

Fernie Nordic Society



Special thanks to <http://www.xcskiworld.com>

What is Cross Country Skiing?

Cross Country Skiing (aka Nordic Skiing or XC Skiing) is, in the opinion of many exercise physiologists and researchers, the world's best aerobic fitness activity. The sport involves simultaneous use of arms and legs utilizing ski equipment including boots, poles, and skis.

The primary functional difference between Cross Country Skiing (XC) and alpine (downhill) skiing is that in XC skiing, the skier is attached to the ski only with the toe--with the heel "free". In alpine skiing, the entire foot is attached to the ski. The free heel allows a XC skier to climb, descend and traverse terrain making the sport a truly "cross country" activity. In alpine skiing and snowboarding, the participant is limited to the range of downhill slope.



With origins in Scandinavia 4000-4500 years ago, Cross Country Skiing has come a long way from being the sole method of transportation for snow and ice-bound Northerners. You can Cross Country Ski on every continent on Earth and in many island nations at Cross Country Ski Centers featuring prepared tracks as well as off-track in parks, woods, mountains--just about anywhere! Competition in Cross Country Skiing

spans the globe with a third of all the Winter Olympic medals being awarded in Cross Country Skiing and the other Nordic sports.

Although commonly thought of as a minor winter sport in the Canada., Cross Country Skiing is actually the great-great-grandparent of all ski sports since both alpine skiing and snowboarding were only recently derived from this free-heeled ancestor. A member of the Nordic sport family, Cross Country Skiing is divided into two styles or competitive disciplines; Classic (aka Traditional or Diagonal) skiing which involves a straight-ahead gliding motion, and Ski Skating (aka Freestyle) which involves a V-style glide and edge motion much like ice skating or roller blading.

Other members of the Nordic sport family are: biathlon--cross country skiing and rifle marksmanship, ski jumping, Nordic combined--combined scoring of jumping and cross country skiing events, ski orienteering--a marker search on skis with aid of compass and map, and telemark--a distinctive decent technique performed with free heel equipment.