

# Check today's avalanche forecast

You find daily avalanche forecasts on Varsom during the winter season. Use the forecast to plan your trip. Download the **Varsom app** from [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#) for forecasts, offline maps, and sharing observations.



## Norwegian snow and climate

### Weather changes quickly

The snow is white, as anywhere else in the world, but the conditions may be unfamiliar. The weather often changes quickly and can catch you by surprise, reducing visibility and your ability to navigate safely.

Pay attention to the risk of avalanche in the avalanche forecasts. They will help you make safe choices. If you are used to skiing in the Alps or North America, be aware that the effect of the sun is less than you are used to.

### Persistent weak layers and cornices are dangerous

Wind creates numerous cornices, mostly located on east-facing slopes off rounded or plateau-shaped peaks. Blowing snow is a common cause of avalanche danger, and it is easy to underestimate how quickly this problem can become severe.

Strong winds also create hard wind slabs. Hard slabs mean fewer warning signs, and you may have a hard time identifying persistent weak layers in the snowpack. Long periods with persistent weak layers are common, especially in the interior regions and on Svalbard.

Many visitors are fooled by persistent weak layers creating dangerous conditions in coastal areas and south-facing terrain in the spring. Remember: if the snow is the problem, the terrain is the solution.

### Polar lows are nasty

Norway (58°–71°N) and Svalbard (76°–80°N) have long winters with plenty of snow. Low-pressure systems hit the coastal regions repeatedly, dumping massive amounts of snow and changing the snowpack rapidly. The interior regions and Svalbard have less snow, and long cold, dry periods.

So-called polar lows can be especially nasty and give intense snow showers and complex wind patterns. Low sun during winter is compensated for by long, light spring and summer days, with midnight sun above 66°N.

### **Be prepared to help yourself**

Call [112](#) in case of emergency or need of rescue. However, phone coverage may be poor or non-existent, and rescue may be impossible due to poor weather. Know your Companion Rescue procedure, avalanche safety gear, and how to navigate and survive during harsh winter weather. A bivouac and first aid kit are highly recommended. [Nortind](#) provides qualified guides; a safe choice when visiting – and possibly the smartest way to find the best snow.

**Have a great adventure and safe trip!**