

## Why not skiing just after the groomer is a good practice?

We all know what a fresh falling snowflakes looks like: a beautiful star with nice branches called dendrites.

The dendrites keep snowflakes far from each other, giving the snow poor cohesion. It is Soft and not really enjoyable to ski on but beautiful on the trees.

Grooming consists of breaking these dendrites so the center of the snowflake (that looks like a ball) gets close to each other and small ice bridges can build up between them to give a better cohesion of the snowpack. Then, the trail starts to be hard and enjoyable to ski on.

There are 2 steps to achieve a trail that's enjoyable to ski on:

- Breaking the dendrites: The groomer (Pisten Bully Snowcat) with the blade moves snow in front and under the machine. Then the tracks chew up the snow and finally, the tailer breaks the dendrites even further. The plastic carpet behind makes the trail smooth and the courduroy helps the cold to get into the snowpack.

After grooming, dendrites are broke down but the centers of the snowflakes are isolated from each other, the trail is still soft. That's why we need the second step.

- Letting the trail set for at least two hours (but even three or four hours for best results). The humidity between what's left of the snowflakes will freeze again, creating ice bridges and linking all particles together. Temperature and time are really important in this step.

The 2 steps described above are really important when we have fresh snow on the trails, but we have to let the trail firm up (step 2) after each grooming. Even if we are grooming old trails, we are breaking the snowpack and the ice bridges so time and temperature have to get involved to have a snowpack with cohesion again.

So please don't ski on trails that have just been groomed! Skiing just after grooming is not enjoyable for skiers and not really respectful of the groomer's work.

Thanks a lot