New to SkiSparks

Welcome to SkiSparks! We are a group of people who love being active in the outdoors! It can be hard to get outside and enjoy the outdoors during the winter months, but being active with a group of people can help overcome that challenge. SkiSparks is a league of cross-country ski clubs that give children and their families an opportunity to be active together in the winter months. We hope you come for the fun and stay for the life long health benefits of an active lifestyle year long!

What is cross country skiing? Cross country skiing was developed 8,000 years ago in Central Asia, Russia, and Scandinavia as a way to travel long distances over snowy ground. Today it is a vibrant winter sport that can be enjoyed as an individual or in a group. In Cross-Country skiing the skier propels themselves forward by striding on their skis and pushing with their ski poles. Cross-Country skiers learn to glide up hills, swoosh downhill and stride along trails. Cross-country skiing is adventurous, thrilling and fun!

SkiSparks clubs are a group of youth, families, and community members learning to cross-country ski and enjoy winter together. During club time kids are divided into groups according to their ability level. Groups are led by a trained volunteer coach. Each group plays games, learns new skills and explores the trails together. Caregivers are welcome to ski and learn along with their child.

Steps to participate in SkiSparks (parents/caregivers will be able to click on the steps for more information):

1. Find a Club Location
2. Select a level for your skier
3. Ski Equipment
4. Register
5. Volunteer
6. Dress for Winter Fun
7. Attend club meetings
Step one
Find a club location that works for you.

We have 45+ clubs throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. Find a location that is close to you!

Clubs meet 8 times a winter, normally during the day on a weekend when we can all be outside and enjoy the sunshine. Club meeting dates are listed on the individual club websites. Links to club websites are on the Find a Club page. Click on the name of the club to navigate to that club page.
Step Two
Select a level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Who is this level for?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>- Beginning skiers in this age range.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2     | 6-8       | - Completed level 1  
- Beginning skiers in this age range.  
- Skiers who can walk on skis and get up independently. |
| 3     | 7-10      | - Completed level 2  
- Beginning skiers 9-10 years old.  
- Skiers who can sidestep up hills, glide down gentle hills and use poles. |
| 3 Stars | 11-14     | - Beginning skiers who are 11 years old and older. |
| 4     | 8-14      | - Completed level 3.  
- Skiers who have learned classic skiing technique, have a good use of poles, and are comfortable on hills. |
| 5     | 9-14      | - Completed level 4 and are ready for skate skiing.  
- Skiers with advanced classic ski technique. |
| 6     | 11-14     | - Completed level 5.  
- Skiers who know basic skate ski techniques. |
Step Three
Equipment

Every skier must bring the equipment listed below to every club meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1     | ● Classic non-wax skis (skin or fishscale skis)  
       | ● Classic boots. |
| 2     | ● Classic non-wax skis (skin or fishscale skis)  
       | ● Classic boots  
       | ● Ski poles |
| 3     | ● Classic non-wax skis (skin or fishscale skis)  
       | ● Classic boots  
       | ● Ski poles |
| 3 Stars | ● Classic non-wax skis (skin or fishscale skis) OR waxable classic skis  
        | ● Classic boots  
        | ● Ski poles |
| 4     | ● Classic non-wax skis (skin or fishscale skis) OR waxable classic skis  
       | ● Classic boots  
       | ● Ski poles |
| 5     | ● Skate skis  
       | ● Combi boots  
       | ● Skate ski poles |
| 6     | ● Skate skis  
       | ● Combi boots  
       | ● Skate ski poles |

There are three main ways to obtain equipment.

*Indicates Club Equipment Option listed on [Find A Club]

1. Select SkiSparks Clubs have rental equipment.
   a. Of these clubs, some allow you to request and pay for rental equipment online [Club Rentals - Online]* and some have fitting nights where you pay onsite [Club Rentals - In Person]*. Check the [Find A Club] page for details on the different clubs.
   b. In most cases, clubs only rent waxless classic skis in youth sizes. This will not work for many 13-14 year old skiers. The largest boots in most club rental banks are Euro 42 (Mens 9).
c. All of the clubs run out of equipment. You can still participate in any club with your own equipment.

2. Some CHALETS/FACILITIES have daily rentals [Chalet Rentals]*. Please show up 30 minutes earlier than your club meeting time to fit and pay. This is for adults and children, classic and skating.

3. Some clubs and club locations have neither equipment banks or onsite rentals. In these cases, it is up to you to purchase (at a retailer or ski swap) your own equipment. [Skiers Must Have Equipment]*

Tips about purchasing equipment.

● Purchasing new equipment
  ○ Local ski shops are going to have the best service for new equipment. They can guide you through the purchase and most ski shops in our region are familiar with what an MYSL skier needs. Make sure you mention your skier is joining MYSL, you may qualify for a discount!

● Purchasing used equipment.
  ○ There are different types of bindings. The boots must be made to fit into the type of bindings the skis have on them.
    ■ We recommend NNN or SNS bindings.
  ○ Level 1-4: Purchase CLASSIC skis, boots and poles
    ■ Purchase non-wax classic skis, especially if you are new to skiing.
  ○ Level 5-6: Purchase SKATE skis, skate or combi boots, and poles

● See our Youth Ski Fitting Chart
Step four
Register

- All youth (ages 4-14) involved in the club must register on our website. Once you have completed the registration your child is a member of the club they have registered for.
- Information you will need to know during registration
  - Which club are you registering for?
  - Which level are you registering your skier for?
  - If you are obtaining equipment through MYSL we need:
    - Height of your child (in inches)
    - Weight of your child (in pounds)
    - Shoe size (in Euro), error on the side of a little big
    - YOU MUST be accurate with your size information! Your skier will receive the size you requested.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU Size</th>
<th>US Size (Youth)</th>
<th>US Size (Women)</th>
<th>US Size (Men)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>13.5</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42+</td>
<td>not available at most clubs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Payment
  - Scholarships are available!
  - You can pay online with a credit card
  - There is an option to mail in a check.
Step five
Sign up to Volunteer

We encourage all caregivers to sign up to volunteer. No skiing required! All of our clubs are 100% volunteer run and we would love your help to insure a fun and safe environment for all the kids!

