

NOOKSACK NORDIC SKI CLUB

P.O. Box 28793, Bellingham, WA 98228



Welcome to the Nooksack Nordic Ski Club! We want you to have safe and enjoyable ski outings. Therefore we are enclosing some general safety guidelines regarding cross country skiing, suggestions on dressing for warmth, injury prevention, what to take with you when skiing, and information about snow park permits. We trust you will find this information helpful.

General Skiing Guidelines

Before starting out, check weather reports and trail conditions. Don't start out on a trail unless you know the distance, conditions you can expect and that you can reasonably finish it in the time you've allotted. Be sure you know about any avalanche potential or other hazards you may encounter. Avoid the area if avalanche danger is moderate to high. For more information on avalanches - check out ski area hotline, the local ranger station, or regional avalanche conditions.

Don't ski alone! In fact it is best to ski with at least 2 others. This is particularly important if skiing ungroomed, infrequently used trails. This way should someone become injured, there will be someone to stay with the injured person and someone to go get help.

Use the trail ratings to make sure there is a good match between your ski group's abilities and the difficulties the trail may offer. Know your ability and weaknesses so you can plan ahead. Don't try to do too much. The tired skier is more likely to fall or be injured.

Let others (not in your ski group) know of your route and the time you expect to return. Be specific so others will know where to search for you should you be unexpectedly delayed in returning.

Before skiing do some stretches. A limber body is less prone to injury.

Dress appropriately. Overdressing is the most common mistake made by novices. Dress in layers so you can tailor your dress to the needs of the moment according to the demands of exertion and the weather. Rather than one heavy layer of clothing, use several layers of lighter items that allow you easy movement. You can choose anything from army surplus to new synthetics like lycra, polypropylene, polyester, silk, fleece. Wool can be warm even when it's wet. Above all never dress in cotton or denim! They add very little warmth when dry and once they get wet - they stay wet - chilling your body. Don't let yourself get so hot you get soaked with sweat or you'll be at risk of freezing. Rather peel off layers when you're getting too warm, and have layers available to add for when you start to cool down. A good hat or stocking cap can save 25 - 30% of your body heat. Gaiters are great help in keeping your feet and legs dry if you're going to be in fresh soft snow. Don't forget rain gear or something to protect you from wind. An extra pair of gloves or mittens can be essential if your first pair becomes wet (often from sweat). A small back pack or fanny pack is necessary to carry these extra layers of clothes.