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**Clothing**

In cold weather, the best way to stay warm is to trap your body’s own heat and using it as insulation. As well, you want to avoid getting damp from your own perspiration and keep the rain and the wind out. The best way to accomplish this is to wear layers.

**Base layer:** the innermost layer is critical because it’s in direct contact with your skin. Base layers (Also known as underwear) should transport moisture away from the skin and disperse it to the air or outer layers where it can evaporate.

Because water is a good heat conductor, damp garments draw precious heat away form your body. Even in conditions above freezing, this rapid heat loss can cause a dangerous drop in your body’s core temperature.

The best base layer materials are synthetic (polypropylene and polyester). These are light and strong, absorb very little water, and are quick to dry. Silk is lovely and cool against the skin when it is hot but is not an excellent choice for wintery conditions.

Seamless or flat-seams garments lay flat and won’t press into your skin under a harness or pack. Base layers should fit snugly without being constricting.

Base layers are available in light, medium, and heavy weights. Light layers suit aerobic activity where sweat dispersal is paramount. Mid-weight underwear provides moisture control and insulation for stop and go activities. Heavy layers are best in very cold conditions, or when you are relatively inactive.

**Mid Layer:** the mid layer provides insulation and continues the transportation of moisture from the inner layer. To slow heat loss, this layer must be capable of retaining the warmth generated by your body.

Wool and synthetics are will suited to this because the structure of the fibers creates small air spaces that trap molecules of warm air.

Additional features, such as pit zippers and full-length front zippers, allow venting. As with the inner layer, this layer should be snug but not constricting.

**Outer Layer:** the outer layer protects you from the elements and should allow air to circulate and excess moisture to escape. For dry conditions, a breathable (uncoated) wind shell or a smooth-surface soft shell may be all you need.

If you expect conditions to be more severe, a waterproof (coated) rain jacket might be adequate. A shell made of a breathable and waterproof fabric, such as Gore-Tex, will protect you from wind and rain, and allow water vapour to escape.

When it’s hot our, you want to choose clothing to protect yourself from the sun’s burning rays, as well as to make use of your perspiration for cooling.