



NORDIC SKIING

PARA NORDIC SKIING includes both **cross-country skiing** events and the **biathlon** discipline. Cross-country was first included at the 1976 Winter Paralympic Games in Örnsköldsvik, Sweden. Biathlon first appeared in Innsbruck at the 1988 Winter Paralympic Games.

BASIC RULES: CROSS-COUNTRY

Cross-country races range from 800m head-to-head sprints to 20 km depending on class and gender.

BASIC RULES: BIATHLON

Biathlon combines elements of cross-country skiing and shooting. The events consist of a 2.0 or 2.5 km course skied three or five times, stopping after each loop to shoot at five targets (10 or 20 targets total, depending on the race format). For each missed shot, the athlete is penalized and skis a 100-150 meter penalty lap or has one minute added to the athlete's final time for each missed shot.

Athletes with vision impairment are assisted by acoustic signals, which depending on signal intensity, indicate when the athlete is on target. The most important success factor lies in the capability of alternating the skills of physical endurance and shooting accuracy during the competition.

EQUIPMENT

Nordic skiing events require sports specific equipment such as, cross-country skis, binding, cross-country ski poles and a sit ski or boots. Biathlon requires a .177 air rifle or audio rifle and a 10 mm air rifle target, or audio rifle target.

GETTING STARTED

We encourage you to get started by finding equipment (rent, borrow or buy) that fits and is comfortable for you. We encourage you to connect with a local ski club to take an introductory course on the sport. To get connected with a local organization that fits your sport needs, we encourage you to complete the Nordic skiing sport questionnaire [**HERE**](#).

CLASSIFICATION

Classification determines which athletes are eligible to compete and how athletes are grouped together for competition. If an athlete has a Paralympic eligible impairment, the athlete may be eligible for a classification appointment. Once an athlete is ready to compete regionally or nationally, an athlete should seek national classification.

For more information on U.S. Paralympics Nordic Skiing, please visit [**USParaNordicSkiing.org**](http://USParaNordicSkiing.org).

PARALYMPIC ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

- Ataxia, Athetosis and Hypertonia
- Impaired Muscle Power
- Impaired Passive Range of Movement
- Limb Deficiency
- Leg Length Difference
- Visual Impairment

PARALYMPIC MEDAL CATEGORIES

- **Sitting classes** include athletes with paraplegia and athletes with a double or single leg amputation.
- Athletes in the **standing classes** include athletes with arm(s) or leg(s) limb deficiencies and athletes with impairments that impact the athlete's mobility, balance, or muscular development.
- **Visually Impaired classes** for athletes with vision loss and/or blind athletes. Athletes are guided through the course by a sighted guide using voice signals to indicate the course to follow.

PARALYMPIC EVENTS

- Athletes compete in individual events over **short, middle and long** distances.
- **Cross-country** races range from 800m head-to-head sprints to 20 km depending on class and gender.
- **Biathlon** races range from 6km-15km depending on class and gender.