

## Skiing

In the winter, Yellowstone offers a variety of enjoyable and challenging trails for the skier. All trails are marked but may be untracked. On some trails, the more difficult and most difficult sections can be avoided by skiing part way in and returning to the same trailhead. The experience you have will depend upon the amount of planning and preparation you do prior to your trip. We suggest that you stop at a visitor center or ski shop and discuss your trip in person. The staff will be happy to provide current information on weather, trail, snow conditions, and alert you to any special winter hazards. Wood fires are not permitted. Pets are not allowed on ski trails or in backcountry areas.

**Backcountry trails**, marked with dashed black line, are suitable for travel, but should only be attempted by experienced parties equipped with topographic maps and a compass. Overnight camping requires a free backcountry use permit which must be obtained in person from the Mammoth or Old Faithful visitor centers/or West, South, or East entrance stations. Your permit may be picked up 48 hours in advance and will designate the camping area to be used.

### Trail Etiquette

- Do not snowshoe or walk directly on ski tracks.
- Skiers going uphill yield to those going downhill.

## Safety

When skiing near thermal areas, stay on marked trails. Approaching thermal features is dangerous and prohibited. The snow in these areas is often icy and what appears to be bare ground may be a thin crust over boiling water.

Winter weather in Yellowstone changes rapidly and can be severe. Many areas are frequently windy. Wear proper clothing. Watch yourself and other members of your party for signs of frostbite and hypothermia. For your safety, always ski with someone else. Tell someone where you are going, by what route, and when you plan to return. Carry extra clothing, food, water, map and compass, matches, flashlight, and a whistle.

In avalanche-prone areas carry a shovel, avalanche transceiver, probe, and first aid kit - and know how to use them. Avalanche-prone areas are not marked on maps.

## Wildlife

Please do not approach wildlife. Large mammals survive on stored fat and low quality food during winter. Causing them to move will cost them precious calories vital for survival. If animals look at you and move away, you are too close.

In important winter wildlife habitat, cross-country ski and snowshoe travel may be restricted to designated routes. The park is currently developing these guidelines. This information will be posted at winter trailheads, visitor centers and warming huts.

## Trail Ratings

### Easiest

Skiers need basic knowledge and limited experience in the diagonal stride, snow plow, and side stepping. Trails may have short downhill and uphill stretches.

### More Difficult

Skiers need to be able to ski varied terrain requiring turning, snow plowing, herringboning, and diagonal stride.

### Most Difficult

Skiers need to be experienced as trails are hazardous and terrain is frequently extreme. Turns are often sharp and linked together with no room to snow plow or herringbone.

## Caution All Skiers

Trails within Yellowstone National Park have been rated by the National Park Service with trail ratings specific to Yellowstone. We strongly encourage all skiers to inquire at a visitor center or Xanterra Ski Shop before beginning their first ski trip. Weather conditions may cause icy trails, deep snow, or barren sections, and in some instances make trails difficult to follow, increasing the difficulty of a trail.

- Trails are not checked daily.
- Trails are not groomed each day.
- Leave your itinerary with a friend.

## National Park Service

P.O. Box 168

Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190

## For emergencies, dial 911

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# TOWER AREA SKI TRAILS



**Yellowstone  
National Park**