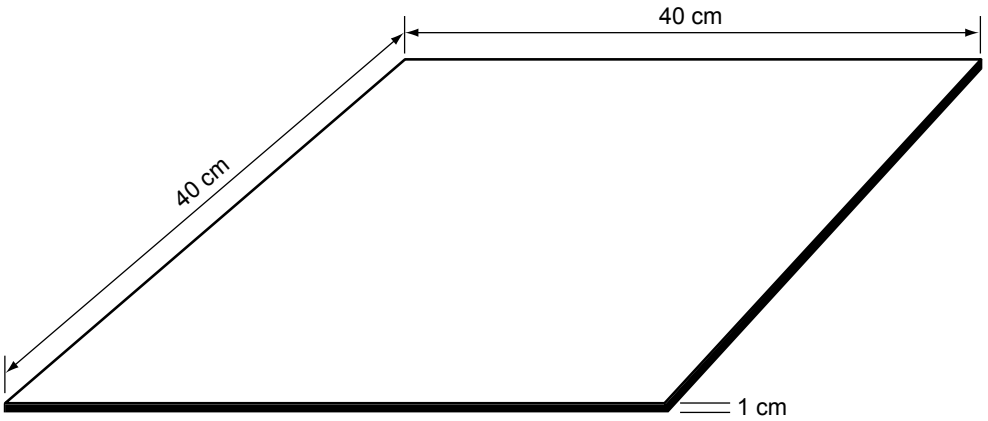
Instrument Construction: Snowboard

Instructions for Making a Snowboard for Measuring Solid Precipitation

A snowboard is a thin, flat surface that rests on top of earlier layers of snow. New snow falls on top of it and can be measured with a meter stick. The board should be made of plywood about 1 cm thick. It must be light enough so that the existing snow will support its weight. It should be at least 40 cm by 40 cm in area (see Figure AT-ICS-1) so that more than one snow depth measurement can be made and so that samples may be collected for both snow water equivalent and snow pH. The snowboard must be painted white. A flag will be needed to mark the location of the snowboard so that it can be found following a fresh snowfall.

Figure AT-ICS-1: Snowboard Dimensions



Frequently Asked Questions

1. Must our snowboard be made of plywood?

Plywood is best, but other light woods may be used. Metal is not appropriate as it can warm up too much in sunlight and melt the initial snow of a day time snowfall. The key is that the snowboard is light enough to be placed on the surface of the snow and not sink into the snowpack.