

## Nordic Skiing Provides Full Body Benefits

The New Year is upon us, bringing excitement of what is to come and inspiring us to set work and personal goals, and of course, Resolutions. If your list is representative of most Americans, chances are it includes **exercising more** and **losing weight**. Unfortunately, cold weather and darkness make it a struggle to stay motivated during the winter months, and sometimes the thought of another workout at the gym doesn't resonate as fun. Fortunately, there is another option to achieve these goals and have fun in the NW outdoors: Nordic Skiing.

Nordic skiing is an excellent aerobic workout that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and fitness levels. It can be purely recreational or highly competitive and comes with the benefit of being low-impact. Therefore, unlike court or running sports, there is very little shock to the feet, knees, hips, and back. In addition, because no single joint or muscle group is over-loaded, the skier is better able to sustain an elevated heart-rate for a longer duration, which strengthens the cardiovascular system and improves the heart's capacity to pump blood efficiently and effectively. Added benefits come in the form of lowered risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome.

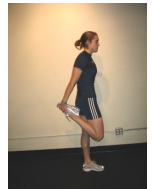
Aerobic benefits aside, few activities provide the total body workout found with Nordic skiing. The movement pattern involves both upper and lower body muscle groups, maintains core muscle activation in a dynamic fashion, and challenges your balance throughout the activity. Every major muscle group is involved in propelling the skier forward, while smaller muscle groups are active in creating a fluid, coordinated movement. All of this activity demands a significant amount of energy, which requires the body to burn large amounts of calories and leads to a slimmer body!

So, don't let the beauty of exercising in the NW outdoors pass you by. Before you set out on the trail, try the dynamic stretching exercises shown on this page to help prepare your muscles. Focus on performing the drills with perfect technique for approximately 10-15 meters, or as needed to feel adequately warmed up.

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### ANKLE GRABS

Bring your foot back behind you and pull it up so that a stretch is felt in your quads/hip flexors. Make sure you DO NOT arch your low back and keep the knee straight.



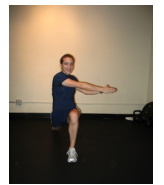
### KNEE GRABS

Pull your knee up to your chest then step forward and pull the opposite knee up while standing tall and maintaining good posture.



### LUNGE AND TWIST

Lunge forward so that a slight stretch is felt in the front of your back hip. Then twist your trunk toward the leg that is forward so that you feel a comfortable stretch in your hip and back.



### SINGLE-LEG-TOE-TOUCHES (DYNO-WALKS)

On one leg, reach down and touch your foot with the opposite hand while bringing the back leg up. Then step forward with the opposite leg and repeat.

