



Snow Slider Credit: Alisa Anderson



Sit Ski Credit: Disabledgear.com



Snowboarding Credit: OregonAdaptiveSports.com

Winter Adaptive Sports - *Go with the Snow!* **custom devices**

"The only way to discover the limits of the possible is to go beyond them into the impossible." - Arthur C. Clarke

For many people, the exhilaration of freedom and wind in their face rushing down a slope or across snowy plains seems beyond reach due to a physical disability. Fortunately, there are adaptations to winter sports, stretching the limits of the possible.

Depending on level and type of disability, there are several types of adaptive ski equipment that can be used. If stability and balance are issues, four-track skiing is an ideal technique, using two skis with two hand-held outriggers for balance so there are 4 points of contact with the snow. Outriggers are metal forearm crutches with ski tips on the ends, some having adjustable brakes to aid with balance if necessary.

The snow slider is another form of four-track skiing for those with more severe balance issues. Skis are mounted to the metal frame making it something like a walker with skis. The skier is aided by instructors on either side.

There are also three-track and two-track skiing for different levels of balance and strength. For those who have difficulty standing, there is sit-skiing, using a seat with one or two skis under it and handheld outriggers.

And don't ignore the excitement of snowboarding! There are adaptations to a snowboard such as tubes which go around the waist and attached to long poles controlled by the instructor for balance and turning. There's also a horse and buggy system used for stability but does not control your turns. You can also use outriggers or ski poles. Tandem snowboards are used for those who are concerned about controlling the board.

Snowshoeing sound more exciting? Adaptations are available using forearm crutches, a walker-like device or a sleigh ("Pulk") which has one person in front pulling and one in the rear pushing and balancing. The rider can also use shortened ski poles to help in the movement across the snow.

Note for amputees -- not every prosthetic knee/leg can withstand the forces of these sports so consult with your prosthetist first to determine the best type of components for the intended activity.

Sunshine Prosthetics and Orthotics located in Wayne New Jersey, provides a full range of services for amputees and other physically challenged adults and children. Call 973-696-8100 to learn more about their custom services or visit their website at www.SunshinePandO.com.



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**"I love the challenge
of seeing people find they are stronger
than they thought."**



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