



Adventure Activity Standards (AAS)

**Guidelines for commercial and non- commercial
Dependent Groups**

The Snow Sports AAS

- **Skiing –cross country & downhill**
- **Snowboarding**
- **Tobogganing**
- **Snowshoeing**
- **Snow tubing**
- **Snow camping**

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Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication has been gathered through widespread sector consultation. All reasonable attempts have been made to ensure that it is accurate, relevant and current at the date of publication. The Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) are advisory and general in nature, and should not be relied upon to meet individual or specific requirements. The AAS should be used as a guide only.

The AAS provides recommendations for application to outdoor adventure activity providers and participants. While the AAS are NOT statutory standards imposed by law, some agencies/organisations may make application of the AAS mandatory i.e. Crown land licences, insurers and Worksafe.

Whenever using the information contained in this publication or any AAS, all outdoors adventure activity providers should carefully evaluate the specific requirements of the intended activity and the persons participating in it. If necessary, further advice should be obtained from a suitably experienced and qualified professional person.

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1. Introduction to the AAS

The Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) have been developed to assist commercial and non-commercial organisations and their leaders to plan and safely undertake outdoor adventure activities with dependent participants.

The AAS have been prepared with the involvement of a wide cross-section of Victoria's outdoor sector, and reflect commonly accepted practices for planning and undertaking outdoor adventure activities with dependent participants.

The AAS are guidelines for undertaking outdoor adventure activities in a manner that:

- promotes safety for both participants and providers
- provides assistance for providers against legal liability claims and criminal penalties
- provides assistance in obtaining insurance cover and operator crown land licenses.

The likelihood of injury and loss can be minimised by having suitable risk management programs in place and applying the advice provided in the AAS to suit the particular circumstances of the activity or organisation. Each organisation and leader has a duty of care to the participants to have completed a risk analysis of the activity and developed strategies to address possible risks.

Participants may already have a degree of skill and experience in the particular outdoor adventure activity and so be less dependent upon the leader for guidance and instruction. In these situations the AAS should be adapted to reflect the experience of group members and the particular circumstances of the adventure activity.

The AAS are not fixed documents. They are reviewed periodically in the light of changing knowledge or practices i.e. new equipment or technology, changing understanding of the environment, reports of incidents or near misses in Australia or overseas.

2. The Snow Sports AAS

Snow sports and activity include:

- Downhill skiing – commonly known as alpine skiing and is the sport of skiing down groomed and lift serviced ski runs on skis with fixed-heel alpine or Free heel Telemark bindings
- Cross-country skiing - is a way of accessing winter alpine environments using skis. Cross-country skiing may include skiing on groomed trails as well as skiing on ungroomed snow
- Snowboarding – is using a board resembling a small surfboard and equipped with bindings, used for descending snow-covered slopes on one's feet but without ski poles – snow boards may be used in both lift serviced and back country areas
- Tobogganing - a toboggan is a simple moulded plastic sled which is used on snow to carry people (often children) down a snow hill or other slope for recreation
- Snowshoeing - is a winter sport in which participants wear specially designed gear on their feet which distributes their weight, allowing them to walk on snow without breaking through it
- Snow tubing - is a recreational winter activity that takes place by using an air-filled inner tube, or device that resembles an inner tube, to go downhill at a high rate of speed – (this is only allowed at specially designed and supervised tube parks with a tube tow system)
- Snow camping - is when a group spends one or more nights out in huts, tents, improvised shelters including snow structures, snow caves or with no shelter.

Participation in these activities may occur during the day or overnight.

The activities may be undertaken in either:

- resorts/ lift serviced lease areas and/or Parks Victoria managed areas which are well supported i.e: where there is road access, groomed trails and patrols, there is reliable communication and emergency services within one hour.
- in 'back country' areas - where emergency services or medical care is more than one hour away, communication is limited and there are no patrols.

Leaders need to be aware of the level of support likely to be available. Some areas, even within areas often described as 'resorts', may not be patrolled. Leaders should understand that it is possible to inadvertently move out of well-supported areas.

Resorts and other managed ski areas operate according to specific operating procedures which link ski instructors, ski patrols, lift operators and key facilities to significantly enhance the safety of snow activities.

3. Risk Management Planning

Risk management is a series of 'well-defined steps which, taken in sequence, support better decision making by contributing a greater insight into risks and their impacts' (Australian Standard AS/NZS 4360 Risk Management). The five step approach is:

- Step 1 -Identify all hazards
- Step 2 -Assess and prioritise the risks these hazards create, deal with highest priority risk first
- Step 3 -Decide on measures to control the risks (e.g. eliminate the risk, substitute a venue, use personal protective equipment)
- Step 4 -Implement appropriate control measures
- Step 5 -Monitor the control measures and review the process

The identification of risks could be considered under the headings of 'people', 'equipment' and 'environment'

The identification of risks could be considered under the headings of 'people', 'equipment' and 'environment' i.e.:

- risks associated with 'people' could be the lack of necessary skills or inadequate fitness
- risks associated with 'equipment' could include inadequate clothing for the area, and insufficient or incorrect equipment
- risks associated with 'environment' could include adverse or unseasonal weather, snow storms, high winds.

