



# Section 8: Guidelines for Cross-Country Skiing



- The leader should know the area where the group will go including the level of difficulty, access points, alternate routes, shelters and emergency help locations.
- The leader should plan a trip that can easily be finished by all participants before dark.

# On the trip



The leader should:

- Ensure that everyone in the group is fully apprised of the level of difficulty and trail conditions of the area.
- Participants should be cautioned not to ski trails beyond their ability.
- Beginner trips should not go far from a warming hut or car, so consider a touring center. Intermediate and Advanced trips may go miles into the wilderness.



- For trails not adequately signed, provide participants with an accurate and legible map.
- Teach basic skills to beginners in order to avoid injury, such as how to fall.
- Suggest that participants wear bright clothing. They will be easier to keep track of in a white out, easier for snowmobilers to spot from a distance, and will help avoid injury during hunting season.



- Have skiers travel in groups of three or more in remote areas so that in case of injury one person can go for help while another stays with the injured party.
- Be watchful of weather changes and be ready to modify plans if necessary. Have an alternate plan if the snow conditions do not allow planned activity.



- Ensure that everyone on the trip carries food, water and extra clothing (including a warm hat).
- Also encourage them to check frequently for frostbite.
- Know the trails you intend to ski. Check them out in advance by hiking them in the summer or using books that rate trails for skiing.

## Reference books:

- Backcountry Skiing, Sierra Club,
- Wilderness Skiing, Sierra Club,
- AMC Backcountry Skiing in New England

