
Water Skiing

Have you ever tried water skiing? It's like flying, only cooler. As you glide across the surface at top speed, cool water splashes over and around you. It's a fun and exciting sport that people of all ages can take part in. If you're strong enough to hold yourself up, you're strong enough to water ski.

To be really good at water skiing does take a little practice; but even more important, it takes the right equipment. Four basic types of water skis are available on the market:

* **Combination:** The most common types of water skis sold today are combination skis. The skis have a wider tip, so they're the best style to learn on and are preferred by beginners and advance skiers alike.

* **Slalom skis:** Used by skiers who prefer to use just one ski. By skiing on one ski, the athlete is able to make sharp turns and reach faster speeds. Recreational slalom skis have a wider tail and a flatter bottom to make it easier to get up and ride straight, while advanced skis have a more tapered tail with beveled edges and a tunnel bottom. These are more difficult to ski on, but will take the skier on a much faster ride.

* **Trick skis:** Extreme athletes use trick skis to pull off the most outrageous stunts. Trick skis are for spinning, jumping and busting extreme moves in (or over) the water. These are shorter and wider than other style of water skis, and require much more skill. There are no fins on the bottoms of trick skis, so it's easier to slide and turn, but harder to make controlled moves while water skiing.

* **Jump skis** look like old-fashioned skis, but are made from a hi-tech composite material to make them stronger. As the name suggests, jump skis are used for jumping off of ramps.

The other essential piece of water skiing equipment is a rope. This is what connects you to the boat. Make sure that you have a proper rope with an appropriate handle. Water ski ropes have a flexible elastic quality, so they're able to change speeds and move with the skier. In normal conditions, polypropylene ropes will stretch two to three percent of their standard length of seventy inches.

The comfort of the rope handle is very important, and every water skier has his or her personal preference. Recreational water ski handles usually have a plastic or rubber grip. The plastic molded handles are strong and durable, and will float when dropped in the water. High-performance handles are generally comprised of an aluminum bar covered with a comfortable rubber grip. The construction is lighter, but more comfortable and durable than a molded plastic handle. Higher performance handles are hollow, so they sink when dropped in the water.

It's suggested that you wear goggles while water skiing, especially if you need to wear your eyeglasses. Protective goggles will stop water and debris going into your eyes, and will prevent your glasses from flying off and sinking if you fall into the water.

Water skiing is great exercise and a super fun way to enjoy a sunny day with friends. Strap on a lifejacket, grab some skis and make the most of your day on the water.