

The Basics of Nordic Skiing and Methow Valley Nordic

Nordic skiing is a winter sport where the front of the foot is connected to the ski by a binding and the heel is free. It is comprised of two different techniques, classic and freestyle. In classic skiing the skis are usually longer, the poles are a bit shorter and skiers move ahead in groomed tracks (grooves) often in a diagonal motion. Classic skis need a grip of some sort under the foot (skins, fishscale pattern or manually applied kick wax) to keep from sliding backwards on the uphill. Freestyle skiing (also known as skate skiing) uses shorter skis, longer poles and the skiers push themselves forward using skating motions similar to ice skating. There is no grip or pattern under the foot. We use both freestyle and classic techniques on the Methow Valley Nordic Team. This differs from alpine skiing and backcountry skiing where the skis and boots are heavier and often have a metal edge. Alpine skiers ride the lift such as at the Loup Loup Ski Bowl and usually the toe and the heel are held by the binding in alpine skiing.

The Methow Valley Nordic Team is part of the non-profit Methow Valley Nordic Ski Education Foundation (MVNSEF). We are a, local, self-funded group that provides a world-class cross-country experience for kids five to eighteen years old. From learning to ski to improving technique, from improving fitness to developing competitive endurance, from growing as a person to developing and practicing life values, from having fun and skiing with friends to creating the memories of a lifetime, the Methow Valley Nordic Team provides all of these experiences through Nordic skiing. The Methow Valley Nordic Team holds practices from November until early March for the whole team, year round for committed older athletes, meeting 2-5 times each week.

MVNSEF also runs the Ski Cubs program for kindergartners to 2nd graders. This is a less committing program introducing kids to the sport. Many of the barriers are removed for the Ski Cub program as skis, boots and poles are provided for the practices. Practices are held at the McCabe trail (at the school) or transportation is provided. Ski Cubs meet once/week for 6 weeks from January to mid-February.