

## Transcending Winter Weather

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Whether it's having your training sessions restricted to indoor environments or dealing with inclement weather for your outdoor workouts, folks can find winter a challenging time to get started or stay on track.



But it doesn't have to be that way! With a little understanding of how to prepare for the colder temperatures and a willingness to venture outdoors, the winter season can be an incredible time of fun and opportunity for your fitness and health.



Cardiovascular-based winter activities such as jogging, snow shoeing, skating, cross-country skiing and skate skiing are activities that can be done in almost any temperatures. Today, there is even the option of winter triathlons that merge trail running with mountain biking and skate skiing.

So why do people who love the outdoors choose to hibernate through the cold months as they wait for spring? Most of the time it's because people just don't think they can stay comfortable, but the following tips can help you get beyond the initial obstacles of winter.

### Tips for Winter Exercising

1. Use **base-layer clothing** made from natural fabrics such as wool, these are designed to work with the moisture on your skin to regulate your temperature for the duration of your workout.
2. **Do not overdress!** Though this may feel nice and comfortable at the beginning, you will sweat much more than you would otherwise, increasing your feelings of fatigue. Generally speaking, plan for your second 10 minutes. If you feel just a little cold when starting your run, you have dressed perfectly for the conditions.
3. **Dress to your training plan.** Harder workouts will require less clothing than easier workouts. If you are unsure how to dress, bring a shell jacket that can be used for your warm-up and cool-down, but can be easily vented or taken off for the more difficult part of the workout.
4. **Sunglasses.** In most cool or cold weather conditions, sunglasses will protect eyes from the bright sun reflecting off of the snow and prevent them from watering due to the cold or wind.
5. **Staying on your feet and keeping them warm** go a long way toward enjoying outdoor winter activities. Over-layering your feet will cause them to sweat excessively, which can lead to cold toes. For cardiovascular-based activity, a single pair of wool socks will normally do. In very cold conditions or for gravity-based sports like skiing, use a double layer of socks.

6. A good **trail running shoe** provides extra traction for slippery surfaces and many offer waterproof features that help keep your feet dry. In areas with ice or crusty snow, a slip-on traction device will keep you up right and safer.

7. **Water.** One of the biggest challenges for exercising in cold temperatures is avoiding de-hydration. While it may feel unappealing, drinking regularly during your lower temperature workouts is just as necessary as in the summer. Filling water bottles with lukewarm fluids will help to prevent them from freezing or being too cold to drink comfortably.

**8. Plan your route ahead of time.** Use a loop course to avoid getting too far away from home in the event something were to go wrong during your activity.

9. Avoiding frostbite and hypothermia is the most important consideration when preparing for cold weather. **Make sure all of your skin is covered** and plan to go home in case the conditions change during your workout.

The cold weather can bring a wonderland of possibilities for the active person. With a little planning and knowledge, along with the right clothing, you will be amazed at how enjoyable the crisp air can feel.

**NOW GET OUT THERE AND HAVE SOME FUN!**