend your feet, bend your knees, and turn across (or “into”) the mountain to slow down.

Because of your extreme speed while airborne, you must minimize acceleration by turning as soon as you land, or you risk hurtling down the mountain out of control. Modern skis should stay on top of deep powder instead of sinking, giving you a reasonable amount of control.

- 9** Continue making turns to keep control and reduce speed as you ski away.

Be Aware

- If you feel yourself falling backward while airborne, move your hands further in front of you and make fast circular motions, forward and back. This balancing maneuver is called “rolling down the windows.”
- In any jump greater than 15 feet, avoid landing in the same spot a previous jumper landed; the snow will already be compacted and will not provide sufficient cushioning.

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