

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING TIPS

Safety Guidelines

To avoid problems and to be prepared for any difficulty that might arise on a cross-country ski outing, follow these safety guidelines:

Let someone know where you will be skiing and what time you will be returning, particularly if you are going into a back country area.

Check your equipment before you leave home, to ensure that it functions properly and that you have everything that you will need.

When venturing into mountainous areas, follow the basic avalanche safety procedures

Carry a map of the area where you are skiing.

If trails are not marked, you will also need a compass.

Wear a backpack containing food and drink, a waxing kit, extra clothing, emergency repair equipment and a first-aid kit.

Know your limitations--in terms of both

trail difficulty and distance--and ski on trails that are within your ability.

Ski in groups of three or more, especially if venturing into back country areas.

If someone is injured, one person can stay with the victim while the other goes for help.

Know the symptoms of and remedies for frostbite and hypothermia. Check the other members of your group for symptoms at regular intervals.

Eat and drink at regular intervals to maintain energy and hydration levels.

Physical activity suppresses the appetite, so eat a few mouthfuls of food and take a few swallows of liquid every half hour or so, even if you're not hungry or thirsty.

Before crossing ice over lakes or streams, ensure that it is thick enough to support your weight.

Ski centers usually warn their clientèle about thin ice, but in back country areas you will have to make your own decisions.

Several weeks of continual freezing

temperatures are required to build up a safe thickness of ice.

Emergency and Repair Equipment

At the beginning of the winter put together an emergency/repair kit including the following basic items:

- a cigarette lighter or waterproof matches
- two or three candles to provide heat and light
- a metal container or plastic bag to melt snow
- a lightweight emergency blanket or plastic tarp

- a whistle (if you happen to get lost or injured, three short blasts will alert searchers to your location)
- a pocket knife with a screwdriver blade
- a replacement ski tip and pole basket and screws for your bindings

- a roll of duct tape (to repair just about anything)

Skier's Code of Ethics

Follow these guidelines to help make skiing a safe and pleasant experience for everyone:

- Always buy a trail pass when skiing at a commercial center. Your trail fee helps pay for grooming and maintenance of the trails.
- When stopping, step off the trail to leave room for other skiers to pass.
- On double-tracked trails ski single-file except when overtaking.
- When a skier behind calls out "track," move to the right to give them room to pass.
- Avoid cutting off other skiers when entering trails or overtaking.
- Ski in the specified direction on one-way trails.
- Descending skiers have right-of-way on hills.

- Climbing skiers should move as far to the right of the trail as possible when oncoming skiers approach.
- Fill in sitzmarks after falling on trails.
- Pack out any garbage that you have brought with you.
- Leave nothing but tracks, take nothing but pictures.
- Avoid walking or snowshoeing on ski trails--footprints decrease grip and glide.
- Skating on classically groomed trails will similarly disrupt the grip and glide of classic skiers.
- Leave your dog at home - dogs not only leave paw prints (and more unpleasant things) but can also cause an accident.
- Stick close to the trail--you may get lost or your tracks may lead other skiers astray.

- Respect private property.
- Some landowners are gracious enough to allow use of their land.
- Trespassers may cause this privilege to be revoked.