

WINTER SPORTS SPECIAL

Skiing and snowboarding blast tons of calories (up to 550 per hour!) while sculpting your abs, butt, legs—and pretty much every muscle in between. Plus, the clothes and gear are awesome. Here's why to try it this season.

By Gina DeMillo Wagner



Pro Rave

"I see the mountain as my blank canvas, shredding where I please and being barreled by white clouds of powder."

—Torah Bright, Roxy professional snowboarder and Olympic gold medalist

Why to try SNOWBOARDING

YOU'LL FEEL EMPOWERED

If you've ever skateboarded or surfed, snowboarding will feel familiar, says Jon Schriener, D.O., medical director of the Michigan Center for Athletic Medicine. If not, the learning curve may be steeper—but stick with it! "A new challenge pushes you physically and mentally," says Torah Bright, Roxy pro snowboarder and Olympic gold medalist. "Anything that places you outside of your comfort zone is worth seeing through," she adds.

IT'S AN ABS-FLATTENER

Unlike skiers, snowboarders rely entirely on their core (and

not poles) for balance, since they use their legs as one unit. "You must constantly twist your body back and forth in small, subtle movements to stay upright," says Schriener. Those little moves add up to some major stomach-toning results.

THERE ARE PLAYGROUNDS

Most resorts have a beginner-terrain park (think a giant, snow-covered obstacle course) where you can ride over small humps or on rails, and even try jumping as you progress. Everyone from beginners to advanced riders is welcome. Consider taking a lesson (offered at most resorts) if you're a newbie.

STABILITY BOOSTER

Increase core strength and improve balance with this move. Stand with feet together on a Bosu ball (black side down). Inhale and raise your arms overhead. Exhale as you squat (as if sitting in a chair) until thighs are parallel to the floor. Hold for 1 minute, then stand. Repeat 1 to 2 times.



Why to try SKIING

IT'S EASY TO PICK UP

Because skiing is a bipedal sport (meaning you use your legs separately) and you have poles to help you balance, most people learn the basics quickly and can feel comfortable on green runs (the easiest hills) on their first day, says Schriener. Ladies, even more good news: You're likely to learn the skills of skiing faster than men, Schriener adds, because you tend to be more flexible and fluid, and to have better balance than guys.

YOU'LL BECOME A BETTER RUNNER

Or cyclist, or swimmer. Downhill skiing works similar muscles, so the strength you build on the slopes will help you perform better in other endurance sports, says exercise physiologist Polly de Mille, R.N. In other words, you can consider your winter fun cross training for spring and summer sports.

COUNT IT AS A TOTAL-BODY WORKOUT

Skiing is dynamic and multidirectional—you'll work multiple muscles at once and

in every plane of motion (up, down, left, right, forward, backward), says Schriener. You recruit your shoulders, biceps, and triceps as you push off with your ski poles, and your core, hips, and legs as you move down the mountain. You even use your toes to help you turn and balance. "Sometimes you don't realize that you have those tiny muscles that skiing utilizes," adds U.S. World Cup skier Paula Moltzan. (That is, until they're a little sore the next day!)

POWER UP Prep for the explosive side-to-side motion of skiing, and strengthen your legs and ankles with the lateral ski jump. Mark a line on the floor with tape or a belt. Stand with feet together about 6 inches to the left of the line. Jump sideways over the line, landing to the right of it, with knees soft. Repeat. Jumping over the line to the left. Continue jumping for 30 seconds. Rest for up to 30 seconds to complete 1 set. Do up to 10 sets.



Pro Rave

"You're doing something physical all day and burning tons of calories, but you don't realize you're working out."

—Lindsey Vonn, professional skier and Olympic gold medalist



HEAD for the HILLS

Return from a getaway this winter with a better body—and mind! Check ski.com for location-based deals.

REVERSE VACATION WEIGHT GAIN All the calories you torch on the mountain will help you return home as trim (or trimmer) as when you left—whereas people who took even a short-term, non-active vacation gained weight, found researchers from Texas Tech University.

NATURE IS SERIOUSLY GOOD FOR YOU "The moment you step outdoors, your brain produces more serotonin and dopamine, neurotransmitters that help regulate mood," says psychotherapist Jonathan Alpert.

YOU'LL GET INTO VACAY MODE, STAT Thanks to all that physical exertion, you'll relax more easily at the end of each precious PTO day. "Snow sports can reduce your body's stress hormones," says clinical psychologist Julia Kim, Ph.D. Proof: Nearly 90 percent of respondents in an Expedia.com survey felt fully relaxed after going on just a two-day trip.



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LEAN
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FIRM
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**Zero
Belly
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6 Foods That
Burn Fat Fast

**Get More
Energy for
Everything**



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Minutes
To Flawless
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