

SKI CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES

Helmet

Not only are helmets warm and comfortable to wear while skiing and snowboarding, they can prevent head injuries and even save your life. For winter sports, skiing and snowboarding, there are specific helmets that are designed for cold weather activities, work with your goggles and are certified to protect you. As a general rule, if a helmet doesn't fit, it serves no purpose and if it's not comfortable, it won't be worn.

Helmet Sizing and Fit: MOST IMPORTANT

1. Measure Your Head - Take a soft measuring tape or piece of string and wrap it around your head about 1 inch above your eyebrows and ears. Measure your head in centimeters.
2. Try It On - The helmet should feel snug. A properly fitting helmet needs to be snug all the way around your head so that it doesn't move around. You don't want any excess space between the helmet and your head. Not only does excess space mean it doesn't fit properly but it will allow cold air to leak in making you cold all day. Be careful to pay attention to any pressure or pain points.
3. Shake Test - Once you have placed the helmet on your head and checked for gaps, it is time for the shake test. Shake your head forward and back as well as from side to side. The helmet should not slide around on your head at all. If it does, this means the helmet is too big and could slip off during a serious jolt or fall. Some helmets have a way to adjust the helmet size by cranking a knob in the back or adding air. If your helmet does, and you find your helmet is fitting too loose, give the knob a few cranks and see if it fits any better.

Is the helmet too tight? If your head is feeling squeezed or doesn't fit all the way onto your head, then your helmet is too tight. You should comfortably be able to wear your helmet all day.

Helmet Venting

Almost all helmets have some form of open, passive venting built into their design that allows for excess heat and moisture to escape. Some can be opened/closed others you can not adjust.

What about my goggles?

You want your goggles to fit comfortably with your helmet. Your goggles should fit comfortably with your goggle strap over the helmet. There should be no gap between the top of your goggles and the helmet; this is referred to as a "goggle gap" or sometimes "gaper gap." Besides, "goggle gap" can give you a brain freeze. It has become increasingly popular to wear goggles underneath helmets. This is mainly for style and should only be done if the helmet fits properly over your goggles.

Safety Ratings for Helmets

There are two main bodies that certify helmets with safety ratings: the American Society of Testing Materials, International (ASTM) and Central European Norm (CEN)

Audio Capabilities

3 types: Wired, Bluetooth (needs transmitter) & wireless
Helmet earflaps have or allow you to install headphones

How to avoid helmet head....cute headbands

Googles

Goggles are one of the most important pieces of equipment you can purchase; they are just as important as your jacket and pants. Any skier or snowboarder can tell you that not being able to see ruins a day as fast as poor fitting boots. All ski and snowboard goggles will offer some basic protection from wind and cold, but beyond the basics there are some key features to consider: lens type, lens color/tint, interchangeable lenses, frame size and fit. Most goggles are unisex but there are a few women's specific which are generally smaller in size. Goggle sizes generally correlate with the size of your head so if you wear a small helmet consider a small frame and if you wear a large or extra-large helmet consider a larger frame, medium to large helmet consider a medium frame size. Also consider if you're wearing a hat or a helmet.

When Wearing a Hat

If you will be wearing a hat when you hit the slopes, the first step you will want to take is to check to see if the goggle fits your face. Every goggle frame has a different shape, so be sure to try a few different ones on to see which feel the most comfortable. The goggle should form a soft, snug feel around your face with no pressure points. If the goggle feels good so far, check to make sure there are no gaps in the seal. If there are, try a different pair. Gaps in the ski goggles seal against your face will allow air and moisture to leak in, causing your eyes to water and your ski goggles to fog. If there are no gaps and the goggle feels good, double check to make sure the strap closes tightly around your head. If so, then you have found a goggle with a good fit.

