

## KITE SNOWBOARDING

Ever flown a kite and thought that with the right gust there just might be enough lift to send you airborne? You're not the only one. The key to getting that lift, not surprisingly, involves flying a big kite—and that's exactly what the extreme sports pioneers known as kite snowboarders are doing. Kite sports aren't new; people have been doing them on water for over a decade. But throwing a snowboard into the mix is new, and it offers a few distinct advantages. One, the board won't sink on snow, which does a considerable job of flattening the learning curve. Two, you can kite board anywhere there's an expanse of snow or ice: lakes, fields, even mountains.

You start by launching the kite, which is made out of ripstop nylon. Fix the kite to a hook you've hammered into the snow, step into your bindings, grab hold of the kite, take a deep breath and go. Your first day out, you'll reach speeds of 50 km/h, but you'll quickly learn that the whole point of kite snowboarding is catching air, anywhere from 10 to 30 feet of the stuff. Serious kite snowboarders catch such serious air that they can jump from mountain to mountain.

Before you run out and buy your first kite, a word about safety. The kite is strapped to a harness, which means that if you lose control of it, nasty things can happen. Be sure to find spaces free of obstructions, as hard and immovable objects like trees or buildings can be painful. Also, keep an eye out for who's downwind. The last thing you want to do is get someone else tangled in your kite strings—particularly another kiter. Never go out alone, and be sure to take at least a couple of lessons. Oh yeah: helmets are mandatory.  
[www.kiteaddict.com](http://www.kiteaddict.com)

