

How to Size Snow Skis

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Before you spend hundreds of dollars on snow skis, take a moment to think about the length and shape of them. The proper size snow skis can make skiing easy and enjoyable. The wrong size can make even the simplest task a chore.

Difficulty: Moderately Easy

Instructions

things you'll need:

- Outdoor outfitter or ski shop
- Variety of skis to demo

Choosing the Proper Type of Ski

- 1 Choose the appropriate type of skis, according to your ability level and the type of skiing you enjoy. Skis are made in freeride, freestyle, all-mountain and powder skis.
- 2 Buy all-mountain skis or freeride skis if you enjoy skiing at high speeds in all types of snow conditions. Generally speaking, longer skis offer the rider more stability at higher speeds. Freeride skis are designed for terrain parks and demand maneuverability, so you'll want to consider a shorter ski. Choose powder skis if you'll be skiing powder or "crud" that is at least several inches deep.
- 3 Avoid "inheriting" someone else's skis unless they are the same height, weight and skiing ability as you. Using an incorrect ski type and length can hurt your skiing.

Choosing the Proper Ski Length

- 1 Choose a relatively short ski between 120 and 140 cm if you're just learning how to ski. Shorter skis are easier to turn but are unstable at high speeds. Since you're just learning, chances are you'll want a ski that's easy to maneuver over a ski that tracks fast. Shorter skis are also ideal for smaller women.
- 2 Rent a ski that's between 140 and 160 cm if you're an intermediate skier or a beginner who is heavier or more athletic. Skis at this length are easier to turn but are still stable at moderate speeds.
- 3 Buy a ski that is between 160 and 176 cm if you're an advanced skier or a heavier man. Skis in this range are more stable at higher speeds but are still relatively easy to turn.
- 4 Rent various lengths of skis, especially before you buy them. Ski the same terrain conditions with different lengths of skis to determine how each of them

performs.

- 5 Rent or buy shorter skis if they are broader or "fatter." Use longer skis if they are narrower. Generally speaking, the wider the ski, the shorter the length.

Tips & Warnings

- Deal with a reputable ski shop that will let you try before you buy. Rent skis through ski shops that are close to the mountain. Try "fatter" skis for skiing powder or crud.
- Avoid using others' skis unless they are the correct size for you. Never scrimp on price.