Major factors to be considered in the snow environment include:

- snow conditions – snow levels, thinning snow, additional snowfalls, ice, avalanche, cornice
- geographical features- ridges, steepness/ gradient and cliffs
- changing visibility- wind, rain, white out
- where conditions and other factors may impact on safety or environment – leader should consider modification, cancelation, postponement of activities
- availability of resort services relevant to the activity if working in resort areas

- permits or permission from the resort or other land manager to conduct activities
- ensuring activities are undertaken in designated areas within resorts for example; tobogganing only where indicated
- consideration of other snow users.

For the activity being undertaken and the group involved, foreseeable risks should be noted and strategies should be developed to avoid or minimise these risks. The strategies should be included in the organisation's Activity Plan (see section 3.4 – *Activity Plan*).

3.1 Incident reporting

Any incidents or accidents that result in injury or have the potential to result in injury should be documented. Incident documentation should include time, date, relevant details of the incident, and the response to the incident. Incident documentation should be treated with appropriate confidentiality and should be stored safely and easily accessible.

3.2 Severe weather

The risk of severe weather must be taken into account in the planning and running of all outdoor adventure activities.

The risk of severe weather must be taken into account in the planning and running of all outdoor adventure activities. Advice on managing risks of severe weather can be found in the Guidance Note, '*Management of Outdoor Activities for Severe Weather Conditions*' which can be found at www.outdoorsvictoria.org.au

3.3 Pre- activity documentation

There are certain details that a leader and/or organisation must document to maximise safety. The following information must be documented, taken on the activity and a copy must be made available to a non-participating contact.

- Activity Plan (see section 3.4)
- Emergency strategy (see section 3.5)
- Name, address and emergency contact details for all participants and staff
- Any medical conditions of participants, including teachers and supervisors, that is likely to affect performance. For example asthma (details of management plan including medication), diabetes, epilepsy, fainting/dizziness, specific allergic reactions, blood conditions which may affect bleeding/ blood clotting, conditions affecting balance, recent or long-standing injuries (e.g. back, knee, ankle), disability or other relevant medical conditions (e.g. pregnancy, repetitive strain injury (RSI), heart and any relevant medication. Throughout the activity, the leader must take reasonable steps to manage any known specific participant medical requirements
- After a full explanation/briefing participants should be asked to sign an acknowledgement of the inherent risks involved in the specific activity. The signature of a parent/guardian for participants under the age of 18 authorising participation.

In cases where the activity and conditions around the activity have changed at point of activity as much practical the leader should document, recorded the change of activity and advise their organisation where possible.

3.4 Activity Plan

An Activity Plan should be prepared for all activities.

The leader(s) selected for the activity must have the required skills, experience and competency to conduct the activity, effectively manage incidents and satisfy the planned objectives.

At least one leader should be suitably familiar with the area being visited (the level of familiarity will vary according to the objectives and circumstances of the group).

Leaders must hold a current Working with Children Check if independently supervising participants under 18 years of age www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren.

The following is a list of factors that should be addressed in preparing a plan.

People

- objectives of the activity (desired outcomes) and participant expectations
- duration of activity
- age, experience, fitness, skill level, disposition, and known medical conditions of participants
- size of group
- standard of care (education, commercial or community organisation)
- leader to participant ratio.

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Equipment

- group equipment including first aid and communication equipment
- personal equipment including clothing, food and dietary requirements, and personal medication
- availability of specific activity equipment for participants
- condition and suitability of all equipment
- support/ evacuation resources (e.g: ski patrol and SES)

Environment

- area and route selection and intended route
- availability and suitability of maps and other area specific information
- ability of site to withstand visitation with minimal impact
- terrain (route characteristics) and associated implications including remoteness and access
- land managers requirements (access restrictions, group sizes, permit requirements, booking requirements)

- expected weather conditions and implications i.e. Hypothermia - the condition of having an abnormally low body temperature typically one that is dangerously low.
Hyperthermia - the condition of having a body temperature greatly above normal.

3.5 Emergency strategy

An emergency strategy must be devised from the risk assessment to manage foreseeable incidents and minimise escalation. The Activity Leader(s) and a non-participating contact must be aware of the emergency strategy and have a copy of it.

