

## EQUIPMENT LAYERING

The equipment we need to optimise our enjoyment of the wilder areas of the countryside is determined by the wind, weather, and terrain. Essentially what we wear and carry enable us to survive in beautiful but inhospitable places.

There is a wealth of different materials on the market today, most of which are synthetic. As fibres become more technical, so caring for them can become more complicated. For example, many fabrics cannot be washed with a fabric conditioner, as this affects the ability of the product to draw perspiration vapour through its fibres.

All outdoor clothing, from waterproofs to base layers, works better when clean. As a general rule, clothes should be washed in warm water (30°-40°C) with mild soap rather than detergents. To remove stains, first try gently rubbing the fabric gently with a soft brush, or alternatively speak to your retailer to find out if a proprietary stain removing product can be applied without adversely affecting the material's performance. If you wash your clothing during a trip, please ensure that you use an eco-friendly soap in a bowl well away from water sources.

Clothes are worn to maintain a body temperature of around 36.9 centigrade. If we get too hot or cold we feel uncomfortable. In fact, any departure either way from 36.9 centigrade puts our body in danger.

The factors which determine our heat level are:

- the type of clothes we are wearing;
- the weather conditions we find ourselves in.

Heat escapes from the pores of the body as moisture vapour. This heat loss needs to be



controlled. We wear a lot of different clothes, therefore, to control this loss, clothing in effect is our heat control system, which can be added or removed as necessary.

Weather conditions play a major part in determining our reactions to hot and cold.

In a wilderness situation, shelter is not always available to protect us from the elements. Consequently the insulation properties and quality of our clothing determines its effect on our body heat.

Wind and rain are perhaps the two weather elements which impact most on our survival in harsh conditions. We must provide a protective layer over our clothing if we want it to maintain its heating properties. This will include waterproof and wind proof layers for our upper body, leggings for our legs, boots for our feet, a hat for our head, and mittens or gloves for our hands.

If we can keep ourselves dry and comfortable it is a pleasure to travel in the wilderness. If we get cold and wet we are putting ourselves in danger which can ultimately be fatal.

## What do we need:

Warm clothing

Outer shell clothing, waterproofs

Boots

A rucksac

Spare clothing

Food and drink

A map and compass

Survival rations and kit in case of  
emergency

Survival Bag

Torch in case you are caught out (plus  
spare bulb & batteries!)

First Aid kit

Optional extras (depending on adventure being  
undertaken):

Tents

Bivouac sheet

Sleeping bag

Walking rope

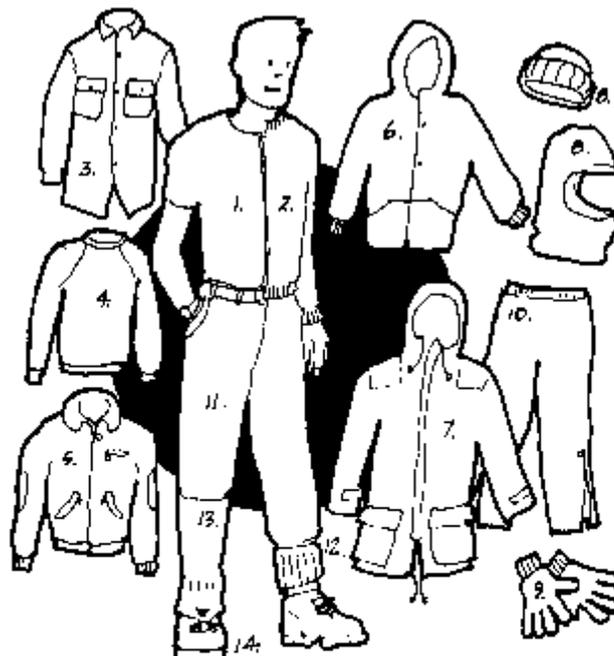


The secret of dressing for a trip into the moors and mountains is to create a layered system of clothing. The first layer is a vest or T-shirt made of wicking nylon (wool or cotton is second best) next to our skin. This soaks up the moisture expelled from our body and transports it to the next layer.

The second layer such as a wool shirt, followed by a fleece pullover or jacket. Next perhaps a windproof jacket and lastly a waterproof barrier. The top two layers are controllable and can be removed and put on as weather conditions change.

It is important to note that as you walk or climb you will use more energy and create more heat. This increase in heat output must be controlled. This control maybe as simple as opening a jacket to allow more air to circulate around your body or it may entail the removal of a clothing layer.

However, once you stop, perhaps at the top of a mountain you must restore the removed layers so as to retain body heat thereby maintaining body temperature. The wind is a quick cooler of the body and its temperature can drop very quickly once you stop in exposed situations.



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| 1 - T-shirt  | 2 - Thermal top/long-sleeved turtleneck shirt |
| 3 - Warm (wool) shirts                               | 4 - Fleece tops                               |
| 5 - Fleece jacket                                    | 6 - Windproof jacket                          |
| 7 - Waterproof jacket [essential]                    | 8 - Fleece (or woollen hat/balaclava          |
| 9 - Fleece with nylon outer mittens/gloves           | 10 - Waterproof overtrousers                  |
| 11 - Walking trousers/ tracksuit bottoms [NOT jeans] | 12 - Thick woollen socks                      |
| 13 - Gaiters, a useful extra                         | 14 - Stout walking boots                      |

A word about leg wear. You should not allow jeans made of denim to be worn on the hills or in wild countryside. When wet they have no heat retention properties and they shrink slightly. These can lead to body cooling. Track suit bottoms are excellent as indeed are hiking breeches.

