



Cross Country Skiing

Activity Permitted for: *D B J C S A

***Activity Not Recommended for:** Daisies

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

Vendor Approval: Required

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

About Cross-Country Skiing

Also referred to as Nordic and XC skiing, cross-country is a form of skiing where skiers rely on their own locomotion to move across snow covered terrain, rather than using ski lifts or other forms of assistance. Unlike downhill skiing, in which the entire boot is attached to the ski, only the toe of the cross-country boot is attached to the ski.

*Cross-country skiing is not recommended for Daisies due to the complex nature of the cross-country ski and the fact that young girls will typically not learn with ski poles, which means it may be far more difficult for an adult volunteer to coral and manage a group of Daisies for this activity. Daisies may find it too labor intensive and not enjoyable which is why it is not recommended. However, while cross country skiing is not recommended for Daisies it is permitted, so councils located in regions where cross-country skiing with young children is common and typical, it is permitted.

Know where to cross-country ski: designated cross-country ski trails are recommended. Connect with your Girl Scout council for site suggestions and approval. Also, [Cross Country Ski Areas Association](#) provides information about cross-country skiing trails.

Learn More

- [Cross Country Ski Areas Association](#)
- [National Ski Patrol](#)

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 ski instructor and 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.

Cross Country Skiing Checkpoints

Vendor Approval Required for Cross Country Skiing. Review Vendor Approval section under the *Standard Safety Guidelines for vendor approval timelines*. Connect with your Girl Scout council for approved vendor suggestions to ensure they are properly insured. If it is not, allow enough time to have the vendor approved. The owner operator should be able to confirm one million dollars General Liability insurance upon request. For privately/locally owned businesses, the council will request a certificate of insurance to document evidence of the insurance coverage and name the council as additional insured. Most facilities will accommodate this request if they are able to administratively. [See High Adventure Approved Vendors List \(#2127\)](#).

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.

Verify instructor knowledge and experience. Instruction is given by an adult with experience teaching and/or supervising cross-country skiing for the ages involved, or has documented experience, according to your council's guidelines.

Select a safe site. Girls are encouraged to plan trip details and include adequate rest periods with opportunities to replenish fluids and eat high-energy foods (such as fruits and nuts). The nature of the terrain, potential hazards (such as an avalanche or frozen lake), mileage, and approximate cross-country skiing time should be known to all group members. When a latrine is not available, individual cat holes located at least 200 feet away from water sources should be used to dispose of human waste.

Map the course. The route should be marked on a map.

Designate a meeting spot. Before skiing, designate a meeting place where girls can contact a supervising adult.

Recover from a fall. The act of hoisting back up while wearing skis can be a cumbersome process. Have members learn how to get back up on their skis.

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, sprains, fractures, and altitude sickness. Emergency transportation should be available. 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.

Girls must be trained in winter survival (such as snow-cave building, whiteouts, and avalanche avoidance), as needed. Search and rescue procedures are written out in advance and arrangements are made for medical emergencies and evacuation procedures.

Follow cross-country skiing safety standards. Ski area rules are explained and observed:

- Girls should ski under control to avoid other skiers and objects.
- Girls must yield the right-of-way to those already on the trail. They step to the side to let the faster skier pass. A descending skier has the right of way.
- A faster skier should indicate her desire to pass by calling “track, please.”
- Never ski close to the edge of an embankment or a cliff.
- Girls must not walk on ski trails.

Safety and Required Gear

- Skis and ski poles
- Boots
- Water-resistant gloves or mittens
- Heavy insulating socks
- Winter hat
- Thermal underwear or long underwear (as necessary)
- Sunglasses or ski goggles to protect eyes from glare
- Water bottle
- High-energy food (such as fruits and nuts)
- A daypack to carry personal belongings