

Q: Where do I START?

A: First, you must become a member of the US Luge Association and complete all the necessary paperwork (described in USA Luge brochure #3 entitled "Administrative Requirements").

Second, sign up for USA Luge sliding programs for the coming winter for which you are qualified. Winter programs in both Lake Placid and Park City are usually set in the late summer and then listed in the "USA Luge Member Bulletin" (which you will receive as a USA Luge member). Only certain athletes are qualified to participate in certain programs. For example:

Program	Who Qualifies
Screening camps	Athletes recruited through the Slider Search and recommended through club sliding programs.
Club Sliding	Club level sliders of any age or ability. Junior National Seeding experienced team and non-team junior age athletes already sliding from the start where the races.
Local Luge Program	Lake Placid area children ages 10-14. Runs both summer and winter.
Learn to Luge	Beginner sliders of any age in Park City. Masters experienced athletes over age 30 qualified to race in the Master's National Championship.
Senior National Seeding	Experienced team and non-team junior and senior age athletes already sliding from the start where the races will take place.
Empire State Games	Various categories of experienced athletes already sliding from the start where the races will take place.

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If you would like to be an "Official Supporter" of USA Luge, contact our Marketing Department at ext. 104

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UNITED STATES LUGE ASSOCIATION

How can I Slide?



Member, United States Olympic Committee



U.S. Representative, Fédération Internationale de Luge de Course





How Can I Slide?

Q: Is it possible for beginners of any age to try luge?

A: Yes, luge is a sport open to athletes of all ages and ability levels; and there are ways for anyone wishing to try the sport to do so. While the US Luge Team actively recruits new athletes between the ages of 11-14, there are ways for older athletes to slide as well. Programs such as Club Sliding, Learn to Luge, and the Master's National Championships are good examples.

Q: What is the best age to start luge?

A: It really depends on what the goals are of the athlete. The path of an athlete interested in making an Olympic Team is very different from that of a recreational slider. It is the philosophy of USA Luge that it takes 8-10 years of training and racing before an athlete can be competitive at the international level....and that success can only come if that athlete begins with the inherent natural talent for luge. That's why USA Luge starts athletes so young (11 -14 years old). This way, by the time they are 20 years old (and again only *IF* they have the natural talent), they will still have 10-15 years left in a competitive luge career. It is important to start at a young age in order to gain the experience necessary to win races at the international level.

However, athletes with realistic goals can start sliding at ANY age. There are programs for athletes who wish to slide recreationally or wish to slide at the club level, regardless of age.

Q: What is the USA Luge Slider Search?

A: The USA Luge Slider Search is the primary recruitment program of the USA Luge Team. Most of the athletes on teams, at every level, received their start through this program. It is a nationwide tour that visits 8-10 cities each summer and introduces the sport of luge to athletes 11-14 years old using sleds with wheels attached. Participants are taught the basics of how to ride, steer and stop a luge sled and then take runs down a hill in the host city. Participants also take part in a range of fitness tests to evaluate their physical skills and abilities. These two aspects, are used by the coaches

to select what they feel are the most promising athletes. These athletes are invited to attend a winter or summer screening camp of 7-10 days in length where they receive more advanced training in the sport.

Q: What if I am not in the 11-14 age range?

A: If you are older than age 14, the best way for you to start sliding is through one of the four luge clubs recognized by USA Luge.

Adirondack Luge Club
46 Mountain Road
Brookline, NH 03033

Wasatch Luge Club
P.O. Box 980216
Park City, UT 84098

Muskegon Luge Club
5671 South Shore Drive
White Hall, MI 49461

Upper Peninsula Luge Club
P.O. Box 704
Marquette, MI 49855

Club sliding is dedicated track time available to members of any USA Luge recognized club and is a good way for non-team athletes, older sliders and anyone outside the "team athlete pipeline" to slide. Athletes must be members of USA Luge and their respective club. Once USA Luge determines what dates and times Club Sliding will be available, the clubs will be notified of the schedule and it will be published in the "USA Luge Member Bulletin" (distributed to all USA Luge members). Individuals wishing to slide during this time, then notify their club directly of the dates they would like to attend. The number of sliders per session is limited and is based on the amount of track time available. Athletes are usually charged a per run track fee or can purchase a season's pass through the track.

If you have never been on a luge track, the first step is to try it and see if you like it. Once you've done this and find that luge is something you want to pursue, you may consider setting intermediate goals as opposed to a goal of "being in the Olympics".

Q: What is the Learn to Luge Program?

A: Learn to Luge is a program in Park City, Utah which is similar to Club Sliding. It allows non-team and recreational athletes the opportunity to train on the Park City track a couple days each week. The days and times of these training sessions are usually determined in the late summer. Individuals can call the Park City USA Luge office to get on the list for training. As with any USA Luge program, participants must be a USA Luge member and have all the proper paperwork on file.

Q: Will I be in the Olympics?

A: Only ten athletes every four years will compete in the Games; and, while racing in the Olympics is certainly an admirable goal, anyone getting started in luge should understand that very few people make an Olympic Team. It takes many years of experience to become an Olympic Luge Athlete.

Q: What is the Local Luge Program?

A: The Local Luge Program is based in Lake Placid and introduces the sport to area children ages 10-14 both in the summer and winter. The program is specifically designed to foster involvement of potential athletes from the regions surrounding the existing luge run in Lake Placid. The summer program offers participants once weekly training and ice starts at the US Luge indoor start facility. During the winter, weekly on-track training takes place on the actual luge run. The summer program is free and in the winter, participants are required to pay a nominal fee for use of the track. *Participants are required to become members of USA Luge.*

Q: If I start luge at an older age, will I make it to the Olympics?

A: Because the USA Luge athlete "pipeline" is so developed and effective, most of the athletes who make the Olympic Team, or the National Team, usually come from one of our recruitment programs. However, if you have a passion for the sport of luge and a true desire to slide, you are encouraged to try your best and see how far your skills will take you within the parameters of the USA Luge program.

For example, the goal for your first season might be to spend three weeks sliding on the track or work up to the women's start. The following year you might enter a club level race, then national level races and try to qualify for one of the junior level teams (if you fit into that category). After that you might want to try and improve your results in the National Seeding Races held annually, which are used to help select the teams each year. After three or four successful years your goal may be to qualify for the Junior National Team and race in Europe....and so on. As you can see, every goal is a stepping stone to the next level.