The emergency strategy for an activity must be specific to each activity and will contain:

- emergency access and emergency escape routes (where possible)
- assembly points where appropriate
- emergency contact details for key organisations (land manager and police) and how they are best contacted (mobile phone, satellite phone, radio)
- planned start and finish time of the activity
- the emergency trigger time for the non-participating contact to inform emergency services (on failure of group to return/check-in)
- specific communication being carried by group
- relevant aspects of the land manager's emergency strategy
- strategies adopted peculiar to specific areas being visited
- a strategy for maintaining supervision ratios should any changes to the planned activity eventuate (adverse conditions, injured leader, participant(s) pull out of activity).

A communication and trigger point plan should be developed as part of the emergency strategy to enable the emergency strategy to be implemented if required.

3.6 Pre-activity briefing

It is essential that all information be accurately disseminated to potential participants in adequate time for an informed decision to be made about their participation.

Groups and organisations may have their own preference for how the pre-activity briefing will be delivered and the method may depend on the length and complexity of an activity. The briefing should be delivered in a way that ensures that all participants are aware of the following:

- identity and role of Activity Leader(s)
- an outline of the activity plan and objectives
- the nature of the activity and its inherent risks
- essential equipment and clothing
- correct use and/or fit of equipment
- recommendations on the type of food, the amount of food and water required and the availability of water
- strategies for conservation including protection of flora and fauna, rubbish removal and sanitation
- a summary of the emergency strategy, including methods of emergency communication
- explanation of what is expected of participants and the participant's responsibility to act as requested
- any restrictions to participation

- agreed methods of communication within the group (signals and calls) devised before the activity commences
- final check that all documentation is completed and submitted.

Leaders should receive acknowledgment that participants have understood the content of the briefing and must offer participants the opportunity to voice any concerns.

Safety Talk

- personal safety equipment
- safety in the snow
- brief on the Alpine Responsibility code
- Group management issues
- appropriate communication
- other relevant information

Participants are responsible for their own actions both in relation to obvious risks that may be encountered and also in following the directions/instruction of the leader on any activity.

Participants may be excluded or removed from an activity (or an activity may be modified) at any time prior to departure at the leader's discretion. This may also be done during the activity if safe to do so.

Participants may be excluded for reasons that include (but are not limited to) being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including prescription drugs which may affect performance), being unable or unwilling to follow instructions, lacking suitable equipment, having an inadequate level of fitness, physical ability and experience for the particular activity.

3.7 First Aid

To lead any activity a leader of a group (or a delegated other) must have a level of first aid training that is relevant to the situation. The factors that determine the level of first aid training and support include:

- the size of the group
- the age of the group
- the remoteness of the activity
- the ease with which the emergency services can be contacted; this may depend on the remoteness of the activity and the type of communication equipment available
- the likely time for emergency services to reach the injured person
- the nature and severity of likely injuries
- for participants with disabilities, for multi day activities and/or walks in remote areas, more specialised first aid knowledge may be required.

A common approach is given below. The time limits are guidelines only and the leader needs to make a judgement, based on the circumstances of each activity, about the level of first aid training required. The codes refer to the **Health Training Package** available from www.training.gov.au

Urban This applies in parks and urban areas supported by an emergency or medical service. Distance from road heads should be at no time more than 15 minutes.

It is recommended that a leader should at least be able to care for someone who is unconscious or who is choking, treat for shock, manage severe bleeding and provide CPR. After consideration

of such factors listed above it may be judged that first aid training equivalent to **Apply First Aid HLTF311A** is necessary.

Standard This applies to any situation where access to medical care is less than one hour. It is recommended that leaders have a level of first aid training equivalent to **Apply First Aid HLTF311A**.

Remote This applies to any situation where access to professional medical care is greater than one hour. It is recommended that leaders have a level of first aid training equivalent to **Apply Advanced First Aid HLTF412A**.

For further information visit:

Ambulance Victoria www.ambulance.vic.gov.au

Red Cross Victoria www.redcross.org.au

Life Saving Victoria www.lifesavingvictoria.com.au

St Johns Ambulance www.sjaa.com.au

Wilderness Medicine Institute www.wmi.net.au

4. Supervisory Ratios

The ratio of participants to leaders is determined by a number of factors. In some circumstances the leader may judge that a smaller number of participants per leader/Assistant Leader is necessary. The leader should consider the supervision ratio based upon the:

- experience of the leader
- expected capabilities of participants (experience, competence, fitness, etc.)
- conditions (environment, remoteness, weather)
- land manager's requirements
- planned duration of the activity
- remoteness of the activity
- suitability and availability of equipment.

Note: Land managers or relevant authorities may reduce the group size due to environmental and other factors.

