



CROSS COUNTRY SKI & HIKING SHOP

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X-C SKI CLOTHING SELECTION GUIDE

RECREATIONAL – BACK COUNTRY – RACING – CLOTHING and ACCESSORIES

Helpful hints on how to dress for comfort when Cross-country skiing.

Cross-country and Alpine/Downhill skiing are very different when it comes to clothing choices. Insulated, down-filled suits, jackets and pants are a “no-no”. Cross-country skiing usually gets the body temperature up quite quickly, much faster than in downhill skiing.

The secret to comfortable clothing for cross-country skiing is in layering with relatively thin layers. This provides the flexibility to peel off layers as the body temperature rises.

Underwear

The first layer (next-to-the-skin) is very important. There are basically two choices.

1. Good quality synthetic blends, including polyester, polypropylene etc. designed to wick the moisture away from the skin into the next layer and leave you feeling dry.
2. Wool, or high wool content underwear (typically brushed Merino wool) has a much softer feel than the old, rough and itchy quality of the past. Wool is a natural fiber and has the unique ability to provide warmth even when wet.

Cotton is not good in the winter as it retains moisture next to the skin and gets cold very fast.

Middle layer

The middle layer should be of a similar breathable synthetic material as the underwear base layer, but a bit thicker. If a high neck garment is used, a zipper is preferable for releasing excess heat. A vest can be a good choice to keep the torso warm while leaving arms free to move.

Pants should be single layer, wind-breaking, smooth surface so snow does not stick to it, or one layer with a mesh or other thin lining. It should cover the top of the boots to prevent snow to get down into the boots or else it may be necessary to use gaiters.

Outer layer

The outerlayer should be a light breathable windbreaker type garment lined with mesh or thin synthetic lining. For more technical garments with more breathability the wind layer should only be in the front. In any case an extra layer should be brought in the backpack.

Socks

Nothing beats wool and synthetic blend socks for keeping feet warm and comfortable. Often one pair of medium wool/synthetic socks is sufficient (modern boots have either Thinsulate or other microfiber lining). A thin pair of wicking, synthetic liner socks first and then wool/synthetic socks on top may be preferable especially for those prone to blisters. Again, cotton is a bad choice for winter.

Gloves, Mitts and Toques

Handwear must be breathable, as to prevent moisture build-up. Mitts are warmer than gloves and usually used for temperatures below -10 C and for those prone to cold hands.

The Norseman carries a great selection of all of the above equipment and provides helpful advice to choose the most suitable equipment and clothing.