



Why Snowshoeing Tracks Damage Groomed Cross Country Ski Trails.

Why do cross country skiers get upset when they see snowshoeing (or walking) tracks on Nordic ski trails? It is because snowshoe tracks make cross country skiing more difficult.

For the last thirty years or so there have been two styles of cross country skiing. Classic skiing is the traditional type of skiing that people have been doing for thousands of years. You will recognize the single leg kick, in a backward direction, and a single pole push. Skate skiing is a newer method of Nordic skiing. Skate skiers use a “skating step” combined with double poling. At Telemark about 50% of skiers are classic skiers, and 50% skate ski, with skate skiing being a growing sport.

At Telemark we groom daily 50 kilometers of cross country ski trails for both classic and skate skiing. (The cost of grooming at Telemark is \$ 275 an hour.) Classic skiers place their skis in the parallel tracks that the groomer sets on the outside of the trails. Skate skiers ski between the tracks in a six to ten foot lane, on the packed snow, that has been set to look like corduroy.

Snowshoeing in the “middle” of the trails creates tracks that throw skate skiers off balance. Think of skating on an ice rink after someone has walked on the ice while soft, and left footprints that froze. It would be very difficult to ice skate on the uneven ice. That is what happens when snowshoe tracks are left on cross country ski trails. It makes skate skiing more difficult.

The snowshoe trails at Telemark are; separate from the ski trails, are in the forests and are not groomed. Please snowshoe on the snowshoe trails. If you must snowshoe on a cross country ski trail, such as at the beginning of snowshoe trails by the lodge, walk to the outside (forest) side of the parallel classic tracks on the trail. If you are a cross country skier and you see a snowshoer on the ski trails, stop and talk with the snowshoer and explain why this is an issue. Most of the time snowshoers are on the ski trail as they are lost, and need direction, or are uninformed. (If you are lost while snowshoeing this is an emergency situation. Walk wherever you feel will lead you to safety.)

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