4.1 Group size

Group size is an essential component of group management. Maximum and minimum group size must be carefully decided based upon the following:

- the safety of the group and individuals
- the objectives of the activity
- specific restrictions imposed by the land manager (e.g. Parks Victoria, Resort management Board, Lift company).
- expected environmental impact of the activity
- experience of the leader and participants
- the potential impact of other users
- conditions (environment, remoteness, weather)
- equipment available.

4.1.1 Group Ratios

- The recommended maximum group size in back country areas is 24 participants plus leaders.
- The recommended maximum group size in resort areas is 12 participants plus leaders as large groups impact on other users
- Where a large group is split into a number of smaller groups each group must be capable of operating independently, and must have its own leader(s) and adhere to AAS.

4.2 Leader ratios

In well-supported areas (e.g. resorts, lift serviced areas , groomed trails and patrols, reliable communication, easy access for emergency services) the recommended minimum leader ratio for conducting snow activities is:

1 activity leader: 12 participants

In back country areas (e.g. where professional medical care is more than one hour away, communication is unreliable, no patrols or support) the recommended minimum leader ratio for conducting snow activities is:

1 activity leader: 8 participants

Guidance notes:

- It is recommended that there be a minimum of two (2) leaders when conducting activities in back country areas.
- When snow camping the participant numbers per leader may need to be decreased.

5. Competencies

To lead activities a leader must be confident of having the skills and experience at least equivalent to that described in **Appendix 1 - Units of Competency**.

A leader can acquire these skills and experience through training with community organisations such as clubs, via employers, TAFE colleges, universities, registered training organisations (RTOs), in-house training and by attaining international qualifications.

Details of these Units of Competency can be found at the training.gov.au website. These competencies are used to describe the skills required to undertake a specific role within the outdoor sector.

In non-commercial activities participants are often peers/club members with known experience/skills. Where this is the case, the leader may not require all of the skills listed below but may prefer to delegate some aspects to other members of the group.

It is recommended that leaders keep a diary record of activities they participate in and/or are responsible for as relevant experience is also extremely important.

6. Leaders responsibilities

The leader has a range of responsibilities for the duration of the activity including:

- take reasonable steps to ensure that the level of knowledge, ability, skill and equipment of each participant is adequate for the level of difficulty and complexity of the activity

- ensure that a process has been undertaken to research and plan for likely hazards, and that the leader is familiar with the measures required
- introduce themselves as leader and introduce any other key people
- ensure that minimal environmental impact message is conveyed and adhered to
- manage and minimise the impact to the environment that may be caused by the activity
- where considered necessary nominate an Assistant Leader (or Assistant Leaders) who has/have known skills and experience relevant to the activity and are willing to perform defined duties
- ensure a briefing is conducted and understood by all participants
- undertake headcount before, during and immediately following the activity
- maintain awareness of the physical and psychological condition of the group
- control the pace of the group
- delegate responsibility to other group members as necessary (whip, navigation, first aid, etc.)
- notify relevant people of safe completion of the activity
- ensure that any incidents are managed, reported and recorded
- manage the group to avoid or minimise the effects of hazards
- ensure land manager's requirements are followed
- confirm the Activity Plan
- ensure that the group has access to safe drinking water
- check suitability, condition and use of all group equipment prior to departure and on return
- ensure group equipment is secured and stored correctly at all times
- ensure to the best of their ability that group members do not get into situations beyond their capabilities
- check first aid kit equipment prior to activity
- check communication equipment prior to activity
- frequently check weather forecasts prior to the activity and, if possible and relevant, during the activity
- ensure all documentation has been completed and collated
- arrange for the signing of waivers where these apply
- check river levels and weather reports prior to trip and every day on a multi-day trip.

Individual tasks may be delegated to other leaders but the responsibility remains with the Activity Leader.

If an assistant to the leader is appointed, they must be familiar with the requirements of the activity in order to be able to assume an effective Assistant Leader role including undertaking activity-specific tasks delegated by the leader, and being able to safely manage the group, including in an emergency, if the leader is incapacitated.

Additional leader information

- know your ability and always stay in control and be able to stop and avoid other people or objects
- take lessons from professional instructors to learn and progress
- use appropriate protective equipment to minimise the risk of injury
- before using any lift you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely and always use the restraining devices

- observe and obey all signs and warnings
- keep off closed trails or runs
- give way to people below and beside you on the hill. It is your responsibility to avoid them
- do not stop where you are not clearly visible from above
- Look uphill and give way to others when entering/exiting a trail or starting downhill.
- do not ski, board, ride a lift or undertake any other alpine activity if your ability is impaired by drugs or alcohol
- if you are involved in, or witness an accident or collision, alert Ski Patrol, remain at the scene and identify yourself to the ski patrol.

