

Fun Games to Play with Family and Friends on a Ski Trip

There's more to a ski trip than just skiing. Here are some fun, low-stress games you can play in the condo, at the lodge, or in the car on the way up the mountain – including one I created called **On Your Mark** that's become a go-to background game on trips.

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Why Games Matter on a Ski Trip

A ski trip is usually a mix of big energy and quiet downtime. You ski hard during the day, then you're back at the condo or hotel with family and friends figuring out what to do next. That Après-ski ("after skiing") time is where games shine.

Good games help:

- **Break the ice** when you have a mix of family, friends, and maybe a few new people.
- **Keep kids engaged** when adults are cooking, planning, or just trying to recover from a full day on the hill.
- **Create shared memories** that you'll laugh about long after the snow melts.

The key is to pick games that fit your group's energy level, space, and attention span. On a ski trip, it's fun to have some "all-in" games and some "background" games that just run quietly while life is happening.

What Makes a Good Ski Trip Game?

Not every party game works well on a ski trip. Here are a few guidelines I like to use:

- **Easy setup:** You shouldn't need to unpack a suitcase of props just to get started. And you might not have the space, right?
- **Flexible group size:** People will drift in and out. The game should handle that without breaking.

- **Short turns:** Nobody wants to wait 10 minutes between turns while their quads are still burning from moguls. The hot tub is calling.
- **Kid-friendly variants:** Bonus if you can easily tone a game up or down for different ages.
- **Works with ski fatigue:** At the end of the day, brainpower and patience can be limited. Simple is good.

With that in mind, let's walk through some game ideas that fit a ski trip perfectly.

Classic Games That Work Great on Ski Trips

Top-down view of a table with a deck of cards, dice, hot chocolate mugs, and a folded trail map.

You don't have to reinvent game night. A lot of classic games translate really well to a ski condo. Here are a few categories and examples you can pack or play with minimal gear.

1. Card Games

A single deck of cards is one of the best things you can throw in your ski bag. Card games are compact, flexible, and easy to teach.

- **Uno (or Uno-style games):** Great for kids and adults together, quick rounds, easy to pause.
- **Crazy Eights / Go Fish:** Simple enough for younger kids but still fun for everyone.
- **Euchre or Hearts:** Good for smaller groups who want a little more strategy without too much complexity.
- **Skyjo:** We played this on our last trip and it was a blast.

If you want to keep things light, set a time limit instead of "playing to a certain number of points." When time's up, whoever is ahead wins.

2. Dice and "Roll-and-Write" Games

If you bring a couple of dice and some notepaper, you suddenly have a dozen possible games. Many modern "roll-and-write" games are easy to pack and play around a coffee table.

- **Yahtzee-style games:** Everyone rolls, fills in a score sheet, and compares totals at the end.
- **Simple dice challenges:** First to roll a certain combination wins, or create mini-challenges for kids ("roll three even numbers in a row").

3. Party / Conversation Games

These work especially well when you're all hanging out after dinner and don't want to focus on a board or cards.

- **Would You Rather?** Take turns giving your most ridiculous ski or travel scenarios.

- **Two Truths and a Lie:** Great for new friends on the trip or extended family who haven't seen each other in a while.
- **Story-building games:** One person starts a sentence, the next adds on, and it keeps going around the room.

These games require almost no gear and can be played in the car, in line at the rental shop, the lift line, or anywhere your group is stuck waiting.

Low-Energy Games for Tired Ski Legs

End of the day, legs are cooked, and half the group is in their base layers or comfy clothes. That's when you want low-energy games that still feel fun, not like homework.

1. “Highs and Lows” of the Day

Go around the room and have everyone share:

- **One high:** Best moment on the hill.
- **One low:** A wipeout, a long lift line, or something funny that went wrong.

This is simple, but it gets people talking and reliving the day. It's also a nice way to include people who skied different runs or were in different lessons.

