

POLAREXPLORERS

POLAR SHAKEDOWN TRAINING



The Essential Skills To Thrive And Survive At Both Poles And All Cold Places In Between

From packing a pulk or dogsled to crossing thin ice, planning a menu to picking the best communication device, we will cover everything you need to know to make your expedition as safe, fun and rewarding as possible. Stepping off the plane onto the polar ice, whether in the Arctic or Antarctic is no time to wish you had more experience. It is no time to re-think your decision to participate in a polar expedition. Our Polar Shakedown Training takes care of this by letting you test-drive your clothing & equipment and learn vitally important skills before your expedition. More importantly it gives you a taste of the mental and physical challenges that lie ahead, giving you the benefit of knowing how to personalize your training and approach. Polar Shakedown Trainings are not exclusive to people joining a polar expedition! If you want to get a taste of a polar expedition without having to travel to the ends of the Earth this training is the perfect opportunity!



Skill level:



When you are proficient in the basic and intermediate skills of any sport and are ready for long days, challenging weather, backcountry camping and a chance to push your limits without going over the top, this is your level. Prepare in advance for some strenuous days in order to fully enjoy this adventure.

Distance: 111 km as the crow flies. With drift and deviations this distance could be more.

Duration: 2 nights camping, 2 nights indoors

Sled weight: 20 kg + depending on your goals.

Location: We offer two Shakedown locations: Ely, Minnesota in the USA and Longyearbyenm Norway (in Svalbard). We also offer custo trainings in Iceland, Norway and elsewhere depending on the season and your goals. Longer trainings available on a custom basis.

Daily Itinerary

Day 1: This training kicks off in the afternoon of the first day with team introductions and a review the schedule. If the guide(s) have not already checked your kit they will review your clothing and equipment to make sure you have everything you need. Your guide(s) will also do an in-depth review of his/her kit to show everyone how each item is used and offer tips, suggestions and helpful modifications. Dinner offers a nice opportunity to get to know your other team mates, some of whom may be joining each other on future expeditions.

Day 2-3: We will start off the morning with a hearty breakfast and a couple of indoor classes. Then it is time to hit the trail for some polar training. Our time on the trail will provide many learning opportunities, both impromptu lessons as well as formal classes. Topics to be covered include: staying warm in the extreme cold; the threat of overheating; personal comfort & hygiene; layering systems; packing a pulk or dogsled (for people on dogsled Shakedowns); the basics of skis & bindings; tents & tent maintenance; sleeping systems; stove basics; cooking simple meals; accident prevention; traveling on ice; encountering leads (open water); insurance tips; evacuations & other logistics.



Days will be spent traveling between camps by ski or dogsled (for people on dogsled shakedown) while evenings will find us preparing expedition-style meals and talking about all things related to expedition life. Nights will be spent in the same polar tents and sleeping systems we use on our expeditions.

Day 4: A late afternoon return to civilization will allow us to wrap up the training with individual meetings between participants and guides. Your guide will review the experience and discuss your strengths, areas for improvement and how you can continue your training. If you are participating in the USA Shakedown you will also have the chance to learn and practice the art of escaping cold water. Conditions allowing we will cut a hole in the ice of a frozen lake and demonstrate what to do if you break through or fall into open water. This is especially useful for any participants headed to the North Pole. Hot showers, a well-deserved dinner and a comfortable night in a lodge or hotel top off this day.

Day 5: This training officially ends after breakfast. Participants on our USA Shakedown will likely make their way to either Duluth or Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airports for flights homeward. Transportation to/from the airport is not included in the cost of the Shakedown. Participants on our Shakedowns in Iceland or Longyearbyen should consider spending a day or two participating in one of the many guided tours that are offered (dogsledding, snowmobiling, etc.) Participants who are continuing directly on to one of our North Pole expeditions may have one day off between the Shakedown and the start of the expedition. We are happy to make recommendations on things to do during your free time. Contact us for suggestions!

This itinerary is highly dependent on a number of factors and it is subject to change.

Mountaineering Bridge Course:

Designed for Grand Slammers and other people with previous high altitude mountaineering skills. Our bridge course focuses on the differences between the mountains and the poles and assumes an already high level of expedition experience.





Click here to watch this moment on Youtube.



Ask us for references!

We have guided hundreds of people in the polar regions. Ask us for references from your city or country and we will put you in contact with someone who has done this expedition and can give you the “inside scoop”. References can be the BEST way to learn about the expedition.

Getting there:

Getting to Ely, MN (USA): Ely is accessible by air from either Duluth International Airport or Minneapolis -St. Paul International Airport. Contact us for more details.

Getting to Longyearbyen: SAS and Norwegian are the only commercial airlines serving Longyearbyen. Their flight schedules are limited. Connections are made through Oslo, Norway. Contact us for details.

Additional information:

Please contact us for links to our expedition videos, expedition reviews, equipment checklist, dates and rates and FAQ.

Meet us!

We are always free to meet you, check your gear, or discuss your expedition via Skype or Google. Give us a shout!

WANT TO JOIN? HERE'S HOW:



- 1 Complete and return our application.**

To join one of our expeditions you'll need to complete and return our [online application](#). You can also request an application by emailing annie@polarexplorers.com.
- 2 Reserve your space with a deposit.**

A 25% deposit will reserve your space on any expedition. Contact us at annie@polarexplorers.com to request an invoice for your deposit. Deposits can be paid by wire transfer, credit card or USD check. Currency exchange fees and credit card processing fees may apply.
- 3 Review your eConfirmation Kit.**

Upon receipt of your completed application and deposit we will send you a comprehensive eConfirmation Kit that includes all the information you need to prepare for your expedition including what to expect, what to pack and how to prepare. From this point on we are always available answer any questions and to offer assistance during your preparations.
- 4 Get ready!**

All of our expeditions require varying degrees of preparations. There will be forms to complete and travel insurance to purchase. We can assist you with any of these requirements. Some of our expeditions also require physical and mental preparations or participation on our [Polar Shakedown Training](#). We are always available to talk with you about training regimens and to help you prepare as best as possible.
- 5 Let the adventure begin!**

As the expedition approaches we will be in touch on more regular basis. We will meet you at the expedition's starting location and check your kit to ensure you have everything you need. With your preparations behind you now is the time to let the adventure begin. We will be right beside you to help you make the most of the expedition!



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