7. Definition of terms and further information

In the AAS the following terms are used:

- **Well-supported areas**
This includes areas where there may be resort, lift company leased areas, groomed trails and patrols, there is reliable communication and emergency services can readily reach the site within one hour.
- **Back country areas**
This includes areas where professional medical care is more than one hour away, communication is unreliable and there is no patrols or support. Leaders should understand that it is possible to inadvertently move out of well-supported areas and on to public land where no support exists.
- **Organisation or activity provider**
This is a commercial body (for profit) or non-commercial body (not-for-profit / community group) which undertakes to provide an activity.
- **Leader**
This is the person who has the responsibility for the conduct of the actual activity. The leader will have a level of skill appropriate to the activity and may be supported by one or more assistant leaders.
- **Assistant leader**
This person will be delegated tasks by the leader and will have a level of skill appropriate to those tasks.
- **Participants**
A person whose welfare is the responsibility of leader or assistant leader and/or who participates in an activity for recreational or educational purposes but not in a leadership role.

For further information visit:

- **SnowSafe** 'A Guide to Safety in Alpine Areas' provides sound advice and information for all visitors to alpine regions .The SnowSafe information is available online at www.snowsafes.org.au
- **Resort** specific information is available at:
Mt Buller Ski Resort - www.mtbuller.com.au
Falls Creek Alpine Resort - www.falls creek.com.au
Mt Stirling Resort - www.mtstirling.com.au
Mt Hotham Alpine Resort - www.mthotham.com.au

Mount Baw Baw Alpine Resort -www.mountbawbaw.com.au

Lake Mountain Resort - www.lakemountainresort.com.au

Mt Buffalo National Park/ Mt St Gwinear/ Mt Donna Buang - www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

- **Other sites of interest**

Australian Ski Patrol Association - www.skipatrol.org.au

The Australian Professional Snow sports Instructors – www.aspi.net.au

Disabled Winter Sport Association – www.disablewintersport.com.au

Guide to Units of Competency

5.1 Units

The following is the list of units for cross country skiing, downhill skiing and ski touring:

SISOSKT409A - Apply intermediate cross country skiing skills
SISOSKT406A - Demonstrate advanced cross country skiing skills
SISOSKI201A - Demonstrate alpine skiing skills downhill on beginner terrain
SISOSKT201A - Demonstrate basic cross country skiing skills
SISOSKI408A - Instruct alpine skiing skills
SISOSKT411A - Instruct cross country skiing
SISSS00084 - Skiing Cross Country Instructor Advanced
SISSS00085 - Skiing Cross Country Instructor Intermediate
SISSS00086 - Skiing Downhill Instructor
SISSS00087 - Skiing Guide Overnight Intermediate Ski Touring
SISSS00088 - Skiing Guide Overnight Ski Touring
SISSS00090 - Skiing Instructor Downhill Telemarking

Equipment standards

Equipment requirements vary with the objectives of the activity plan and the environmental conditions likely to be encountered. It is the responsibility of leader(s) to ensure that all participants carry with them all necessary equipment for the activity.

Leaders should ensure that they have adequate supplies to handle any likely emergency situation.

Equipment requirements for snow activities vary with the activity, the objectives of the activity, experience of the participants (and leader), and the expected environmental conditions likely to be encountered. This means equipment and clothing selection must be based on a wide range of eventualities.

Leaders must be satisfied that all participants set out with suitable equipment, food and clothing for the planned activity.

It is recommended that this be achieved by reference to a tailored checklist, which should be provided to participants in advance.

Group or shared equipment

- Depending on the group and the duration of the activity it is likely that participants will share equipment such as tents, cooking equipment and communication equipment such as mobile phone, radio or PLB (personal locator beacon).
- The leader should ensure the group equipment is adequate for the nature and duration of the activity and is carried by key members of the group.
- Participants should refer to an equipment list such as those on the Snow Safe website www.snowsafesite.org.au
- Essential items, matched to the nature and duration of the activity, should be identified by the leader who should check that these items are carried

Additionally, in back country areas (e.g. where professional medical care is more than one hour away, communication is unreliable, there are no patrols or support.) the following group equipment should be considered for day and/or overnight activities:

- repair kit with contents appropriate for the equipment being used
- emergency shelter appropriate to the group such as individual bivvy bags or a “Megamid” style tent for the group
- at least one snow rated sleeping bag
- insulating matt
- snow shovels (sufficient for the group)
- means of communication – a satellite phone should be considered
- first aid kit
- thermos or cooking equipment
- sunscreen (for group or participants should have their own)
- wax (if waxed skis are being used)
- map and compass
- 20 metres of cord / rope
- torch (with spare batteries and bulb).

