

Snowshoe Experiment

Test the effectiveness of snowshoe designs with an experiment!



Maker: George Sam. UA69-052-0007AB.

People in the Arctic often use snowshoes for traveling in wintertime. Snowshoes work by distributing the weight of a person so that they will not sink in snow.

Materials Needed:

Plastic bin or metal baking tray, snow or flour, cardboard pieces, scissors, tape, measuring tape. *Optional:* Other craft supplies (pipecleaners, yarn, foam pieces, etc.).

Instructions:

Step 1: Fill a plastic bin or baking tray with a layer of snow or flour 1 to 1.5 inches deep.

Step 2: Poke your fingers into the

Traditional Technology: Snowshoes

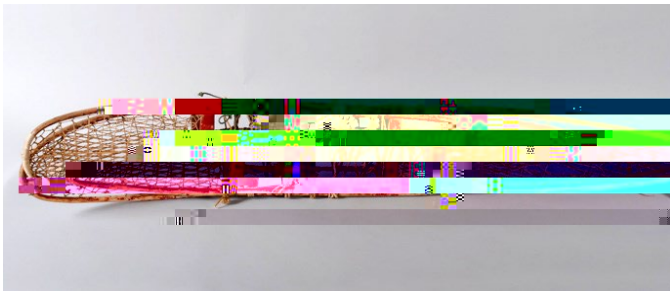


Image: pcdazero, Pixabay.com.

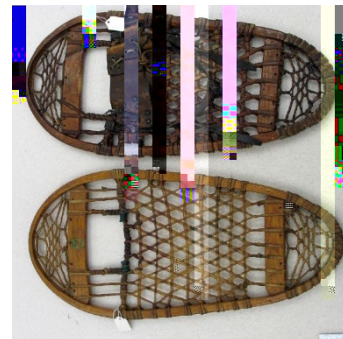
"Making snowshoes like these is time consuming and requires a great deal of knowledge. The artisan must know how to select the right birch tree, how to best chop it down, bend the frame, carve the wood, make the moose or caribou lacings, and weave the complex patterns of the webbing. In addition, the artisan must understand the science behind what different styles and shapes are needed for different people, activities, and snow conditions. Snowshoe makers develop their own personal style based on what they saw, who they learned from, and their personal preferences..."

Today, traditional snowshoe-making is an endangered art, but thanks to objects like this in museum collections, elders and master craftsmen can learn how past generations made these items, and can continue to pass on the knowledge, stories, language, and traditions associated to the skills that are central to Athabascan people."

From "Dena'ina Athabascan Snowshoes", Lake Clark National Park & Preserve:
www.nps.gov/articles/athabascan-snowshoes.htm



Dena'ina Snowshoes, Wassillie Trefon, 1957.
Lake Clark National Park & Preserve.



Bearpaw-Style Snowshoes, ASA C. Osborn Company, pre-1947. UA99-001-0006AB.



Iñupiaq Snowshoes (*tagluk*), 1887.
National Museum of Natural History, E127941



Chukchi-Style Snowshoes, Sib8, ..no...