



SPRINGWATER CONSERVATION AREA MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL

SNOWSHOEING 101

HISTORY

The North American Indigenous Peoples used the snowshoe to help them travel easily in the winter. They saw the foot of the lynx, rabbit or some other similar creature that could travel easily over the snow. Very specifically, the purpose of the snowshoe is to allow person to walk over deep snow without sinking. The different styles evolved because of different needs in different areas and the availability of different types of wood to construct the frames.

PUTTING ON THE GEAR

- With both shoes flat on the ground and the binding side up.
- Place their toe into the “cup” of the binding; the “strap will need to be under their foot.
- Sometimes it is best to kneel as you pull the strap over the heel of the boot.
- If the strap is too high above the ankle, it will be uncomfortable; usually the strap sits less than an inch from the sole of the boot.
- Small users will need help. It is best if they kneel so you can pull the strap.
- It is great if you have a spare pair of mittens, as putting on and taking off of the snowshoes will wear out a pair of gloves before you know it.

WALKING ON SNOWSHOES

- A long stride helps prevent having to walk with your legs spread unnaturally wide, and helps to prevent stepping on one snowshoe with the other, which is a common problem with beginners.
- Try to lead with the knee, and point the knee where you would like to go.
- Snowshoes are designed to fit together when walking, so it is easy to illustrate how a long stride is needed.
- Plant the snowshoe into soft snow heel first.
- When going over obstacles avoid putting weight on tips and tails with no support under the foot.
- This style of snowshoe will slide on slopes.
- Never wear the snowshoes on ice.



FALLING

- If you feel yourself falling try to sit down & lean back slightly.
- To get back up, get the snowshoes right under you. Get one knee under you and one foot under you and bring yourself up.
- If all else fails you can take the snowshoes off and get up from there.
- If you have fallen on a slope, place the snowshoes in position horizontally across the grade of the slope.

TURNING

- Most importantly, the tails will move the least while the tips cover most of the distance.
- STEP TURN is a simple, broad turn made by moving the right snowshoe to the right slightly, followed by the left. Repeat these short movements until you are pointed where you want to go.
- 180' KICK TURN can be done with a little practice and without poles. Simply lift the right leg up and turn it 180' to the rear; try leaving the tail down, then match with the left leg.

SNOWSHOEING PATH

The main snowshoe path is around the Snowshoe Rental Building. More advanced snowshoers are welcome to branch off into the hiking paths starting at the "Snowshoe Hiker" icon.

