



# Ski / Snowshoe SAR Guidelines

## Individual Winter Gear and Clothing

- ✓ **Pack** – large enough for extra individual and team gear
- ✓ **Boots** – Winter weight providing warmth and stability
- ✓ **Head Cover** - several layers (coat should have a hood as well)
- ✓ **Extra Socks** – Layering system with extras
- ✓ **Gloves or Mittens** – Layering system with extras
- ✓ **Wind/Snow Shell** – top w/hood and pants
- ✓ **Middle Insulation** – be sure to have extra
- ✓ **Inner wicking layer**
- ✓ **Food For 24 hours**
- ✓ **Water – 2 quarts**
- ✓ **Knife**
- ✓ **Fire starter** – with a backup
- ✓ **Compass**
- ✓ **Whistle** - not metal
- ✓ **Signal Mirror**
- ✓ **Headlamp** – with spare bulb and batteries
- ✓ **First aid kit**
- ✓ **Tarp style space blanket** (not thin foil except as an extra)
- ✓ **Pencil and paper** – pens freeze in the winter
- ✓ **Tubular Webbing** – 25 feet
- ✓ **Leather work gloves**
- ❖ **Goggles**
- ❖ **Gaiters**
- ❖ **Metal pot or cup**
- ❖ **Parachute cord** – 25 feet
- ❖ **Insulating pad** – at least large enough to sit on
- ❖ **Field repair kit** – for bindings & poles etc
- ❖ **Snowshoes** w/ice cleats or **Skis** w/climbing skins
- ❖ **Poles** – adjustable probe poles are a plus
  
- ✓ PACE items
- ❖ Extra gear for winter

## Team Winter Gear

- **2-Radios** capable of 155.160 Mhz
- **2-GPS units**
- **2-Stoves**
- **2-Snow shovels**
- **Litter** (capable of snow use) **and sleeping bag available at base**

## Comments and Considerations

The list of individual gear and equipment starts with the PACE gear and clothing list, expounding upon and adding items for winter needs. **The list is considered a minimum.** Warm food, drink and clothing should be considered for subjects. Additional items of gear to be considered are avalanche beacons, extra snowshoes and helmets as well as radios, GPS units, stoves and shovels for all team members. Snow travel gear needs to be strong and large enough to support the weight of the searcher and heavy pack in soft snow. Boots should provide solid ankle support. Either skis w/climbing skins or snowshoes are acceptable, but the searcher should be **proficient** in their use.

## Protocol

The Team Leader will assign a Navigator, Radio Operator, Scribe, Lead and Sweep. Team members may have more than one assignment. While traveling, no team members pass the Lead or fall behind the Sweep. The strongest member should be considered as the Sweep. The Lead and Sweep members must stay in audible contact via voice or radio. Winter search and rescue operations inherently present additional hazards. Team members must be aware the environment, their own condition and that of team members. **All team members are responsible for safety.**

## Training

- **Pace Certification**
- **Medical** – First Aid; including cold weather injuries (hypothermia, frost bite, snow blindness, etc.)
- **Snow Travel** – Proficiency demonstrated on either skis or snowshoes in difficult snow conditions
- **Avalanche Awareness Class or Level I Avalanche Training**
- **Construction of Snow Shelters**