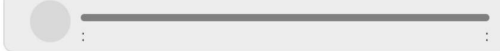


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Updated on November 4, 2025

Skiing and Snowboarding Safety Tips

Before you hit the mountain, know the risks. Summit Orthopaedics shares safety tips and injury prevention advice for skiing and snowboarding so you can enjoy a fun, injury-free winter season.

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Skiing and snowboarding are two of the most thrilling and popular winter sports out there and they are a fantastic experience to share with others. While staying active in the mountains is an excellent way for families to bond, skiing and snowboarding can be dangerous and you can get injured if you're not following safety precautions.

Even in the best of conditions, mountains and slopes can create a hostile environment, and with great skiing or snowboarding power and speed comes great responsibility. The speed of these sports, combined with the mountainous terrain, means that these sports must be taken seriously if accidents are to be avoided.

That's why we've compiled some tips and advice to help you prepare for the next time you hit the slopes. Read on to find out how you can keep yourself and your family safe during your next skiing or snowboarding trip.

Use the right gear

Like many other winter sports, snowboarding and skiing require the use of proper equipment and gear. Here are some valuable tips to help you prepare the correct gear:

- Before the first run of the year, have your bindings checked by a professional to ensure they work properly.
- Put on a helmet. This piece of safety advice cannot be emphasized enough. According to [The American Association of Neurological Surgeons](#), skiing and snowboarding are among the top 20 recreational activities contributing to head injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms (AANS).
- Have the necessary equipment. Skis and poles must be sized for the skier's height and ability. The boots should be the correct size. Ask for assistance when purchasing the equipment to ensure you have the right size.
- Wear sunscreen to protect your exposed skin and ski goggles or sunglasses to shield your eyes.
- Wear multiple layers of lightweight clothing that can be removed or added as the weather or level of exertion changes.
- Wear clothing that is windproof and waterproof. The top of a slope can get very cold.

Ice hazards

Icy conditions pose additional dangers to skiers and snowboarders. To ensure your safety on snowy slopes, keep the following in mind:



- Skis and snowboards should be tuned specifically for ice use.
- If a friend is in danger or difficulty, do not put yourself in danger to help them. Instead, make sure you seek help from the Ski Patrol.
- The degree of difficulty increases significantly when a slope is covered in ice. So make sure you keep an eye on the weather and snow conditions as they change.
- Choose runs appropriate for your skill level and obey all slope signs. Don't be tempted to ski or board a run you don't think you can handle.

Hypothermia and frostbite

It's important to be aware of hypothermia and frostbite symptoms when you're on the slopes. If you or anyone with you experiences any of the following symptoms, make sure you seek immediate shelter and medical attention:

- Grey or blue skin on the face
- Loss of physical coordination
- Speaking difficulties, such as slurring
- Uncontrollable shivering, followed by lack of shivering
- Loss of control over small muscles, such as the muscles of the fingers
- Cold, hard, and white skin numb patches on the skin swollen and blistering skin

Avalanche awareness

Avalanches can cause high-risk emergencies. Unfortunately, they are more common than you might think, and you should take every precaution and measure possible to avoid being in the path of an avalanche.

Always carry an avalanche transceiver, an extra-long collapsible probe, and a shovel if you plan to ski off-piste. The transceiver emits an electronic signal that can be detected even from many meters beneath the snow, assisting rescuers in tracking you or allowing you to track a victim if set to rescue mode. The probe and shovel will be your only manual tools for digging yourself out.



Follow the rules

The Alpine Responsibility code is a set of rules aimed at injury prevention and used to keep people safe in snow sports all over the world. The code reinforces many of the previously discussed points:

- Warm-up before hitting the slopes every day.
- Maintain and inspect all equipment to ensure proper fit.
- Try to avoid skiing or snowboarding when you are tired.
- Beginners should seek the guidance of a certified instructor.
- Wear protective gear such as helmets, wrist guards, and sunscreen.
- Never ski or snowboard alone. Always make sure you're with someone.
- Stay on marked trails to avoid "out-of-bounds" skiing and snowboarding.

Slope injuries are common

Slope injuries are more common than you think, especially since downhill skiing and snowboarding involve high speeds. Sprains and broken bones are the most common, and they can occur as a result of falls or running into objects on the slopes. These are some of the types of injuries that can occur:

- Injuries to the head. High-speed collisions and crashes can cause serious head and neck injuries. Helmets make the sport safer, but they do not eliminate all injuries. Remember that helmets must be the correct size and worn correctly in order to function correctly.
- Injury to the upper extremity. Falling on an outstretched hand or shoulder is a common snowboarding injury. Rest, ice, compression, and elevation should be used to treat minor injuries (RICE). Severe pain may indicate a broken bone or a dislocated joint—request assistance from the ski patrol.
- Injury to the lower extremity. Leg injuries can occur due to a fall, collision, or crash. Check that the boot bindings are correctly adjusted to release properly during a fall. Twisting knee injuries can occur due to skidding out of control or falling off the lift.

Serious injuries, such as a tear in the anterior cruciate ligament, necessitate the assistance of the ski patrol to get to a medical center. Skiers and snowboarders with a lot of swelling, persistent pain, and difficulty walking and moving the knee should see a doctor as soon as possible.

At [Summit Orthopaedics](#), our doctors keep up to date on the latest advances in orthopaedic care. Our team is always ready to help you get the care you need, from musculoskeletal injuries and back pain to sports injuries and joint replacement surgeries. So if you have had an accident or if you are experiencing orthopaedic pain, call or [book an appointment](#) with our physicians today.

Summit Orthopaedics has an answering service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by dialling 208-227-1100. In an emergency, the answering service can contact a provider or provide additional instructions on what you need to do.

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