2. “Name That Run” Photo Game

If you've got phones full of photos and trail maps lying around, you can create a quick guess-the-location game:

- One person shows a cropped or zoomed-in picture from the day.
- Everyone guesses which run, lift, or area it was taken in.
- Keep score, or just play for laughs.

You can do the same thing with video clips, helmet-cam footage, or even old photos from past trips.

3. “Tomorrow’s Challenge” Draft

As a group, come up with light-hearted challenges for the next day on the mountain, like:

- Be the first to spot someone skiing in a retro one-piece suit.
- Count how many times your group accidentally ends up in the moguls.
- Find the best hot chocolate on the mountain and rate it.

Everyone picks one or two challenges to “own” for the next day. It gives people something fun to look for while they're skiing or riding.

On Your Mark: A Background Game for the Whole Trip

Family/friends playing On Your Mark on a couch with their phones and talking/laughing.

Most games happen in rounds. You sit down, you play, the game ends. **On Your Mark** is different. It's designed as a **background game** that runs quietly in the back of your trip, while everything else is going on. You can't just sit and play it because it'll be too obvious – let me explain...

What Is On Your Mark?

On Your Mark is a game I created where you join a “mission-based” competition with other players using your phones. Each player gets simple missions (little tasks, prompts, or things to watch for), and you complete them throughout the day – between runs, in the lodge, or back at the condo.

The beauty of it is that you don't need to sit around a table for an hour to play. You just:

- Jump into the game on your phone.
- See your current mission.
- Complete it when it fits naturally into what you're already doing.

How We Used It on a Ski Trip

On a recent ski trip with friends, we ran an On Your Mark game in the background the whole time. While we were:

- Riding lifts
- Waiting for the last person to finish a run
- Hanging out after dinner in the condo

...people would quietly work on their missions. Some were silly, some were creative, and a few got surprisingly competitive. But it never took over the trip. It just added this extra layer of fun that connected the whole weekend together.

Why It Works So Well for Ski Trips

Friends having fun at the ski condo.

On Your Mark is a good fit for ski trips because:

- **It's flexible:** People can dip in and out without breaking the game.
- **It fills “dead time”:** Lift rides, lines, and downtime suddenly become chances to score points.
- **It doesn't require a big setup:** No boards or decks to unpack. Just your phone.
- **It creates running jokes:** Missions turn into stories that your group will reference for the rest of the trip.

If your group likes light competition and inside jokes, keep On Your Mark in mind for your next ski weekend. It layers on top of the trip instead of replacing the moments you already enjoy.

[Go Play On Your Mark](#)

Tips for Mixing Games into Your Ski Trip

A few practical ideas to actually get people playing:

- **Set a “game window” after dinner:** Let people know that from, say, 7–9 pm, you’ll be hanging out and playing something. It takes the pressure off having to “force” games at random times.
- **Start with something simple:** Open with a quick, low-commitment game so people can still wander off to hot tubs, snacks, or bedtime.
- **Mix active and background games:** Use classic card or dice games when everyone’s together, and something like On Your Mark as a light background game that runs all day.
- **Know your group:** Some families love competition. Others prefer silly, story-based games. Pick accordingly.

The goal isn’t to “run game night perfectly.” The goal is to create more moments where people are laughing, connecting, and telling stories that will come up again for years.

Glossary of Terms

Apres-ski

The time after skiing is done for the day, usually spent relaxing, eating, or hanging out with friends and family.

Background game

A game that runs quietly in the background of other activities. Players can join, make a move, or complete a mission without everyone stopping what they’re doing.

Mission (game context)

A small task or challenge assigned to a player to complete for points or progress in the game.

Roll-and-write game

A type of tabletop game where players roll dice and write results on a score sheet or grid, often building patterns or combos over time.

Ski condo

A rented condo, cabin, or vacation home near a ski area that serves as the base for your trip.

Resources & Further Reading

Here are a few resources where you can find more ideas for games and ski trip planning:

- [REI – Winter Trip & Game Ideas](#)
- [Family-Friendly Card Game Ideas](#)
- [Ski Trip Planning Tips](#)