

Get Started:

Nordic Skating

An exhilarating way to get out on our lakes in winter



KEY DISTINCTION

- Traditional ice skates have the blade bolted to the boot, but Nordic skating uses a separate boot that clips into bindings mounted on a blade. The boots and binding are the same ones employed for most Nordic skiing and roller skiing. You can also walk in the boots, and you are saved the sit-down, lace-up, freeze-fingers routine of traditional skates.

NEED TO KNOW

- Thin ice is dangerous. Check conditions and carry safety equipment.

LEARNING CURVE

- If you have no experience skating, you'll need patience. But if you already know how to figure skate, play ice hockey, rollerblade or Nordic skate ski, you'll catch on quickly.

DAY ONE

- Your best bet is to start on a machine-groomed lake. The ice will have to be thick and safe to support the groomer, and the track will be cleared of snow and easier to glide on.
- Lessons and gear rentals are available at Lake Morey in Fairlee. Call (866) 244-2570 or visit www.nordicskater.com.

THE PERFECT DAY

- Once you're comfortable on a groomed surface, try an outing on natural ice. Popular places in Vermont are Lake Willoughby in Westmore and Lake Champlain. New skater Brian Costello of Colchester is hooked on the sport. "The perfect day starts with the ice — a rare combination of weather creates an ice sheet on the lake that goes for miles and miles, like a sheet of glass ... you can go far with very little effort." ❄️

— Sky Barsch



For a slideshow of Nordic skating, visit www.VermontLife.com.

Photographed by VYTO STARINSKAS