



## **Snowshoe Basics**

*Want to try snowshoes before you buy them? Worried if you purchase snowshoes for your children, that they will outgrow them before next year?*

*The Village of DeForest now rents snowshoes of all sizes, from youth ~50 pounds to adults up to ~300 pounds.*

### **How do I rent snowshoes?**

The equipment rental agreement form must be completed and returned with payment to Village Hall during office hours. (Monday to Thursday from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM or Friday from 7:30 AM to 2:00 PM). Call Village Hall at 608-846-6751 for availability.

Snowshoes can be picked up during office hours Tuesday – Friday and must be returned during office hours on the following Monday.

\$10 per pair with a required \$50 deposit per pair check.

### **Do I need special shoes?**

No. Most types of footwear can be worn with snowshoes, although hiking boots or winter boots are the preferred choice among most recreational users.

### **How do I put on snowshoes?**

Before you go on your first trip take a few minutes to become familiar with your snowshoes. The most important aspect is to become familiar with the binding.

Follow these simple steps to make sure you have the proper fit every time:

1. Left is distinguished from right by which way the loose ends of the binding straps point: always outward, to avoid stepping on them repeatedly. On the Village's snowshoes, it says L or R in sharpie on the decking.
2. Put the ball of your foot over the top of the hinge, centered on the snowshoe. Your toes should hang over the front of the foot bed.
3. Tighten the front strap first, followed by the heel strap and finish by tightening the strap over your instep.
4. The straps don't need to be overly tight. Just make sure they are snug.
5. Put your snowshoes on when you are OUTSIDE, not INSIDE. Steel crampons and hardwood floors do not get along.

### **How do I snowshoe?**

To walk in your snowshoes, you'll imitate your normal stride. Your feet should be a bit farther apart than usual, but not too much, just enough so you are not stepping on your own snowshoes. Stride forward, putting your foot down heel to toe. Repeat as though you were walking on dry, firm ground. Now, pick a direction. Take a step. Take another.

Snowshoes function best when there is enough snow beneath them to pack a layer between them and the ground, usually at a depth of 8 inches or more.

## **Snowshoe sizing**

Snowshoes work by distributing the weight of the person over a larger area so that the person's foot does not sink completely into the snow, a quality called "flotation". Snowshoes are sized with weight recommendations (include all your winter gear), but you don't have to be exact. You aren't going to break snowshoes if you're over the weight recommendation - you just won't float on the snow as much.

Sizes are often given in inches, even though snowshoes are nowhere near perfectly rectangular. For example, size 821 is 8" wide and 21" long.

Sizes, weight recommendations and pairs available to rent through the Village:

<b>Size</b>	<b>Recommended weight (max)</b>	<b>Number available</b>
Junior	100 pounds	20 pairs
Sherpa 821	150 pounds	3 pairs
Sherpa 825	200 pounds	3 pairs
Sherpa 930	250 pounds	3 pairs
Sherpa 1036	300 pounds	2 pairs

## **Parts of a snowshoe**

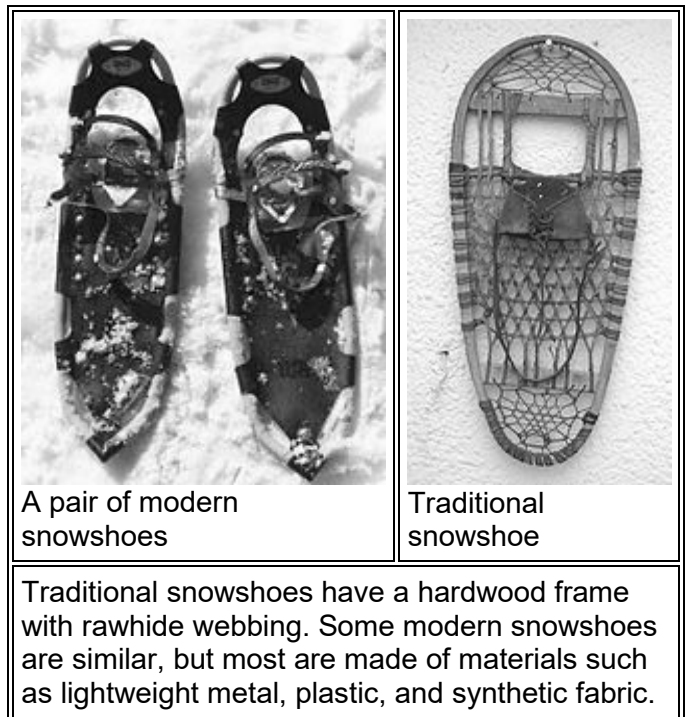
**Bindings:** When traditional wooden shoes were still popular, it was common to buy the bindings separately (like downhill skis), and many wooden shoes are still sold this way. A series of straps, usually three, are used to fasten the foot to the snowshoe.

**Cleat or crampon:** The metal clamps on the bottom of the snowshoes. Helps with grip, especially on ice or hills.

**Decking:** The plastic pieces surrounding your foot, help with flotation.

**Frame:** On modern snowshoes it is typically made of metal, the outer edge of the snowshoe.

**Webbing:** Connects the decking to the frame. If snowshoes do not have decking, the webbing usually crosses the entire snowshoe.



## **Where can I snowshoe?**

Anywhere where there is snow! Here in DeForest we recommend the Western Green Park trail or hike alongside the Upper Yahara River Trail (the main trail is plowed, but there is space in the corridor adjacent to the trail). Or Token Creek County Park has a designated snowshoe trail that runs through the disc golf course.

Where ever you go, be sure to stay off of groomed cross country ski trails – snowshoes ruin the trail grooming.