Leader
- Task: Main coordinator for the club and the point of contact for MyXC Staff and families.
- Time Commitment: Shared position. September - April, 2-3 hours a week
- Ski Experience: Background ski knowledge helpful. No skiing required.
- Location: Personal Computer and Club Meetings
- Learn More

Director
- Task: Complete administrative tasks to create an inclusive and welcoming club.
- Time Commitment: Shared position. 8-10 hours during the season.
- Ski Experience: none.
- Location: Personal computer and club meetings
- Learn More

Outreach Coordinator
- Task: Connect and facilitate partnerships between MyXC and underserved communities
- Time Commitment: Shared position. September - April, 2-4 hours per month
- Ski Experience: Background ski knowledge helpful. No skiing required.
- Location: Out in the community, at events, and forming relationships by meeting people where they are
- Learn More

Meeting Space and/or Snack Coordinator
NOTE: This role is not available during the 2020-2021 season due to COVID-19.
- Task: Coordinate a space and/or snack for community building.
- Time Commitment: Shared position. 2-4 hours during the season.
- Ski Experience: none
- Location: Personal computer and inside the meeting area (if available at club location) during club meetings.
- Learn More
**Equipment Manager**
- Task: Manage and distribute rental skis.
- Time Commitment: 3-8 hours in November and December. 1-2 hours in March.
- Ski Experience: Background knowledge helpful. No skiing required.
- Location: Home or facility.
- Learn More

**Photographer**
- Task: Take pictures at club meetings with personal camera/phone and share with club members and MyXC Staff.
- Time Commitment: Shared position. 2-4 hours during the season.
- Ski Experience: none.
- Location: Club meetings.
- Learn More

**Coach**
- Task: Lead groups of skiers through weekly curriculum activities and games.
- Time Commitment: 8 Club Meetings, 1 ½ hours each
- Ski Experience: Beginner through elite. Must have ski equipment each week.
- Location: Club Meetings
- Learn More

**Assistant Coach**
- Task: Ski along with a group of kids and lead games.
- Time Commitment: 8 Club Meetings, 1 ½ hours each
- Ski Experience: Beginner through intermediate. Must have ski equipment each week.
- Location: Club Meetings
- Learn More

**Sweeper**
- Task: Ski in the back of a group and encourage kids.
- Time Commitment: 8 Club Meetings, 1 ½ hours each
- Ski Experience: Beginner. Must have ski equipment each week.
- Location: Club Meetings
- Learn More

**Junior Coach**
- Task: Ski with a group of kids and show them how fun skiing is.
- Time Commitment: 4-8 Club Meetings, 1 ½ hours each.
- Ski Experience: Intermediate through Elite.
- Location: Club Meetings
- Learn More
Step six
Dress for Winter Fun!

For levels 1-3 dress your child like they are going to play in the snow, because this is what they will be doing! The most important things are:

- Warm, dry socks. Wool socks are the best if they are available to you.
- Warm, dry mittens. Try to stay away from gloves to avoid cold fingers.
- Warm hat that covers your ears.
- Something to cover your neck.

Level 4-6
- Some skiers may wear more traditional ski pants and jackets so it's easier to move fast, but it's not necessary. The most important thing is dressing your skier in layers (on the top) so they can take off a layer when they get hot.
  - Winter jacket
  - Fleece jacket/light jacket
  - Long sleeve (not cotton, preferably) shirt
- Warm, dry socks. Wool socks are the best if they are available.
- Warm, dry mittens
- Warm hat that covers your ears.
- Something to cover your neck.

If you need assistance getting clothing to keep your skier warm and comfortable, let us know! We want your skier to have fun and enjoy winter. Staying warm is part of that.
Step Seven
Club Meetings

Club meetings are a time to have fun skiing with friends, play games and learn new skills from a coach. Club meetings are also a time for caregivers to volunteer, learn alongside their skiers, or socialize.

Your club homepage is where you can find all relevant information about the club you registered for. Navigate to your club homepage from the Find a Club page.

Each club is organized by a club leader. Keep an eye on your email! Club leaders will send out information about required ski passes, parking, where to meet, etc. before your first club meeting. If you have a question, the club leader would love to support you! Contact information for your club leader is found on your club homepage. Please reach out!

Club Meeting Tips:

- Leave plenty of time to get your equipment and clothing organized.
- Remember what level your skier is registered for. This will determine what group and coach your skier is assigned to.
  - After the first club meeting, if you believe your skier is not in the correct level or group, please contact your club leader. In almost all instances this can be changed.
- It's better to dress too warm than too cold. You can always take a layer off.
- Make sure your skis and poles are labeled with your name. If the skis are MYSL rental skis, use blue painters tape to label the skis with your name.
- Plan to arrive at club time 15 minutes early so you can get your skier bib and skis on, adjust your layers for the weather and check in with your coach.
- Some locations have tricky parking situations. Always leave plenty of time for parking at locations such as Elm Creek, Hyland and Wirth.
- Challenge your skier to ski outside of club time! It's a fantastic way to get fresh air and embrace winter.
- Club leaders will notify you if your club is not meeting because of cold weather. Clubs do everything they can to meet unless the temperatures are below our guidelines.
  - Northern clubs: -10 air temperature, -15 windchill
  - Southern clubs (Twin Cities and south): -2 air temperature, -10 windchill