When Wearing a Helmet

If you will be wearing a helmet, you will need to take the same steps to ensure proper fit as if you were wearing a hat, with a few small additions. After ensuring that the goggle fits your face, you will need to ensure that the goggle fits well when you have your helmet on. This means you will first need to check that the goggle is wide enough to be worn when wearing a helmet. Once you check that the goggles can be worn with a helmet, check to make sure that the goggles have a strap which will extend long enough to fit around the helmet. Finally, you will want to check that the goggle forms a good seal between the top of the goggle and the brim of the helmet. If the goggles allow a gap where your forehead is, that means that your forehead will be exposed to the elements, allowing for sunburn, frostbite, or some serious brain freeze.

Glasses?

OTG (Over the Glasses) – OTG goggles are designed to allow you to wear your prescription eyeglasses under the goggles. This is a much less expensive option than a goggle with a custom prescription lens. OTG goggles are deeper than regular goggles and have channels to allow for the arms of your glasses.

Goggle Lenses

The biggest differentiator between goggles is the lenses.

Lens Shape

There are two choices of lens shapes...flat/cylindrical & spherical

Cylindrical (Flat) Lenses – These lenses curve horizontally while remaining flat vertically. Flat lenses are usually found on less expensive and kids ski goggles because they are less expensive to make. While their price is nice they do have some disadvantages. First, flat lenses have a reduced viewing window. This means that flat lenses typically reduce your peripheral vision while skiing. Additionally, flat lenses have a tendency to distort your view. This is because the flat shape causes the light rays to bend when they hit the lens. As a result, goggles with flat lenses tends to have a view that can appear magnified or misshapen. Finally, because of the flat shape, ski goggles with flat lenses can occasionally catch sunlight at off angles, resulting in significant glare.

Spherical Lenses – Spherical lenses, on the other hand, curve both horizontally and vertically around your face, which will give the goggles a bubbled look. Beyond the look there are significant advantages to wearing cylindrical lenses:

- **Peripheral Vision** - With a greater lens surface area, spherical goggles allow you to see more above and below you, as well as to the sides.
- **Glare** - Spherical goggles, on the other hand, have strategically planned curves to reduce glare.
- **Distortion** - spherical lenses reduce distortion and product a much clearer, accurate view. The reason for this is because of the lens shape. When a lens is not spherical, the light rays hit the lens at different angles on the top and bottom then in the middle. The result is a distorted viewing window. Because of the spherical lens' curved shape, light rays pass through in a much straighter line, allowing for less distortion and a more sharp view.
- **Avoid fogging** - There is more volume between your face and the cold outside with a spherical lens, which means better insulation and air flow – this translates into a reduced chance of fogging.

Double vs. Single Lenses

Before we dive into specifics, we will begin explaining the difference between single and double lens by saying this: ski goggles with a double lens are far better than those with a single lens, always. Here's why.....

A goggle with a single lens has one lens between your eyes and the elements. It is simply designed to provide some protection from the wind and snow, and a little protection from the sun. It offers no fog reduction and is typically found on kids ski goggles and very inexpensive adult ski goggles. Goggles with a double lens actually have two lenses in one. They have an outer lens to protect against the elements, a small gap, and an inner lens to prevent fogging. The reason for the barrier of air between the two lenses is what makes them so superior to ski goggles with single lenses. It is this barrier that prevents the ski goggles from fogging, by creating a thermal barrier between your warm face and the cold air outside. Additionally, this helps to insulate the air around your face, making ski goggles with double lenses warmer to wear.

Lens Color / Tint

There is nothing worse (and more dangerous) than having cloudy vision on a powder day or being blinded when it's blue bird. There are dozens of lens colors to choose from that vary from brand to brand, and although one color might match your jacket better, each color will filter light differently and offers unique advantages in certain weather and light conditions. The amount of light a goggle lens allows to pass through is called Visible Light Transmission (VLT). VLT is expressed as percentage of light allowed through the lens falling somewhere between 0% and 100%.

Some lenses are designed to perform much better in low light, low visibility situations, such as when it is snowing, foggy, or the light is flat. These lenses will allow a higher percentage of VLT. Typical colors for low light lenses are yellow, rose, and blue with VLT ranging from 60-90%. Other lenses will function better on sunny days with high visibility where it is more about keeping the light out. These lenses will have a lower VLT percentage and typically come in dark colors of black, grey, and gold, often mirrored and have VLT ranges from 5-20%. Of course there are lenses in the middle of the spectrum that perform fairly well in all conditions and are great if you experience changing light conditions during the day. Each manufacturer produces a wide range of lens tints for bright days, storm days, and everything in between.

