

TAKE THE SNOW SPORTS SAFETY QUIZ

Downhill skiing and snowboarding are popular winter sports, but they aren't without their risks. Each year, thousands of skiers and snowboard enthusiasts are injured, some seriously.

Beginning skiers and snowboarders are at highest risk for injury, but even those who are experienced can run into trouble. Learn more about snow sports injuries and how to prevent them by taking this quiz.

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1. The leather boots once used in downhill skiing left the ankle and lower leg vulnerable to fractures. The rigid plastic boots now used protect the ankle and leg, but put what other body part at risk for injury?
A. Thigh
B. Lower back
C. Pelvis
D. Knee
2. Your upper body also is at risk for injury when you ski. Which upper body part is most likely to be injured?
A. Shoulder
B. Collarbone
C. Thumb
D. A and B
3. What common problem do skiers have with their bindings?
A. The bindings break unexpectedly
B. The binding tension isn't set correctly
C. The bindings jam
D. A and B
4. When should you take ski lessons?
A. If you are a beginner
B. If you don't have a friend to teach you
C. If you are using new skis
D. All of the above
5. Dressing appropriately for the cold cuts the risk for hypothermia. Which other (non-injury) condition are you at risk for when skiing?
A. Vertigo

- B. Frostbite
- C. Dehydration
- D. None of the above

6. What time of day is most dangerous for skiers?
A. Dawn
B. Morning
C. Noon
D. Afternoon
7. Which step(s) should you take to avoid injuries on the slopes?
A. Condition your legs, especially your hamstrings, before ski season
B. Have your skis, bindings and boots checked out regularly
C. Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water
D. All of the above
8. Snowboarders use their boards like surfboards or skateboards, but their feet are attached with non-releasable bindings. Almost one-quarter of snowboarding injuries occur when?
A. After a heavy snowfall
B. During a person's first attempt at snowboarding
C. During snowboarding competitions
D. B and C
9. Which part of the body is most likely to be injured in a snowboarding accident?
A. Wrist
B. Elbow
C. Shoulder
D. All of the above
10. If you're a beginner at snowboarding, how should you adjust your boot bindings?
A. Loosely
B. Tightly
C. Leave the bindings off
D. None of the above
11. When should you wear a helmet when snowboarding?
A. When racing
B. When learning how to snowboard
C. When snowboarding on unmarked trails

- D. All of the above

12. Which of these tips should you follow when snowboarding?
A. Don't sit down on the slopes in areas where others may be passing by
B. Take frequent breaks so you aren't overcome with fatigue
C. Avoid slope areas that are off-limits
D. Attach a security strap to your front foot
E. All of the above

1. The correct answer is D

The boots put stress on the knees, which can lead to injuries to the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). This ligament is one of four that connect your thigh bone to your lower leg. An ACL injury can leave your knee unstable. Both beginning and advanced skiers can injure their ACL. Beginners are more likely to damage the ligament during a fall, when they flex their knees at the same time that their boots push their legs forward. Advanced skiers can injure the ligament when they are landing from a jump or trying to recover from a fall.

2. The correct answer is D

Injuries to the upper body make up about a third of all skiing injuries. The most common sites for upper body injury in skiing are the shoulder and collarbone. The thumb is also vulnerable to skiing injuries. Experts say the best way to avoid these injuries is to learn the proper way to use your ski poles. Also, don't strap your hands to the poles or use ski poles with a molded contour.

3. The correct answer is B

The binding tension is important because it governs when your ski will release from your boot. If the tension is incorrect, the ski may release too soon or too late, putting you at risk for serious injury. You should have your bindings, as well as your boots and skis, checked every year by a ski technician.

4. The correct answer is A

It's important to learn the basics of the slopes from a qualified ski instructor. You need to know how to stop, turn and remain in control when you ski. Once you've taken lessons, evaluate your skills before progressing to more demanding ski runs. Don't be swayed by others who want you to take a run that is beyond your capabilities. You must be able to remain in control on any slope you tackle and to stop if you need to.

5. The correct answer is C

Although you might not think that dehydration is a risk in winter, it can be a problem when exercising in cold, dry conditions. You should drink water before you start out, and rehydrate throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty.

6. The correct answer is D

Experts say the risk for injury is twice as high in the afternoon, because skiers are tired. A skier suffering from fatigue is less able to cope with obstacles on the run. Dehydration is a contributing factor to the increase in afternoon accidents.

7. The correct answer is D

Hamstring exercises help keep the knee stable, because they keep your lower leg from extending too far forward. Quadriceps exercises should be done, as well. Make sure your equipment fits you and is in good working order. Be cautious on the slopes. Don't ski when you are tired and don't try runs that are beyond your skills.

8. The correct answer is B

Almost half of snowboarding injuries occur during a person's first season of snowboarding. Beginning snowboarders are more likely to be injured than more advanced snowboarders, even though the advanced snowboarders try more dangerous moves. Falls are the leading cause of snowboarding injuries, followed by jumps. The most common cause of severe injury is running into a tree.

9. The correct answer is D

Because the feet are bound to the snowboard, the legs are less likely to be injured than the upper body. Less than one-third of snowboard injuries involve the legs. The wrists, elbows and shoulders are especially vulnerable. To help prevent injuries, you should wear wrist guards designed for snowboarding or inline skating. If you fall, don't break your fall with open hands; keep your hands balled in a fist and try to tuck and roll as you land. This will dissipate the force of the fall instead of concentrating it on just one area of the body.

10. The correct answer is B

A tight binding will put more force on your knees when you fall. A looser binding will help protect your knees, but will put you at risk for foot and ankle injuries. Experts recommend a looser binding for beginners, and a tighter binding for more experienced snowboarders. One study found that up to 15 percent of snowboarding ankle injuries involved a fracture of the talus, a bone in the foot. Talus injuries may be misdiagnosed as ankle sprains because they don't show up easily on an X-ray.

11. The correct answer is D

Head injuries are common in snowboarding accidents, when the head hits the ground at the end of a fall. The injury may be more severe if the snow is hard-packed or the surface is ice. Because beginners are more likely to fall than more experienced snowboarders, experts recommend that those starting out wear a helmet. Helmets are also important when racing and when snowboarding on unmarked trails to help prevent injuries when hitting obstacles.

12. The correct answer is EOther safety tips for snowboarding:

- > When you aren't on your snowboard, don't leave it in a place where it may become a runaway board.
- > When turning, especially in a backside turn, check any blind spots.