

# Warm Up for the Winter

Dressing for winter by using layering systems gives us options for regulating heat, preventing and managing sweating, and ultimately keeping us happy and functional while outside. Layers can be used individually, or in conjunction with other layers to fit the weather conditions of the day.

**Systems are going to be a bit different for everyone.** What works can depend on what materials we like to have against the skin, our allergies, how much we tend to sweat and the type of gear we have access to. It can take a bit of experimenting, but finding a system that works is a game changer! Once you've found a good system and reliable pieces of clothing you can adjust your kit based on the temperature, the humidity, and whether you're engaged in active or low-key outdoor activities.

## **Rule of thumb 1:**

### **Protect and keep your core warm!**

If your core has all it needs so should your hands and feet. If you are someone who perpetually has cold hands and feet, this could be a symptom of not having a core warmth system that works well for you. It could also just be your body's constitution!

## **Rule of thumb 2:**

### **No cotton!**

Cotton holds wetness or dampness against the skin which is caused by sweating. This will pull heat away from your body.

## **Rule of thumb 3:**

### **Before purchasing anything new, look through what you already have!**

Fleece pajamas and synthetic tops and bottoms are perfect for the job of staying warm, even if they're not marketed as such. Great layering options can be found in second-hand shops or bought new from an outfitter of your choice.

## **Materials: Wool and synthetic materials are your best friends!**

### **Wool**

- Pros: Natural fibre; antibacterial properties
- Cons: Heavier, not as durable, more expensive

### **Polypropylene**

- Pros: Light weight; insulating; durable; less expensive than down or wool
- Cons: Holds body odour; gets smelly quickly

### **Synthetic materials (blends of synthetic fibres)**

- Pros: Just as warm as other materials and have the added benefit of keeping you dry
- Cons: Heavier; hold on to body odour

### **Down**

- Pros: Great for insulating
- Cons: When it gets wet it no longer insulates

# Layering

## Upper Layers:



### **Base layer**

- This is the layer which lies against the skin
- Mid to lightweight wool, polypropylene, or other synthetic material long-sleeve shirt
- Zip collars can help with ventilation

### **Mid layer**

- Slightly thicker wool or fleece long-sleeve shirt
- Hoods are nice for this layer
- Long-sleeve shirts which cover wrist with thumb holes help seal off the cold



### **Wind Layer**

(on a warmer day this might end up being the top layer)

- Lightweight wind shirt/windbreaker, ideally with ventilation

### **Top Layers**

- Consider how much you want to be able to move around
- Lightweight puffy jacket; can be on the thinner side
- Synthetic, down or fleece jacket
- Down and fleece have the con of not being waterproof
- Big synthetic jacket or down parka; larger so it fits on top of all layers



### **Other top layer options**

Soft shell jacket that's not insulated or 100% waterproof, so it's more breathable than a hard shell or gore-tex jacket; good for when it's not wet and super functional

## Hands



- Bring two pairs of thin liner gloves in case one gets wet
- Insulating gloves; warmer fleece or wool gloves
- Big insulating mit
- Pair of shell mittens if you really want to go to town

## Head



- Lightweight hat; doesn't really matter as long as not cotton
- Thicker hat if you'd like; fleece or wool
- If really cold, fleece neck warmer
- Hoods are great to have as an extra layer

### **Lower body:**

Similar to top layering system



- Light weight-to-mid weight wool or synthetic base layer
- If you're colder person you can consider wearing a thicker layer of fleece tights on top of this
- Top layer option: hard shell gore-tex or hard shell (some breathability; very waterproof)
- Top layer option: soft shell (more breathable; less waterproof)
- Top layer option: big puffy snow pants for insulating



### **Socks:**

- Merino wool/synthetic material, one layer
- Don't wear too many layers of socks so your boots are tight as this will cause cold, better to bring additional layers with you
- Always pack extra socks



### **Boots:**

- Make sure they are waterproof and not water resistant if possible
- Need room for airflow, consider getting one size up if planning on wearing super thick socks/multiple layers of socks
- Boots can be uncomfortable and impact various joints in your body over time
- get an insole for support
- Take breaks from them or take notice if they are compromising the structural integrity of your feet