Amber is the most popular lens color because it works well in most light conditions. It's well suited for overcast & grey conditions.

Gold -very overcast or snowy conditions,
Rose-flat light & night skiing
Yellow-flat light
Black or Grey-bright sunny ski days
Orange-all conditions
Clear-night or in very overcast

Multiple Lenses

So, how many different lenses do you need? Many people can get away with just one pair of good goggles with only one lens option. For example if you only ski or ride in Colorado on bright, sunny days, you will probably be fine with only a dark lens. However, if you ski in range of conditions, it is probably best to have two pairs of goggles or one pair with multiple lenses to swap out.

Interchangeable Lenses

The more time you spend in the mountains, the more weather conditions you'll encounter. Having multiple lens colors on hand can help to maximize visibility and performance throughout the day, as the reality is that no one goggle lens can provide optimal visibility across the full spectrum of lighting and weather conditions. Although many goggles do allow you to change lenses ([extra lenses](#) typically sold separately), manufacturers have come up with a bunch of ingenious ways to make swapping lenses a cinch with easy to use toggles and now even magnets. These quick changing lens systems can be more expensive but offer a very fast means of changing lenses and typically come with a second lens. Interchangeable lenses give you a quick change in lens color while not adding the bulk of carrying a second pair of goggles.

Lens Tech

Beyond just the lens type and color, goggle manufacturers apply additional features to their goggles in order to make them better at doing their job. Some lens features to keep an eye out for include:

UV Protection

Mirrored Lenses - A coating on the outside of the goggle lens reflects a greater amount of light than a non-mirrored lens. Letting in a decreased volume of light means less glare and increased visual clarity in bright conditions. You also get that cool Top Gun aviator look, although we recommend removing your mirrored goggles in the bar.

Polarized Lenses - cut glare

Double Lenses - These create a thermal barrier that reduces fogging significantly

Anti-Fog Coating

Photochromic Lenses - These lenses automatically adjust to changing light conditions by darkening when exposed to stronger ultraviolet (UV) light and lightening when there is less UV light.

Ventilation

You can count on virtually all quality goggles having vents, but some are better than others. In general, more venting is better in terms of preventing fogging. It is important to check that the venting system in your goggles is compatible with the shape of your helmet, in other words don't block the vents; otherwise your goggles might be a little more susceptible to fogging.

Other Fit Features

Face Foam - Make sure the foam follows the curvature of your face without pressure points. There should be no gaps between the foam and your face for wind or snow to flow through. You want a consistent, snug fit all around the perimeter of the goggle. If the goggles pinch your face or feel uncomfortable, they probably aren't for you.

Helmet Compatibility

Fit Problems and Solutions

If your goggles don't feel right, consider why they are uncomfortable:

Pressure on the outer eye socket - If you feel this, the goggle is too narrow and you need to find a model with a wider frame.

Pinching you on the bridge of the nose - First try to tighten the strap so that it secures the goggle a little higher up on your face. If that doesn't work then try goggle with a smaller fit or one with a different bridge contour.

Gap on the bridge of the nose - The first thing you should do is try to loosen the strap a little and see if you can secure it a little lower down on your face. If this doesn't work, you should fit yourself in a goggle with a larger bridge.

Pinching the temple - You should try to loosen the strap a little and see if that relieves the tension. Otherwise, you'll need to try and find a wider pair of goggles.

