

# How Alpine Skiing Was Invented

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Once upon a time there was only cross country skiing...

## oneshot

*Chapter 1 of 1*

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A/N: Many thanks to Softobsidian74 who betaed for me.

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Once upon a time there was only cross-country skiing. Hunters put boards on their feet while hunting in snow because it prevented them from sinking into the drifts while walking. This had been discovered some few years earlier in an incident involving a villager, some recycled floorboards and some old stray nails.

On this particular day, a hunter was out hunting and had put his skis on. He had been out almost all day, despite the fact that, for most of the day, it had looked as if a snowstorm was coming.

Much against his better judgement, the hunter had gone out at his wife's insistence. Meat supplies were running low, and she was a harsh woman who had threatened to run away with the butcher, who always had plentiful stock of meat.

Even though she was a bit of a harridan, the hunter rather liked his wife and wanted her to stay. He also didn't want to see her chopped up in little bits and sold as minced meat to be baked into pies by the butcher, who surely wouldn't put up with her nagging.

So off he went to the forest to hunt. Animals are generally a lot smarter than most people tend to give them credit for, so of course they had all realised that a snowstorm was imminent and had wisely sought shelter in well-hidden places away from hungry predators and foolish hunters with demanding wives.

Finally after many hours of criss-crossing the forest in all directions, the goddess of luck and/or mercy smiled down on him and he met in a meadow a single deer that was actually as dimwitted as people tended to think them to be. It came stumbling out of a bush and stopped, staring at him with interest as if it meant to say, "O HAI THAR!"

The hunter was a quick enough thinker to not give it the chance to run away, so he shot the animal and chopped up as much of the dear as he could carry, before setting off back towards home.

Predictably, before he made it home, the blizzard set in and soon he couldn't see where he was going at all. He hoped that he was pointing in approximately the right direction and set off through the snowfall.

It was snowing so much that he couldn't see where he was going or what was directly in front of him. Or, more importantly, what wasn't.

Suddenly the ground disappeared under him and his skis picked up speed without him doing anything to help them along. Quite a lot of speed. A terrible frightful amount of

speed, actually. They were completely out of his control.

At first he went, "Eep!" as the skis suddenly tipped downwards.

Then he went, "ARGH!!!" as he realised he couldn't stop.

Shortly after he went, "Hey..." as he discovered that this was actually kind of interesting.

And finally he went, "WHEEEEEEEEE!!!" not noticing that cuts of meat was flying to all sides, until the ground evened out again and he started to slow down a bit.

Moments later he went 'BONK!' as he collided quite roughly with the side of a house.

The door was flung open and a matronly woman appeared, her form silhouetted against the light shining from the inside of the house.

"What are you trying to do, you old fool? Knock the house down?"

Ah, it was his caring spouse!

"I just discovered something!" he said excitedly, ignoring his bleeding nose. "These skis can go really fast down hill. You should try it!"

The wife has seen more than her fair share of crazy ideas from his side, and this time she didn't seem to be impressed either.

"Yes, yes... Did you get any fresh meat?" she asked instead.

"Oh, yes, I shot a big deer. I took as much as I could. It's right... uh... it's right... I had it just before!" He patted his clothes in confusion as if several large cuts of meat had suddenly shrunk enough to fit in his pockets.

The wife rolled her eyes as only foul-tempered wives could do.

"Well, you're just going to have to go back and get it, haven't you? I need it tomorrow to make sausages," she said irritably and slammed the door behind her as she went back inside.

"Oh plock!" muttered the hunter.

He struggled to his feet and turned back in the direction from which he had come. Due to the weather, he didn't dare take the usual path around the hill for fear of getting lost in the storm. And even if he didn't get properly lost, he might not be able to find the place where he had lost the meat. It was better to try and retrace his steps.

His skis didn't work so well uphill and the hunter was eventually forced to take them off before he could make any progress at all. Knowing, however, that once he had gone up he would also have to eventually go down again, he brought the skis along.

It was hard work getting up the hill carrying the unwieldy skis. Too much work for such a short time of fun. Something would have to be done about that. Maybe some sort of contraption that could help him get up the hill faster and easier. If, for example, he borrowed the butcher's dog and tied it to one end of a long rope and tied the other end around his waist... It was a big dog and probably quite strong too, so it was just a question of persuading it to tow him up the hill. An old fishing rod and a large bone ought to do the trick. After all, a dog didn't get to be that size without at least a small amount of gluttony, and it would probably be good for the dog's health too.

Really, the butcher ought to pay him for exercising his fat mutt!

Not that he would ever actually say that to the butcher's face. That meat cleaver he always carried around was unusually large, after all.

He considered that as he struggled up the hill in the snow, gathering as much of the meat strewn widely across the hillside as he could find. He wished he could have tried it out right away as he went, "WHEEEEEEEEE!!!" (BONK!) down the hill again.

And that, children, is how alpine skiing AND the ski lift was invented.

The End.