

# Running in Inclement Weather

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<http://www.rei.com/expertadvice/articles/running+basics.html>

Sure, you're going to have those perfect spring-like days when the sun is out, the breeze is cool and you feel like a million bucks. But there are those times when Mother Nature doesn't cooperate. What can you do to stay safe and healthy and still get in your training run? Here are some suggestions.

## Cold Weather

For winter training, layering your clothing is the key. Layering allows you to add or shed layers as your body temperature changes. Layers trap heat to keep you warm, plus they allow sweat to wick away from the first layer to the outer layer where it can evaporate. Everyone's thermostat is a bit different, so experiment with your layering.

Upper-body clothing suggestions:

Layer	Function	Fabric Types
Base layer	Wicking	Wool or synthetics
Middle layer	Insulating	Fleece
Outer layer	Weather protecting	Waterproof/breathable rain shell

Tip: A shirt with a zippered neck helps you regulate your temperature as you run. Also, make sure the sleeve cuffs aren't too tight—you can push the sleeves up when you're too warm or pull them down over your hands if you're cold.

Lower-body clothing suggestions:

Layer	Function	Example
Leggings and tights	Stretch and insulating	Running tights or loose-fit pants

**In wet, winter running conditions:**

- Wear shoes with water-repelling uppers and minimal mesh.
- Avoid cotton socks— wear only those made of merino wool or synthetics such as CoolMax polyester.

### **Important heat retainers:**

- A hat: You can lose significant body heat through a bare noggin.
- Gloves or mittens: Hands are another prime area for heat loss.
- Balaclava, ski mask, bandana or scarf: These cover your mouth and warm the air before it hits your throat and lungs.
- Neck gaiter: It's like a sock for your neck.

It's best to avoid snowy or slushy conditions. If you have no choice but to run on snow or ice, be careful. Consider adding extra traction to your shoes with products such as Yaktrak grippers. They strap to the bottom of your shoes to help you avoid slipping.

### **Hot Weather**

No matter your conditioning level, running in high temperatures and humidity can be hazardous.

- When traveling to a race in a warmer climate, try to arrive a few days early to allow time to acclimatize.
- Any time the temperature goes up, give yourself adequate time to gradually acclimatize.

Remember to take it easy—pushing too hard can lead to heat exhaustion. Your body is working hard at cooling your skin so your brain may end up not getting all the blood and oxygen it needs. This condition is marked by excessive sweating, dizziness, headache and/or leg cramps. If you feel any of these symptoms, it's your cue to stop running and get out of the sun. You should take a cool shower if possible, and start replacing your spent fluids with cool water.

### **Summer clothing tips:**

- Dress for the weather. Wear lightweight, light-colored garments which breathe and reflect sunlight.
- Lightweight nylon running shorts and singlets are about the most comfortable gear in hot weather. Women may opt to wear sport-bra tops in place of singlets in very hot temperatures.
- Avoid wearing cotton clothing. Instead, wear moisture-wicking fabrics such as a polyester microfiber or CoolMax polyester that dry faster and help you stay cooler.
- Wear a visor or a hat with a brim and mesh sides or crowns to keep you from overheating.

**Running times:**

- Avoid noon and afternoon runs when the sun and heat are most intense. Instead, run early in the morning or later in the evening when it's cooler.
- If you're in an urban area, late day is often the worst time for air pollution. Ideally, run in the morning before the day's traffic has started.
- If you must go out during midday, try finding shaded areas to run.

Tip: If it's windy, try running with the wind on the way out so you have the breeze cooling you on the way back when you're perspiring and hot.