The following equipment should be available to share between each 'tent group' on overnight activities:

- stove and plywood mat to be placed under the stove when cooking
- group cooking utensils
- fuel bottle and fuel
- fire lighters and/or candles
- additional snow shovels as necessary
- water bag
- food/waste bags (cloth or plastic)
- food supplies (suitably protected)
- trowel (for burying body waste in the ground) but a poo bag is preferable and in some areas mandatory.

Participant's equipment

Essential items, matched to the nature and duration of the activity and to the weather conditions likely to be encountered should be identified by the leader who should check that these items are carried.

When planning equipment and clothing requirements for a snow activity it is important to consider all possible eventualities and to ensure that all equipment and clothing is functional, appropriate and in good repair for the conditions.

Additionally, in back country areas (e.g. where professional medical care is more than one hour away, communication is unreliable, there are no patrols or support.) the following group equipment should be considered for day and/or overnight activities:

- a lined waterproof rucksack
- any individual medication
- water bottle
- waterproof matches (stored appropriately)
- toilet paper
- goggles/sunglasses
- gloves
- beanie
- sunscreen (if not supplied by group)
- whistle
- garbage bags (heavy duty).

The following equipment should be available to each individual on overnight activities:

- sleeping bag
- additional clothing
- torch (spare batteries and bulb)
- tent (snow tent and fly including snow pegs)
- insulating mats (for overnight trips only)

Note: It is important to consider that huts may not be available or suitable. For this reason, groups should never be dependent upon huts for accommodation.

Clothing

Alpine weather is unpredictable and a fine sunny day can quickly deteriorate into cold, wet, high wind or blizzard conditions. Clothing, therefore, must be versatile and participants should have ready access to protective clothing.

Clothing can be divided into two layers - the inner, insulating layers and the outer windproof and waterproof layer.

Insulating Layers

Participants must be advised of the importance of these layers in cold weather. Several thin layers that trap air and are made of material that will stay warm, even when wet, are better than a couple of thick bulky layers. The number of insulating layers worn depends on the weather and the nature of the activity.

Wool and manufactured fibres such as polypropylene and fibrepile are the most effective fabrics for insulating layers and wearing thermal underwear will also help insulate against the cold.

Outer Layer

Staying dry and reducing the effects of wind chill are the most important aspects of retaining body warmth; therefore participants should carry (and wear as necessary) a jacket and overpants that are waterproof and windproof. The outer layer also helps to insulate by trapping warm air next to the body.

Participants should carry a hat (and wear it as needed) as body heat can be rapidly lost from the head.

Gloves or mittens should also be worn. Preferably these will be designed specifically for snow activities and provide protection from both cold and wet. If not, large rubber dishwashing gloves over woollen gloves help to keep hands warm and dry.

Never wear jeans, cotton or nylon clothing, as these materials don't provide adequate protection against wind, rain or snow.

Skin & Eye Protection

Sunburn can be a serious problem, even on cloudy days. In addition to protective clothing, all participants should have on and carry a good sunscreen with a high SPF (sun protection factor) to protect skin exposed to direct or reflected sunlight.

To protect participant's eyes from the glare off the snow (which can lead to 'snow blindness') the use of high quality sunglasses or goggles is strongly recommended.

Additional considerations

It is recommended that participants, who are dependent on spectacles, carry a spare pair in case of loss or damage.

All snowboards and Nordic skis must have functional leashes and these must be worn at all times when on the resort slopes.

All skis, boards, boots and poles must be appropriate for the planned activity.

It is strongly recommended that all children wear helmets for alpine and snowboarding activities.

Leader's equipment

The leader must have the same equipment as the participant plus the responsibility to ensure that all relevant group equipment is correctly carried by key staff, and that these staff are identified to the group.

Storage and maintenance

All equipment used in snow activities must be used, maintained and stored according to manufacturer's specifications where applicable.

All equipment used must be checked before and after each activity.

All issued equipment must be provided in a clean and serviceable condition.

Environmental considerations

The leader and organising body should be satisfied that participants are aware of their responsibilities as members of the group in respect to the environment and the community by following principles of minimal impact practices.

Snow specific considerations

In the snow extra precautions are often needed. Winter visitors to the mountains can accidentally damage the fragile alpine environment through inappropriate or careless practices. Some impacts can become very obvious only when the snow melts.

Cooking, heat and fire

- Always carry a fuel stove when snow camping – if you carry warm clothes and use a fuel stove, fires will not be needed for warmth or cooking. Compared with fires, fuel stoves are faster, cleaner and a lot easier to use in winter.
- Fires are only permitted in huts where pot-belly stoves or fireplaces are provided – a fire built on the snow or a log raft will burn down and damage sensitive alpine vegetation.
- Minimise the use of fires in huts in winter – stored supplies of firewood may be needed by other groups in an emergency. It is also difficult to replace firewood in winter.
- Cooking outside in winter can be a highly enjoyable and social activity – use a snow-shovel to construct a kitchen area near the tent site
- Dig a trench for your feet and build a wall of snow blocks to deflect any cold winds. Sit on insulating mats for comfort and warmth
- Combining meals is a friendly activity and saves fuel
- Remember to dismantle snow walls – fill in your kitchen area prior to moving camp.
- Stoves should not be used in tents due to the danger of the tent catching fire, hot liquids and food spilling, carbon monoxide poisoning and the depletion of oxygen in confined spaces.

