



WINTER APPAREL/HOW TO DRESS FOR COLD WEATHER

When making the commitment to run outside through the cold, Midwest winters, wearing the proper garments and dressing correctly will add to the comfort and enjoyment of the activity. The most basic place to start with cold weather apparel is the LAYERING SYSTEM. No one garment will cover the whole temperature range. Some of the pieces today though will perform more than one of the layering needs. Proper layering will keep you dry against the skin, trap heat to keep you warm, and protect you from the wind, rain and cold on the outside.

LAYERS

1. BASE LAYER – This layer is worn next to the skin and moves the moisture away from the body to prevent chilling. Tops, pants, briefs and bras should be made of wicking materials (polyester).
2. INSULATING LAYER – This is the middle layer that continues to move moisture and trap heat.
3. ELEMENT LAYER – This is the outer layer that protects you from the wind and the precipitation and completes the moisture transfer by releasing perspiration into the air.

BASE LAYERS.

As we mentioned, base layers pull the moisture away from the skin to keep you dry. This is the most important layer in the system although it maybe the least expensive. Base layers should not be too baggy or roomy because the fabric has to be on the skin to grab the perspiration. Base layers come in different weights. The heavier the base layer, the less clothing you will need to wear as the temperature drops.

INSULATION LAYERS

The insulation layers are usually bipolar layers (an inner layer to keep you dry and the outer layer to keep you warm.). This garment can be worn by itself in temperatures from 35-50 or underneath an element layer below freezing.



ELEMENT LAYERS

The element layers are usually nylon jackets or heavyweight polyester tops to cut through the wind and to repel water. Any technical jacket should have vents on it to regulate heat. There are different weights of jackets from nylon shells to lined waterproof suits. The garments will also vary in technical capabilities like water repelling and wind protection. The jackets can be put into 3 different categories.

Basic Level - Nylon shells will provide a basic level of wind protection, water repellency and breathability. They will be priced from \$50-\$80. None of these have liners so they are more for temperatures from 25-50 degrees.

Middle Level – These garments provide a much greater degree of wind protection, are the most breathable and will keep out almost all the water. They range in price from \$60-\$100. These garments are also not lined which adds to the breathability. They also work best in temperatures from 25-50 degrees. .

Most Technical Level – These garments are lined for extra warm and are waterproof. The waterproofing agent is a laminate applied to the backside of the nylon. The temperature range is 30 degrees and colder.

TIGHTS

Like the base layers and jackets, different tights will work better in different temperatures. Tights come in different weights and fit options and offer different degrees of wind protection. There are form fitting tights and the relaxed fit sport pants. Form-fitting tights hug the body and grab the perspiration you generate and wick it to the outside of the garment. Since there are no air gaps for cold air to seep into, they will work to keep you warmer. Sport pants are more and more popular because of the tapered fit.

ACCESSORIES

Accessories are also an important part of cold weather dressing. There are different weights in the gloves, hats, headbands, mittens and socks. As much as 70% of your body heat escapes through your extremities so how you cover your head, feet and hands will make a big difference.



HELPFUL HINTS

1. Wash your clothing and accessories in cold water and to let them line dry. The dryer beats down the garments and may ruin the laminates and fabrics of some pieces. Also you don't need to wash your garments after every single use. The less washings, the longer the wear life. Most are made with anti-microbial agents to help with odor.
2. Work with the wind. Begin running against the wind so it will be at your back for the return trip. This will help you from overheating too quickly and from getting chilled from perspiration.
3. Resist the urge to overdress. You should feel slightly chilled for the first few minutes till your body heats up.
4. Read the hang tags on the garments and accessories. They give a lot of information.