

WINTER WEATHER RUNNING GEAR

HOW TO DRESS FOR RUNNING IN THE WINTER

Layering to run In the winter months is an ART. Here's my guide on how to successfully keep running all winter long.

Tips from Sam and Brittney Jacobson
The husband and wife running duo!



Winter Weather Running Gear

Dressing for winter running is an art, and unfortunately, it takes some trial and error!

Picture a perfect 33-degree winter morning. Snow on the ground, a few peaceful flakes falling, and absolutely no wind. Sounds magical, right?

Now add a 10 mph wind. Suddenly, those same 33 degrees feel completely different!

And, of course, everyone runs at different temperatures. I tend to run cold, while others (Nora!) run HOT.

There is no perfect winter running outfit. The trick is figuring out what works for YOU.

STEP 1: BASE LAYER

Keep moisture away from your skin!

Even when it's freezing outside, you're still going to sweat. Your base layer helps move that moisture away from your skin so you don't end up cold and damp.

What to look for:

Fabric: Choose moisture-wicking polyester, nylon blends, or merino wool. AVOID COTTON!

Fit: Snug but comfortable, without restricting movement.

Warmth: Lightweight for milder days or runners who run hot; thermal for colder conditions or runners who run cold.

What about my legs?

You generally don't need as many layers on your legs. A pair of regular running tights or warmer thermal/fleece-lined tights will work for many winter conditions.

My tips:

Dress for mile 2, not minute 1. It's okay to feel a little chilly at the start.

Don't automatically choose your warmest gear. Overheating and sweating can leave you colder later.

Pay attention to your effort. Easy runs may require warmer clothing than harder workouts.

Take notes! When you find the perfect combination, remember the temperature and conditions. I have tights I won't even consider wearing unless it's 20°F or colder!

STEP 2: ADDING WARMTH & WEATHER PROTECTION

Stay warm without overheating!

Once you have your base layer, the next question is simple: **Do I need more warmth, protection from the weather, or both?**

Sometimes a lightweight jacket is plenty. Other days, you might need a fleece or insulated layer. And on milder days, you might not need anything else!

Your Options

Layer	Best For
Fleece or warm long-sleeve	Adding warmth without much bulk
Running vest	Keeping your core warm while allowing your arms to cool
Windbreaker	Blocking wind without adding much insulation
Insulated jacket	Extra warmth on colder days
Waterproof jacket	Protection from rain and wet snow

A word about waterproof jackets!

Waterproof does NOT mean you'll stay dry!

GORE-TEX and other waterproof materials can keep rain out, but they often can't release sweat as quickly as your body produces it during a run.

You can end up soaked on the INSIDE of your jacket.

For light rain or snow, I often prefer something more breathable. Waterproof jackets are most useful when you need protection from prolonged rain, wet snow, and wind.

What about my legs?
I keep this pretty simple! I rotate between regular running tights and thermal/fleece-lined tights.

Personally, I spend almost the entire winter in thermal tights because I run cold. But I save my warmest Smartwool tights for temperatures around 20°F or below.

I also own waterproof running pants that I originally had to buy as required race gear. They're not something I typically wear, but they're useful when the weather gets especially nasty.

A Few Things to Remember
Wind changes everything. Sometimes blocking the wind is more important than adding warmth.

Zippers are your friend! Vent heat when you start getting warm.
Your pace matters. Hard workouts generate more heat than easy runs.

Long runs are different. What works for 30 minutes might not work for four hours.

More isn't always better. Too many layers can leave you sweaty and uncomfortable.

My biggest advice?
You don't need ALL the layers. You just need the RIGHT layers! Cold? Add warmth. Windy? Block the wind. Wet? Protect yourself from the rain.

And remember, the goal isn't to be perfectly warm when you step outside. It's to stay comfortable throughout your run, with enough protection for the conditions.

MY PICKS:
BASE LAYER

The foundation of your winter running outfit!

Your base layer has one very important job: **keep moisture away from your skin.** So before you go layering on jackets and vests. Establish what goes on the bottom. For some warmer winter days, you may not need many layers on top.



My Favorite Picks Up Top:

Light weight:

Patagonia Capilene Cool Daily Long Sleeve

Lululemon Swiftly Tech Long Sleeve

(Often any tech long sleeve! Check out CRZ Yoga on Amazon!)

Mid to Heavy weight:

Smartwool Classic Thermal Merino base layer

My Favorite Base Layers:

Smartwool Intraknit Thermal Merino Leggings.

Patagonia Wind Shield Pants

Recently, CRZ Yoga's Fleece lined leggings are a budget friendly option!

MY PICKS:
OUTER LAYER

Stay warm without overheating!

Once you have your base layer, the next question is simple: Do I need more warmth, protection from the weather, or both?

My hat of choice Is a trucker hat unless my ears need covered! *If Its really cold, keep your heat warm!*



When temperatures drop below 30 degrees, especially into the single digits, I start bringing out my warmer gear.

What I wear:

- Smartwool Classic Thermal Merino 1/4 Zip base layer
- My Smartwool Smartloft jacket
- Fleece neck gaiter (Buff)
- Smartwool ear warmer/headband
- Mittens as needed
- Smartwool Intraknit Thermal Merino Leggings

Small Things That Make a BIG Difference

I prefer mittens over gloves! Sam taught me that mittens can keep your hands warmer because your fingers share warmth instead of being separated. My favorites are my Black Diamond mittens.

On especially cold or windy days, hand protection makes a huge difference. I've learned that my hands can be freezing even when the rest of my body is perfectly comfortable.

QUICK GUIDE JACKETS

Do I REALLY need a jacket?
Ask yourself:

Is it windy?
Wind protection may be more useful than extra insulation.

Is it raining or snowing?
Choose protection based on how wet you're likely to get.

Am I going to be working hard?
The harder the effort, the more important ventilation becomes.



Wind:

- Patagonia Houdini Wind Jacket
- NNormal Trail Wind Jacket
- Brooks Canopy Packable Jacket
- REI Co-op Swiftland Windshell Running Jacket



Rain or Snow

- NNormal Trail Rain Jacket 02
- Patagonia Storm Racer Jacket
- Salomon Bonatti Waterproof Jacket
- Brooks High Point Waterproof Jacket 2

Temperature	What I typically wear on top
Below 30°F	Thermal Smartwool base layer + conditions-appropriate jacket
30–40°F	Lightweight long sleeve + conditions-appropriate jacket
40–50°F	Long-sleeve tech shirt or T-shirt + light jacket
50–55°F	Light base layer or short sleeve if no wind
55–75°F	Short-sleeve technical shirt or tank
Above 75°F	Tank top or sports bra or long sleeve sunshirt