



Snowshoeing
is an excellent
winter activity
for all age
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*cumbersome, but if not for these ash wood shoes the natives
helped me construct, I would be alone, trapped in my
cabin, waiting for death by cold or hunger.*

Generations ago, any tool that aided in the extension of the hunting season increased the chance of survival. Hunters, trappers, farmers and soldiers all used snowshoes to traverse the snowy ground. Snowshoes were also an integral part of exploration, and a significant contributor to the settling of the American Northwest.

The first snowshoes were made thousands of years ago in Central Asia, and their use slowly migrated to North America via Alaska. What began as wood planks were eventually modified to the ash wood and leather-bound shoes we recognize today. Native Americans are responsible for crafting the wood shoe into its current shape. Eventually, ash wood snowshoes gave way to aluminum frames, rawhide straps were replaced with neoprene, and a tool once utilized for survival gave way to sport. Today, snowshoeing – much like sailing – has evolved from an ancient way of survival into a leisurely past time.

Snowshoeing is an excellent winter activity for all age groups. It's a great form of cardiovascular exercise, and can easily be mastered. Halibut Point, Dogtown, and many of the properties maintained by The Trustees of the Reservations (www.thetrustees.org) offer exceptional snowshoeing trails.

