



Sledding, Tobogganing, and Snow Tubing

Activity Permitted for: D B J C S A

Council Approval: Required as per Council Policy P1; [Activity/Trip Permission \(2129\)](#)

Vendor Approval: Not Required

Required Training: 281 GS 201 Trips & Overnights (gsLearn)

Girl Scouts members are required to use commercial ski resorts designated for sledding, tobogganing, and snow-tubing.

About Sledding and Tobogganing

The history of sledding is quite interesting. Traditionally, sleds were used to transport goods and people in places where wheels could not operate. Toboggans, made of poles tied together with leather, were used by Native Americans to carry food, clothing, and other items through snow. Today, people of all ages enjoy sledding, tobogganing, and tubing as an enjoyable outdoor winter activity and sport. Tobogganing has even grown to be a formal sport in the winter Olympics.

Sleds and toboggans will vary in design, shape, and material and can range from round plastic discs to rectangular wood structures with metal runners. A toboggan is typically a long, flat-bottomed sled made of thin boards that curve upward in a C-shape at one end. Snow tubes are inflatable, doughnut-shaped, rubber or plastic inner tubes, similar to those used in water tubing, but with dimpled centers.

Girls must stick to designated sledding, tobogganing, and snow-tubing hills away from roads or heavily wooded areas to enjoy sledding safely. They should also receive basic instruction in sledding safety and conduct rules and learn to perform basic steering skills, including how to slow down and stop. Members are never to be towed behind a motor vehicle including a snow mobile.

Connect with your Girl Scout council for site suggestions. In addition, some ski resorts will offer snow-tubing and tobogganing classes within specially designated areas, so check with your local ski resorts if you have any nearby.

Learn More

- Competitive and Olympic sledding: [Team USA](#)
- More on sledding: [Sled Riding](#)

Include Girl Scout Members with Disabilities

Talk to Girl Scout members with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. Always be sure to contact the location and/or the instructor in advance to ensure they are able to accommodate those with disabilities. For more information visit [Move United](#)

Equity. In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities, consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable and have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as proper equipment, prior experiences, and the skills needed to enjoy the activity.

Infectious Disease Guidelines. Girl Scouts use a commonsense approach to health and safety. Before participating in Girl Scouting activities, members are to undergo health checks at home for any symptoms such as fever of 100.4 (or need for fever-reducing medications) chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, stomach aches, nausea, or vomiting. Members with any of these symptoms or in need of fever-reducing medication **MUST** stay home until fully recovered.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) before taking girls out for any activity and review it with the girls so they too are prepared. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl, missing girl, sudden illness, or sudden weather or water emergencies.

Sledding, Tobogganing, and Snow Tubing Checkpoints

Required Training: Troop/Group Program leaders must complete GSUSA's online leadership courses and GSVSC's 281 GS 201 Trips & Overnights course in gsLearn. Adult volunteer chaperones must complete GSVSC's 281 GS 104 Orientation for Support Volunteers online course in gsLearn.

Select a safe site. *Activities are required to take place at a commercial resort only.* Ensure sledding takes place in a safe spot, away from roads and free of vehicles. The site should have no obstructions such as rocks, poles, benches, trees, or signposts. The nature of the terrain, potential hazards (such as an avalanche or frozen lake), mileage, and approximate activity time should be known to all group members in advance. Avoid sledding near streets or highways.

Make smart decisions. Girls should slide downhill feet first (like Olympians) to reduce the potential for head injuries from collisions. Use of helmets for sledding is strongly recommended.

Do not permit towing. Girl Scout members are not permitted to be towed on sleds, toboggans, or tubes behind a motor vehicle of any kind including snow mobiles. Never use a motorized vehicle to pull a sled or tube.

Get a weather report. On the morning of the activity, check [Weather.com](https://www.weather.com) or other reliable weather sources to determine if conditions are appropriate. If weather conditions prevent the activity, be prepared with a backup plan or alternative activity, or postpone the activity. Write, review, and practice evacuation and emergency plans for severe weather with girls.

Practice safe sledding, tobogganing, and snow tubing. Conditions should be monitored, and breaks taken to prevent hypothermia and frostbite. Girls and adults must agree on the portion of slope to be used for sledding and the portion to be used for walking uphill.

Prepare for emergencies. Ensure the presence of a waterproof first aid kit and a first aider with a current certificate in first aid, including adult and child CPR or CPR/AED, who is prepared for cases of frostbite, cold exposure, hypothermia, and altitude sickness. If any part of the activity is located 30 minutes or more from emergency medical services, ensure the presence of a first aider with Wilderness First Aid certification.

Safety and Recommended Gear

- Hat, mittens, or warm gloves.
- Waterproof winter boots.
- Bicycle or ski helmets (may be required by some organized sledding facilities).
- Heavy, wool insulating socks (avoid cotton socks).
- Layered clothing.
- Thermal underwear or long underwear.
- Snow pants, snowsuit, or waterproof pants over warm layers.