

## Snowshoeing

### Application

This standard applies to club-sponsored trips where snowshoes are used except for alpine scrambles and climbs that may use snowshoes for travel in winter conditions. This standard applies to any committee or branch sponsoring a snowshoe trip, including, but not limited to: Snowshoeing, Lodges, Singles, and Under-the –Hill-Rovers.

### Trips

Trips will be rated using a 1-4 scale for both strenuousness and technical difficulty, and the rating must be available to participants when they sign up.

### Rating System

Strenuous Ratings	Technical Ratings
<b>S1:</b> 0-750 ft. elevation gain, maximum 6 miles round trip. Most likely on an established trail or road.	<b>T1:</b> Terrain is flat or gentle with minimal avalanche danger. Open to all properly equipped members and non-members of The Mountaineers.
<b>S2:</b> 500-1,500 ft. elevation gain, maximum 8 miles round trip.	<b>T2:</b> No exposure to steep terrain which would require the use of an ice axe with minimal avalanche danger. Must be a student or graduate of Basic Snowshoeing, and students must have successfully completed the field trip prior to sign-up.
<b>S3:</b> 1,000-2,500 ft. elevation gain, maximum 10 miles round trip.	<b>T3:</b> Exposure to terrain that may require the use of an ice axe and/or the use of avalanche tools: beacon, probe, and shovel. Must be a student or graduate of Intermediate Snowshoeing, Alpine Scrambling graduate, or Basic Climbing graduate. Intermediate Snowshoeing students must have successfully completed the field trip prior to sign-up.
<b>S4:</b> 2,000+ ft. elevation gain, 10+ miles round trip of backcountry travel.	<b>T4:</b> Exposure to challenging terrain that will require proficient snow travel skills and the use of an ice axe. May require the use of other equipment such as crampons and avalanche tools: beacon, probe, and shovel. Must be a graduate of Intermediate Snowshoeing, Alpine Scrambling, or Basic Climbing.

The trip description should include the total elevation gain over the course of the route.

The minimum party size is 3, and the maximum party size is 12 unless another maximum party limit applies.

The leader may require safety equipment appropriate for the trip, such as beacons, probes, shovels, ice axes, and/or crampons.

### **Leaders**

Leaders must be approved to lead trips by the sponsoring committee.

Sponsoring committees or branches must be satisfied that Leaders of snowshoe trips have competence in the following skills as appropriate for the trips they are approved to lead:

- Winter travel skills
- Group leadership
- Use of topographical maps, compass, and altimeter
- Mountain safety, including identification of avalanche hazards, route selection, and group dynamics associated with decision-making in avalanche terrain
- Mountaineering Oriented First Aid / Wilderness First Aid (graduation from the MOFA or WFA course, or Equivalency)
- Emergency preparedness (including winter bivouacs and how to summon help should it be needed)

Leaders will be classified using a two-tiered badge system with the following differentiations.

<b>Basic Snowshoe Leader</b>	<b>Intermediate Snowshoe Leader</b>
Qualified to lead S1-S4, T1-T2 trips only Avalanche Awareness Training required	Qualified to lead all trips AIARE Level 1 Avalanche Training required

### **Participants**

Beginner snowshoe trips, those posted using the Beginner template. There are no prerequisites for Beginner trips (S1-S2, T1) as long as the participant is able to competently travel on snowshoes and is properly equipped.

Basic snowshoe trips, those posted using the Basic template. The following prerequisite applies to participants of Basic trips (S1-S4, T2):

- Graduation from the Basic Snowshoeing course (or Equivalency); or
- Student enrolled in the Basic Snowshoeing course and having successfully completed the field trip prior to sign up; or
- Graduation from the Alpine Scrambling course; or

- Graduation from the Basic Climbing course.

Intermediate snowshoe trips, those posted using the Intermediate template. The following prerequisite applies to participants of Intermediate trips (S1-S4, T3-T4):

- Graduation from the Intermediate Snowshoeing course (or Equivalency); or
- Student enrolled in the Intermediate Snowshoeing course and having successfully completed the field trip prior to sign up (exception: students are allowed on T3-rated trips only); or
- Graduation from the Alpine Scrambling course; or
- Graduation from the Basic Climbing course; or

Participants are responsible for signing up only for trips that are within their capabilities, wearing suitable clothing, and carrying appropriate equipment, including the Ten Essentials.

### **Courses**

Activity committees and branches may offer courses in snowshoeing and require them as prerequisites for trips. Established courses and their minimum content are:

#### Basic Snowshoeing

- Equipment and clothing selection
- Trip selection based on conditioning and skill level
- Snowshoe travel (on-snow practice)
- Avalanche hazards and safe travel principles
- Basic emergency preparedness (including prevention and treatment of hypothermia and frostbite, summoning help if needed, and protecting an injured or ill person until help arrives)

#### Intermediate Snowshoeing

- Equipment and clothing selection
- Trip selection based on conditioning and skill level
- Snowshoe travel (on-snow practice)
- Avalanche hazards and safe travel principles
- Using an avalanche beacon, probe, and shovel (on-snow practice)
- Ice axe use on steep slopes (on-snow practice including self-belay and self-arrest)
- Use of topographical maps, compass, and altimeter
- Emergency preparedness (including winter bivouacs and how to summon help should it be needed)

### **Instructors**

Snowshoe course instructors must be:

- Graduates of the course they are instructing (or have equivalency); or
- Approved Snowshoe Leaders; or
- Approved by the sponsoring committee to instruct

**Related Minimum Club Wide Standards**

- General Standards for All Club Activities, under development
- AIARE Level 1 Avalanche Training
- Mountaineering Oriented First Aid (MOFA)
- Wilderness First Aid (WFA)

**Comparable Standard**

UIAA Standards for Voluntary Leaders and Instructors, October 2006

- Activity Standard 2: Winter Mountain Walking and Snowshoeing