

Running in the Cold – Get Dressed

The key to running safely in cold weather is to be prepared. Wearing the proper clothes for the current weather conditions is your best defense. The most common mistake of new runners is wearing too much clothing, overheating and then allowing the sweat to freeze. Keep moving.

There is no written/proven system for winter running. Each individual is different. It is a trial and error system until you find what is right for you. However, there are these general guidelines:

A rule of thumb is to dress as if it is 20 degrees warmer. Think layers of technical fabrics to wick away sweat, with zippers at the neck and underarm zips to vent air as you heat up.

Below is a guideline. Assume you always wear gloves or mittens and a hat.

30 degrees: 2 tops, 1 bottom. Long sleeve base layer and vest keep your core warm. Tights.

10 to 20 degrees: 2 tops, 2 bottoms. A jacket over your base layer and wind pants over your tights.

0 to 10 degrees: 3 tops, 2 bottoms. Fleece for the cold prone and jacket. Windbrief for the guys.

Minus 10 to 0 degrees: 3 tops, 2 bottoms. Extra pair of mittens, scarf wrapped around the mouth or a balaclava.

Minus 20 degrees: 3 tops, 3 bottoms, 2 extra pairs of mittens, 1 balaclava & sunglasses.

Caring for Cold-Related Emergencies

Hypothermia:

1. Gently move the person to a warm place.
2. Care for shock by laying them down and raising their feet.
3. Remove wet clothing and cover the person with blankets and plastic sheeting to hold in body heat.
4. Carefully monitor use of heating pads and hot water bottles so that the person is not unintentionally burned.
5. Warm the person slowly and handle the person carefully.

Frostbite:

1. Remove wet clothing and jewelry for the affected area.
2. Soak the frostbitten area in warm water.
3. Cover with dry, sterile dressings. Do not rub the frostbitten area.
4. Care for shock.
5. Do not rewarm a frostbitten part if there is a danger of it refreezing.