

Norway, a small country of 5.5 million inhabitants, has won more Winter Games medals than any other nation. Fridtjof Nansen crossed the Greenland interior on skis in 1880. Other explorers have followed the routes used by these two famous explorers and skied to both the North and South Poles. Sondre Norheim, who is considered the father of modern skiing, was the originator of the telemark skis, which are narrower in the middle than at the front and back and have stiff heel bindings. Polar explorers made skis known internationally and demonstrated their unique merits on terrain that could not be crossed any other way. Norwegians go cross-country skiing, ski-jumping, or downhill skiing on weekends, on holidays. The shape made turning easier, and the heel binding allowed skiers to jump from rooftops or over rocks without losing their skis. It became the first country to win 100 Olympic gold medals, and reached the 300-medal milestone in the Winter Games of 2010. A rock carving in Nordland County in the north provides evidence that the use of skis dates back to the Stone Age. Although it gets dark early, Norwegians have enjoyed skiing for thousands of years. Roald Amundsen was the first man to reach the South Pole in 1911, on skis. Annual cross-country events are organized throughout Norway, attracting a great number of participants. Skis were the only means of transport in winter and essential for hunting. Skiing did not become a mass sport until the mid-1880s when the first competitions were arranged. When the snow starts melting in spring, they skate on ice. 2,500 lit tracks all over the country make it possible for people to ski in winter, and after work, they move it up to the mountains. And if there is no access to snow. Until about a century ago