Carry it in, carry it out

- Whatever it is, don't burn, bury or leave anything behind. Many kinds of rubbish can be created during a trip, like food scraps, empty cans and packets, used matches, plastic bread ties, sanitary pads, tampons, tissues, toilet paper and cigarette butts.
- Most rubbish does not decompose, even if it is buried or burnt. Rubbish creates an ugly eyesore or washes into watercourses and pollutes them. Animals may also try to eat it and harm themselves. Always carry rubbish bags and carry out everything – even be prepared to collect litter you see during your trip.

Got to 'go'?

- With so many people visiting the mountains - and the potential for spread of infectious diseases (such as Giardia and Hepatitis A) - the management of human waste is a serious issue. If faeces, urine or toilet paper gets into the water supply, or are uncovered by animals, the results are very unsightly and potentially very dangerous for both people and animals.

Carelessness upstream could affect you downstream!

- Carry out human wastes (poo tubes) to avoid contaminating water sources which can lead to Giardia

- If necessary, dig down into the frozen soil layer. In deep snow, bury faecal wastes deeply in the snow (at least 60 cm) and close to the base of the snow gums
- Ensure all toilet areas are at least 100 metres away from water courses.

Collecting Water

- Collect water upstream of huts, campsites and toilets to avoid possible pollution. Melting clean snow for water should be last option as it is slow and consumes large amounts of fuel
- Boil water for at least five minutes to avoid gastroenteritis and Giardia
- **Wash at least 100 metres from watercourses**
- Take care when washing yourself or your belongings. Detergents, toothpaste and soap (even biodegradable ones) harm fish and water-life. Instead of washing in creeks or lakes use a container well away from the water and, when finished, spread the washing water away from creeks or lakes so that it can filter through the soil before returning to the stream.

Other considerations

Travel and camping

- Stay on track
- Stay on durable surfaces, which include established tracks, rock, gravel and dry grasses
- Do not create new tracks
- Always walk on the track even if wet and muddy, on narrow paths walk in single file as much as possible to avoid widening it (with the exception of Phytophthora areas where one should avoid mud)
- Do not disturb vegetation as this will encourage erosion and promote the spread of pest plant species
- Avoid revegetation areas altogether
- Find out about local vegetation to learn about those that are fragile and those that are resilient
- Try to unload gear and take breaks on large flat rocks or other durable ground to avoid damaging vegetation
- In natural areas spread out and walk carefully to avoid trampling
- Avoid steep areas that are more prone to erosion once disturbed
- Use established campsites. Take care not to create new ones. Otherwise camp on rock, sands, or gravel where impact is smallest. When these can't be found, then on areas with durable grasses or weeds
- Actively manage the group at the site to minimise trampling and damage to the surrounding vegetation. (The leader might choose to educate the group and select tent sites for them)
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary
- Avoid digging, landscaping and trenching around tents
- When leaving a campsite, "naturalise it". Fluff up flattened grasses, brush away boot prints and replace any rocks that have been kicked or moved
- Avoid damaging live shrubs, woody plants or branches
- Protect water sources by camping at least 100 metres from rivers and billabongs
- Keep the group size small

- Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and tracks
- Choose durable surfaces for tents and cooking areas
- Avoid places where impacts are just starting to appear
- Stay only one night.

Disposal of waste

- Pack and carry out all packaging rubbish and leftover food including organics in sturdy bags
- Inspect the campsite and rest areas for rubbish and spilled food before leaving
- Do not burn rubbish
- Be careful not to drop rubbish while walking on tracks
- When available, use established toilet facilities
- In other situations, carry a trowel and deposit solid human waste in shallow holes dug in topsoil – usually 10-15 centimetres deep and at least 100 metres from water, camp and tracks. If toilet paper use is necessary, use it sparingly and bury it deeply or preferably, carry it out. Cover and disguise the hole when finished. (In water catchment areas, human waste should be carried out)
- Urinate on bare ground away from vegetation, routes and tracks
- Pack out all hygiene products in a suitable container
- For personal washing or dishes, carry water 100 metres from streams and pools. Avoid using any soaps or detergents; if they must be used, use only small amounts of biodegradable soaps and detergents. Scatter strained dishwater
- Hand sanitisers are a good alternative for personal hygiene
- All campsites must be located at least 20 metres from any waterway.

