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Beginner's Guide to Snowshoeing



★★★★★ 0 RATINGS //

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Never tried snowshoeing? Don't worry, it's not that hard—once you get the hang of it. Here are five tips to keep you moving... and out of the nearest snowbank.



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Remember in the *Ghostbusters* movie, when they emphasized the importance of not crossing streams? It's the exact same thing with snowshoeing. Only it's your snowshoes you don't want to cross when walking or turning—which could possibly result in you plummeting into the fluffy snow and floundering there like a rather clumsy bear. Not that this happened to me. But it might possibly have happened to my husband, who spent the next 15 minutes digging snow out of his camera.

Despite this setback, snowshoeing is surprisingly easy once you get the hang of it, and also a wonderful way to experience pristine, snowy scenery. Here are a few tips to keep in mind if you're a newbie to snowshoes.

1. Choose a great location with lots of snow

We went to Door County, Wisconsin, which is located on a peninsula that juts out into Lake Michigan and has plenty of beautiful, unspoiled state parks. And it was the perfect introduction to snowshoeing for us. We snowshoed in the Ridges Sanctuary and Whitefish Dunes State Park and both locations were just gorgeous with piles of fresh white snow everywhere. Pick a spot where guides are available, as it will make the experience much better. In our case, they pointed out the local trees, foliage and wildlife.

2. Make sure you have the right snowshoes

The first day, we had a wonderful time snowshoeing but our snowshoes were an old-fashioned style that

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didn't fit very well and were too large for us. On the second day, when we got well-fitting snowshoes that were strapped on correctly, we had a much better experience.



3. Get help from experts

On the second day, a very kind member of our group showed us how to choose the right snowshoes and how to lace them tightly and this made all the difference. If you are not comfortable with your snowshoes, ask for help.

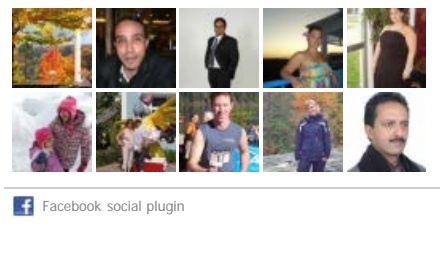
4. Walk correctly

At first, we spent a great deal of time trying to walk as we would normally, but snowshoe walking is a little different. You actually just lift the front part of your foot and sort of drag the back of the foot and the snowshoe on top of the snow. Once you figure this out, it makes snowshoeing easier and a lot more fun. As one of the members of our group pointed out, when snowshoeing, you need to “walk wide” with your legs slightly apart instead of your feet close together.



5. Dress comfortably

Snowshoeing is, surprisingly, pretty hard work and you will actually work up a sweat—which seems amazing considering how cold it is! Dress in layers, as you may want to shed your coat as you walk. If it is



a very cold day, you will want a warm hat, gloves and scarf to start, although those may end up in your pockets as well. One item that was very helpful was packaged foot and hand warmers, which we tucked into our boots and gloves. When we first started out, it was pretty cold and these felt great, especially on our toes!

Don't be afraid to try snowshoeing—it's very easy and a great deal of fun. Just don't cross those snowshoes! And, if you do, just get up, dust off the snow and keep going.

JAN ROSS



After a lifetime of travel, Jan Ross can pack a bag and hit the road with very little notice, although she will always have a little black dress and some snazzy shoes in there. She loves to travel with her husband of more than 35 years as he is a great photographer and she is often way too busy having fun to think about taking pictures. Active travel or relaxing, she is up for it all!

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