Goggle Care

- Never let your lens touch the table or hard surface when you set them down. Place them on the foam side with the lens facing up.
- Use only a soft cloth (not your baselayer shirt) or anti-fog cloth to blot (not wipe) the goggle lens dry. Wiping is more abrasive and can remove the anti-fogging coating on the inside of the lens.
- When off the slopes allow goggles to air dry thoroughly before stowing in their bag.
- Store your goggles in a soft sack when they are not in use. Most come with one when purchased.
- Do not dry goggles in direct sun or high heat, such as on the dashboard or hanging from the rearview mirror.
- Take them off your helmet when you're done skiing so avoid wearing out the stretchiness of the strap
- Use only water to clean them and don't rub too hard or will take the anti-fog coating off
- If your goggles get wet on the inside lens don't wipe dry but dab it. Wiping will take the anti fog off.

Tips to Avoid Fogging

Keep moving! The airflow you get from riding keeps fog from forming.

- Remove excess snow from the goggle by shaking. Don't wipe the lens with your glove, as your glove is abrasive and can leave your lens scratched.
- Clear snow off of vents so they are clear.
- Avoid putting your goggles on your forehead. They will fog up from your body heat.
- If you goggles do get fogged up, place them in a warm, dry pocket of your jacket. You can also try shaking them up and down to create air flow. If need be, go into the lodge to dry them out. This is another great reason to carry two pairs of goggles.

Bluetooth enabled goggles; chat within 1,600 of each other, battery lasts 12 hours; connects wirelessly to your iphone for calls/music \$300

GPS enabled goggles w/ heads up display Oakley \$650

Socks & Zocks

Socks are a critical item. It's important to choose a sock made of wicking material like Polypropylene or Merino wool for moisture control, usually in a relatively thin knit. While some padding is nice for touring, smoothness of the knit is often just as important for blister prevention. Stop as soon as you begin to feel a blister forming, let your feet dry, and apply tape, or moleskin over the affected area. A fully-formed blister that's not taken care of can make your tour miserable.

Buy quality ski socks like SmartWool and get several pairs. You want them to be tall enough to go past the cuff of your boot. It is highly recommended that you carry an extra pair of ski socks in your ski bag in case your ski socks get damp or wet.

Weight

With the advancement in ski boot liner technologies, insulation from the cold is no longer the main responsibility of ski socks. This means the days of the thickest socks always being the best choice are long gone. Lightweight ski socks are good for warmer days, while medium and heavy weight fabrics have been tailored to fit specific weather conditions. Usually ski socks have a thicker cushioning section over the shins for padding, and thinner fabric on the instep and heel to minimize bulk. Unless you perform your winter sports in extreme temperatures, medium weight ski socks are often more than warm enough to keep your feet toasty in most conditions.

Fit

Ski socks are created to cater to the foot of a specific gender. In this case, it is important that women stick to women's specific styles. As women's ski socks are tailored to her foot and calves, allowing them to fit higher arches and thinner, taller calves. Ski socks tend to be very stretchy in order to create mobility and comfort for your foot as it moves around in your ski boot. It is important though, to make sure that your sock fits properly. A sock that is too loose can result in blistering from abrasion and the soaking up of moisture. A sock that is too tight causes discomfort and a decrease in circulation. Above all, the toe fit is critical. There should not be any loose material, nor should you feel the socks pushing against your toes. A taller sock though, may prove to be the most comfortable because it will fit higher than your ski boot, covering more of the leg to provide comfort and warmth.

Ventilation

Think about it. Your foot is trapped for hours inside of a large boot. With that noted, breathability is a must to sustain comfort while skiing. With the use of ski specific socks, you will experience built in ventilation. Ski socks are made for the purpose of providing, warmth, comfort and breathability. A ski sock provides ventilation for your foot so that your feet stay dry from perspiration, allowing you to remain warm after a certain amount of time riding.

Materials

Ski socks are generally made from Synthetics such as polyester, nylon, acrylic, or lycra; Wool; and Wool// Synthetic Blends

Sock Care

Ski socks are probably more expensive than your usual athletic socks, so protect your investment. Turn the socks inside out to wash them – this is where skin cells and dirt build up. It is best not to dry ski socks in commercial dryers. They get too hot. For best results, remove them from your home dryer before they are completely dry and finish drying them at room temperature.

Zocks

I like to wear a pair of thin nylon/lycra zocks on the outside of my ski socks as they help my foot slide into my ski boot easier.

