



X-COUNTRY

What's it all mean? a guide to XC lingo

If you're new to the sport or maybe even a curious downhiller, you might wonder what all that cross country lingo you hear is. Here's a guide to some of the more common XC ski terms.

Cross Country Skiing - skiing groomed trail over varied terrain with light weight ski equipment. Boots are held onto the ski by a binding system which secures the boot at the front and along the length of the boot but which allows the heel to freely move up off the ski.

Skating - a technique for cross country skiing where the skier pushes the skis to the side and glides. Specific equipment is available although skating can be accomplished on waxable cross country skis. The skier requires a packed groomed surface for the technique.

Classical - refers to the diagonal stride technique of cross country skiing. Contrasts with skating.

Ski Touring - skiing ungroomed trail, back country skiing, breaking your own trail.

Telemark - a downhill turning technique that has developed into its own facet of the sport done mostly at downhill ski resorts and in the back country. Specific equipment (very similar to downhill ski equipment except the heel is free) is available although the telemark turn can be executed on cross country skis.

Nordic - the all encompassing umbrella. Any type of skiing which uses free-heel equipment. contrasts with alpine. Includes cross country,

telemark, ski touring, biathlon (cross country skiing and target shooting), and ski jumping (also called ski flying).

Grooming - mechanically working the snow to produce a more consistent surface for skiing. Grooming is done using either a snowcat vehicle or snowmobile. In either case grooming attachments are pulled behind the snow machine which fluff, pack, grind and move the snow on the trail. The last grooming attachment is a tracksetter which carves "tracks" in the snow for use by classical skiers.

Tracks - grooves made in the snow by a machine which enable a skier to ski more easily when employing the classical diagonal stride. Tracks have proven to increase a beginning skier's ability to learn.

km - kilometers (1 kilometer equals .6 miles).

CANSI - Canadian Association of Nordic Ski Instructors.

PSIA - Professional Ski Instructors of America.

Groomed Trail - The snow has been machine prepared for skiing and tracks have been carved in the snow for ease of skiing.

Ski Jouring - Cross country skiing while being pulled by a harnessed dog (sometimes a horse or reindeer). Fun for both animal and skier! Each season more nordic centers are designating a portion of their trail system for skiers with dogs. Generally if the dog trails are groomed, there will be a trail fee (often for both dog and skier). Be sure to check on the ski area's policy. Some will allow loose dogs while others require dogs to be leashed or attached to the skier (skijoring).

Cross Country Ski Areas

Bear Valley, On Highway 4 east of Arnold. Phone: (209) 753-2834. Webpage: www.bearvalleyxc.com.

Northstar-at-Tahoe, Corner of Highway 267 & Northstar Drive. Phone: (800) 466-6784. Webpage: www.ski-northstar.com.

Royal Gorge, 9411 Hillside Drive (P.O. Box 1100), Soda Springs, CA 95728. Phone: (800) 666-3871 (No. Calif.), or (800) 500-3871.

Webpage: www.royal-gorge.com.

Spooner Lake, P.O. Box 981, Carson City, NV 89702 (Located one-half mile on Highway 28 from Highway 50 on the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe) 12 miles south of Incline Village near Highway 28 and Highway 50 junction. Phone: (775) 887-8844 or (888) 858-8844.

Squaw Creek, Squaw Valley exit on Highway 89.

Phone: (800) 327-3353, (530) 308-0375. Web: www.resortatsquawcreek.com.

Tahoe Cross Country, 925 Country Club Drive, Tahoe City, CA 96145. Phone: (530) 583-5475. Webpage: www.tahoexc.org.

Tahoe Donner Cross Country, 15279 Alder Creek Rd., Truckee, CA 96161. Phone: (530) 587-9484. Webpage: www.tahoe-donner.com.



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