

Mushing in detail

Wheel dogs

Wheel dogs are placed directly ahead of the sled and tend to be the strongest dogs on the team.

Team dogs

Team dogs provide the "musclepower" of the team and help turn the sled.

Swing dogs

Swing dogs follow the lead dogs. They help set the pace and turn the sled around corners.

Lead dogs

One or two lead dogs are at the head of each team. They respond to the musher's commands, find and follow the trail, and set the pace of the team.



Musher

Mushers can be any age, sex or race. They relay commands to the team and sometimes run behind the sled to speed it along.

Sled

Older sleds are made out of wood, but modern ones are built of space-age materials like Kevlar and titanium.

Racing

There are two main types of sled dog races: sprint and long-distance. Long-distance races are those like the **Iditarod** and **Yukon Quest**. Mushers and teams compete to be the first to complete a set distance. In sprint racing, mushers race a course multiple times and racers' times are totaled at the end to determine a winner. The **Fur Rendezvous** and **Open North American Championship** are popular sprint races.