



Snow Sports

Scouts BSA · Sports

Name

Started

Completed

Snow Sports is about enjoying winter on skis, a snowboard, or snowshoes while staying safe. You will learn how to prepare, read trail signs, and follow the rules everyone on the slopes uses. Then you'll get out and show off your skills.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/snow-sports/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

1 Snow sports hazards and first aid

Tips for this section: Talk about cold injuries, falls, and collisions, and the first aid for each.

Example for this section: Be ready to explain the first aid for frostbite (warm the area slowly, don't rub it), hypothermia (get the person dry and warm and call for help), and a fall or collision (keep them still and get the ski patrol).

- ☐ **1a** Explain to your counselor the hazards you're most likely to meet in snow sports and how to anticipate, help prevent, reduce, and respond to them

- ☐ **1b** Discuss how to prevent and give first aid for snow sports problems, including frostbite, hypothermia, dehydration, sunburn, shock, concussion, broken bones, bruises, sprains, and strains. Explain how to put on a splint

2 Being ready to help after an accident

Tips for this section: Pack the right gear before going out, and learn how to report an accident to ski patrol.

Example for this section: Explain your plan if you see an accident on the slope: stay with the injured person, cross your skis or plant your board uphill to warn others, and send someone to the nearest lift attendant or ski patrol.

- ☐ **2a** Explain why everyone who takes part in snow sports should be ready to give first aid if an accident happens

- ☐ **2b** Explain the steps for reporting an accident to the ski patrol or local emergency responders

- ☐ **3** Explain the international system for marking trails

Tip: Learn the trail difficulty symbols and what each means before you hit the slopes.

- ☐ **4** Discuss why strength, endurance, and flexibility matter in snow sports. Show exercises and activities that will get you in shape for the option you pick in requirement 7

Tip: Do simple leg and core exercises at home for a few weeks before your trip.

Example: Plan a few weeks of exercises before your trip, like wall sits, squats, and side planks, and show your counselor two of them. Explain how strong legs and core help you turn, balance, and avoid injuries.

- ☐ **5** Show up correctly dressed and equipped for the option you pick in requirement 7, and discuss how your clothing will keep you warm and protected

Tip: Lay out your clothing and gear in layers, and ask your counselor to check it before you go.

Example: Show up in layers: a base layer that wicks sweat, a warm middle layer, a waterproof shell, plus a helmet, goggles, gloves, and warm socks. Avoid cotton, which stays cold when wet.

6 Slope safety codes and avalanches

Tips for this section: Learn the Responsibility Code and SMART Style rules, and talk about how to stay safe from avalanches.

Example for this section: Go through each point of the Your Responsibility Code and give an example for each, like "People ahead of you have the right of way." Then explain why avalanche terrain is only for trained, equipped groups.

- ☐ **6a** Explain each part of the Your Responsibility Code used where you'll ski, snowboard, or snowshoe, and why everyone has to follow it

- ☐ **6b** Explain the SMART Style safety program, why it matters, and how it applies at places like terrain parks and pipes

- ☐ **6c** Explain avalanche safety precautions, including what each person is responsible for

7 Choose a snow sport: Choose 1 of 4

Tips for this section: Take a lesson at a ski area to sharpen your skills in the option you choose.

7a Option A: downhill (alpine) skiing

- ☐ **7a1** Show how to wax and care for your skis and how to use and care for release bindings. Explain what the international DIN standard is and why it matters to skiers

- ☐ **7a2** Explain the American Teaching System and a simple step-by-step path for learning to ski

- ☐ **7a3** Discuss the different kinds of alpine skis, and show two safe, easy ways to carry skis and poles

- ☐ **7a4** Ride one type of lift to show how it's done, and explain how to ride two other types

- ☐ **7a5** On a gentle slope, show beginner moves including the herringbone, sidestep, straight run, gliding wedge, and wedge stop

- ☐ **7a6** On somewhat steeper ground, ski linked wedge turns

- ☐ **7a7** On a moderate slope, ski 5 to 10 christies

- ☐ **7a8** Ski under control from top to bottom of an intermediate slope

- ☐ **7a9** Show you can ski through changing pitch and snow conditions while keeping your balance and turning well

- ☐ **7a10** Name the main US ski organizations and explain what each one does

7b Option B: cross-country (Nordic) skiing

- ☐ **7b1** Show that you can choose, use, and care for cross-country ski equipment so you stay safe and comfortable

- ☐ **7b2** Explain why common trail rules exist, such as no walking on ski trails, skiing one way only, no pets, and staying off snowmobile trails

- ☐ **7b3** Discuss classic, skate, touring, and telemark skis

- ☐ **7b4** Discuss the basics of waxing skis for cross-country touring

- ☐ **7b5** Discuss how cross-country, backcountry or ski touring, ski mountaineering, and downhill or telemark skiing differ

- ☐ **7b6** List what you'd bring on a one-day ski tour

- ☐ **7b7** Show the correct way to use a compass and a topographic map

- ☐ **7b8** On a gentle, groomed slope, show simple ways to manage your speed and direction, including the wedge stop, wedge turn, step turn, side slip, traverse, and straight run

- ☐ **7b9** On a cross-country trail, show good propulsion with proper weight shift between skis, pole timing, rhythm, flow, and glide

- ☐ **7b10** On a 4-mile tour, show you can handle a typical mix of snow conditions (adaptive skiers may do a 1-mile tour with the counselor's approval in advance)

- ☐ **7b11** Show several ways to handle steep hills or tough conditions, including uphill and downhill traverses and kick turns, sidestepping, and pole drag

7c Option C: snowboarding

- ☐ **7c1** Discuss injuries from falling forward

- ☐ **7c2** Show you can choose the right snowboarding gear and use it for safety and comfort

- ☐ **7c3** Show how to use and care for your own bindings, explain the different binding methods, and explain why leashes are needed

- ☐ **7c4** Discuss the four kinds of snowboards, and show a safe, easy way to carry a snowboard

- ☐ **7c5** Ride one type of lift to show how it's done, and explain how to ride two other types

- ☐ **7c6** Show the basics of waxing a snowboard

7c7 Beginner riding skills

- ☐ **7c7a** On a gentle slope, show beginner snowboarding moves and simple ways to manage speed and direction, including sideslipping

- ☐ **7c7b** On somewhat steeper ground, show traversing

- ☐ **7c8** On a moderate slope, do a wheelie, an ollie, and a nose-end grab

- ☐ **7c9** Ride under control from top to bottom of an intermediate slope

- ☐ **7c10** Show you can ride through changing pitch, snow conditions, and moguls while keeping your balance and turning well

- ☐ **7c11** Name the main US snowboarding organizations and explain what each one does

7d Option D: snowshoeing

- ☐ **7d1** Name the parts of a snowshoe

- ☐ **7d2** Explain how to pick the right size snowshoe

- ☐ **7d3** Describe the kinds of snowshoes and what each is made for, and discuss what to think about when choosing one

- ☐ **7d4** Explain how to care for and maintain snowshoes

- ☐ **7d5** List what you'd bring on a one-day snowshoe hike

- ☐ **7d6** Describe the best places for snowshoeing, and discuss some benefits and dangers of snowshoeing in the backcountry

- ☐ **7d7** Discuss why snowshoeing is good for you

- ☐ **7d8** Show the most efficient ways to go uphill, go downhill, cross a slope, and break trail

- ☐ **7d9** On a 2-mile snowshoe hike, show you can handle a typical mix of snow conditions (adaptive snowshoers may do a 1-mile hike with the counselor's approval in advance)

- ☐ **7d10** Show the correct way to use a compass and a topographic map