Do not disturb

Preserve Nature/Respect Culture

- It is illegal to excavate, disturb or remove archaeological, historical and cultural artifacts from any public or wilderness lands
- Avoid bushwalking close to Indigenous sites out of respect for the culture and to ensure their longevity. Land managers can advise on these locations. Seek appropriate permission
- Do not touch rock art, which can be damaged by the natural oils from human skin
- Preserve the past: observe but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artifacts
- Avoid bushwalking in areas where rare and vulnerable plants or animals are found. Land managers can advise you of these locations
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as they are
- Do not build structures, furniture or dig trenches.

Introduced Species

- Avoid spreading non-native plant and animal species that are generally impossible to eradicate once they are introduced. Do not transport flowers, weeds, wood or aquatic plants into or out of the wilderness
- Avoid spreading diseases like Giardia (a human bacterial parasite causing chronic diarrhoea) or Cryptosporidium (a single-celled organism that can cause gastro-intestinal illness with diarrhoea in humans) by properly disposing of human waste at least 100 metres from water

- Know non-native species and report sightings of them to appropriate sources
- Do not travel through Quarantine Areas
- If a trip crosses areas known to contain pathogens (bacteria or viruses), visit the un-infected area first
- Avoid transporting mud in boots, equipment and tyre treads which may contain Phytophthora (dieback fungal spores) by washing thoroughly before and after travelling. Use wash stations immediately where provided
- Check clothing and all gear and burn or dispose of all hitchhiker type seeds before and after travelling in different areas
- Help landowners and managers initiate control efforts by alerting them to infested areas.

Fire impact

- Fires can cause devastating and lasting impacts to the bush
- Check area regulations for fire bans. No fire (including a fuel stove) may be lit on a day of Total Fire Ban
- Total Fire Bans may be implemented regionally so be sure to check daily and be aware of fire regions that cover the route
- If a Total Fire Ban has been declared, consider cancelling your trip to the area for safety reasons
- Leaders MUST know applicable fire regulations in advance of the trip, as fire regulations are the LAW
- Contact your local fire authority or local land manager for details regarding your local responsibility
- Preferably use a lightweight fuel stove for cooking and enjoy a candle or gas lantern for light. Consider using candles standing in sturdy clear plastic bags or containers for light instead of fire (non-drip church candles are recommended). Don't leave wax residue
- Avoid lighting an open fire (even if permitted).
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. Dismantle and naturalise any extra fire rings
- Do not dig fire-pits
- Judge the wind, weather, location and wood availability
- Do not make a fire if fuel is scarce. Choose small dead pieces of wood that are found on the ground. Do not break off branches from trees or bushes
- At least three metres around the fire must be clear of flammable vegetation
- Keep fires to a minimum size necessary for cooking and minimise disturbance to the surrounding area
- Manage your fire. Do not leave it unattended
- Burn wood down to ash. Fires must be completely extinguished with water before leaving the campsite
- Clean out campfires rings after use
- Fires should not be used to create heat unless it is an emergency. Carry enough warm clothing so that fires for warmth are unnecessary
- Be careful of improper cigarette butt disposal. Take butts with you.

Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them
- Understand through education the role each species plays in each environment in order to realise the importance of its position within an ecosystem

- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, and raising young. Touching nests or young animals may cause their parents to abandon them
- Never feed wild animals or birds. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviours, and exposes them to predators and other dangers. Store food and rubbish securely
- Control pets at all times or better yet, leave them at home. All National Parks restrict pets so check regulations first
- Report any injured animals to the local land managers. Do not attempt to handle the animal.

Consider others

- Take the responsibility to ensure that your group behaves with respect for the hosts and other users. Set out reasons and expectations early in the trip
- Learn about the cultural history of the land. Recognise, acknowledge and respect local knowledge
- Respect the wishes and regulations of all hosts. (e.g. Indigenous, pastoral, land managers and locals)
- Never visit places where you have not obtained permission. Seek permission and/or a permit
- Respect others' wilderness experience by examining the group's behaviours to minimise any negative impact
- Make reasonable efforts to minimise the impact of the group on others
- Assist other parties in difficulty provided that this action does not adversely affect the safety of your group
- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Be diplomatic with other groups and other recreational users of the area
- Be courteous. Give way to others on tracks and roads
- Do not block paths or tracks with people or equipment. Have rest breaks in discreet places to minimise impact on other groups
- If possible camp out of sight and sound of other visitors
- Let everyone enjoy nature's sounds. Keep noise to a minimum. Talk quietly especially when in large groups
- Avoid the use of bright lights, radios, electronic games, mobile phones and other intrusive urban devices.