
Trail Descriptions


Skiing in a geyser basin near thermal areas is an exciting and unusual experience. It also presents some challenges. Because of the heat below ground, sections of these trails are often bare of snow and you may need to remove your skis in order to continue. However, for your own safety and the safety of other skiers, please do not remove your skis on steep, snow-covered trails. Skiing on boardwalks can be quite difficult and you may want to consider snowshoeing or walking along those routes.

Black Sand Basin Trail

4 miles (6.4 km) round trip, **easiest**, machine-groomed part of the way.

Begin in front of the Old Faithful Inn and take the Upper Geyser Basin Trail past Castle Geyser. Turn left onto the skier-tracked trail to Daisy Geyser, stay to the left and continue to the snow vehicle road. Black Sand Basin is across the snow vehicle road.

Biscuit Basin Loop Trail


 5 miles (8 km) round trip, **easy to more difficult**, machine-groomed part of the way.

Starting at Old Faithful, follow the Upper Geyser Basin Trail past Morning Glory Pool on a skier-tracked trail that leads to the junction with the Powerline Trail. Proceed left to the snow vehicle road opposite Biscuit Basin (or take a shuttle to this point). There are steep snow-covered sections of the trail beyond Morning Glory Pool, please do not remove your skis. You can side-step this hill with skis on. Continue across the road to Biscuit Basin. Then, to return on the Daisy Geyser Trail, turn right on the snow vehicle road, cross the bridge and take the Daisy Geyser Trail on the left side of the road. Follow this trail to the Upper Geyser Basin Trail. Turn right to return to Old Faithful.

Fern Cascades Loop Trail

2.75 miles (4.4 km), **most difficult**, skier-tracked. Start at the Bear Den Ski Shop exit and angle towards the Snow Lodge cabin area. Then the trail goes through trees and crosses small bridges to reach the main snow vehicle road. The trail begins across the road. Bear right on this one-way loop and follow under the power lines. If the uphill section at the start of the trail is too steep, turn around. The trail only gets more difficult from there. The trail continues close to the bottom of the hillside, past many buildings, then curves steeply uphill through the trees. It will be necessary to “herringbone” up steep sections. Please do not remove your skis. At the top of the hill, there is a small, easily-missed canyon on the right where the cascades are located. Do not approach the edge of the overlook when viewing the cascades. The middle section of the trail is gently rolling. At the end is a steep downhill section that requires good speed control. For downhill speed control on skis, you must have strong “snowplowing” skills in order to attempt this trail.

Mystic Falls Trail

 3 miles (4.8 km) round trip **starting and ending at Biscuit Basin.**

This is a narrow and rolling trail (+/- 500ft.) making it a perfect destination on snowshoes. The trail follows the Little Firehole River to the 70 foot waterfall. It is best to follow the main trail and not climb to the overlook. Often the trail has bare patches due to thermals and small side creeks. Skiers - there is not room for 2 sets of tracks, so you will be skiing in a snowshoe trail.

Skier-Tracked Trail - A trail that has been made/broken by a person skiing through deep snow.

Machine-Groomed Trail - Mostly level trail with machine set tracks; ideal conditions for beginners. Groomed areas are for both classic and skate skiing. Most of these are practice loops that follow summer roads. In addition the **Upper Geyser Basin Trail** from the lower store to Riverside Geyser is groomed but often has bare patches due to thermal heat. **Lone Star Geyser Trail** is also groomed.

Snowshoe Trails - Observation Point, Lonestar Geyser Trail and Mystic Falls are the only designated snowshoe trails in the Old Faithful area. The Upper Geyser Basin is also a popular spot to snowshoe. Please talk to the ski shop staff for other information and conditions on snowshoe trails. Snowshoers and skiers need to maintain separate tracks. Try to stay about 3+ feet apart. This may mean you will need to break trail.

Snowshoeing in a ski trail makes it more difficult and potentially hazardous for skiers.

Caution: Bison frequent all trails in the Old Faithful area. Do not attempt to travel any back country trails without good topographical maps and first inquiring at the ski shop or visitor center about trail conditions. Many trails are difficult to find and follow as they may not be well marked for winter travel and may not have been skied recently. Trails may go through areas with avalanche risks.

Current Trail Information

Please visit YellowstoneNationalParkLodges.com or visit the Bear Den Ski Shops at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel and Old Faithful Snow Lodge for up-to-date trail grooming schedule, trail information, rentals, lessons, tours and accessories.