Ski Pants

Ski pants are necessary to keep you warm and comfortable on the slopes but you don't need to sacrifice fashion for function when it comes to choosing the right pants.

Types of Pants

There are several types of ski pants, with the most common being an insulated pant. Other types include shell pants, stretch pants and bib pants. The first step in selecting ski pants that are best for you is determining if you are a warm or cold person by nature and what type of protection from the snow you prefer.

***Insulated Pants**

For skiers who are colder by nature, an insulated pant is the most suitable option.

The construction of insulated ski pants includes an outer layer which is waterproof and windproof, along with an insulated layer built directly into the pant. An insulated ski pant provides you with the necessary layers you need for cold skiing conditions.

The insulation found in insulated pants is most commonly measured in grams. The greater the number weight in grams, the warmer the pants will be. Insulation types can range as low as 30 grams and go as high as 800 grams, which is most commonly found with Down material.

***Shell Pants**

Shell ski pants are windproof and waterproof but contain no internal insulation and are highly breathable. Other than just being a warmer person by nature, one may choose this type of pant because she prefers to have added mobility that is not available with an insulated pant.

***Stretch Pants**

The most flattering, feminine and fashionable ski pant choice is stretch ski pants. The design is a cling-to-body type pant that is made of an insulated, waterproof and breathable material. Its construction allows for four-way stretch so it can conform to the body type of its wearer. The idea is that the less room that exists between the body and the pant, the less space there is to heat. Additionally the design creates less weight and bulk to deal with.

***Bib Pants**

Bib pants are insulated ski pants that offer an added piece of fabric that extends up from the waist to cover the back and chest areas. If you can imagine a pair of overalls, then you understand the design of a pair of bib ski pants. The two greatest benefits to this type of pant is that one, it provides extra warmth to your core areas and two, it provides additional coverage above the waist to protect from snow going up your jacket or down your pants.

Waterproof Rating

One of the most important factors in choosing a ski pant is the waterproof rating. This rating will tell how quickly your ski pants will become saturated by snow and moisture which allows water to penetrate to the layers below. Waterproof ratings are measured and indicated in millimeters and are determined by placing a tube filled with water on the fabric. The level at which the water begins to penetrate through the fabric is the waterproof rating. The higher the number, the more waterproof the pants are and the longer they will withstand snow and rain.

For pants to be deemed legally waterproof, it must achieve a minimum 1,500mm rating. Pants can be rated as high as 20,000mm, but the average rating is typically between 5,000 and 10,000mm. Keep in mind that as the rating goes higher, so too will the price.

There are many different types of waterproof fabrics that are used on the market today like Gore-Tex. What makes materials such as these so effective is that they contain pores; which are larger than a molecule of sweat, but smaller than a molecule of water. This means that not only is the material waterproof, but also very breathable.

Breathability Rating

Just like the waterproof rating measures how effective pants are at keeping water outside, the breathability rating of a pant measures how effective the pant is at transferring moisture from inside to the outside. The same fabric pores that help prevent water from penetrating inside a jacket, allow sweat molecules to escape and ultimately keep you warmer.

To release moisture, ski pants need to be able to ventilate or breathe, not through holes, but through the fabric itself. This is not very difficult as cotton and nylon are already breathable fabrics and used to create a vast amount of ski pants. The difficulty arises in making the fabric waterproof aside from being breathable. This seems very exotic but there are many different layers which can achieve this based on a simple physics principle. Beneath the pants, the temperature and humidity are higher than in the outside. This creates a pressure whereby pushing the moisture outside.

A breathability rating is measured and indicated in grams (g). The measurement is determined by finding the Moisture Vapor Transmission Rate (MVTR). The MVTR determines how many grams of sweat per 1 square meter can escape a jacket in a 24 hour period. The higher the number, the more moisture escapes and the more breathable a pair of ski pants becomes. Entry level breathable fabrics will have MVTR ratings in the range of 2,000-3000g. Fabrics at the high end of the breathability scale will have an MVTR around 25,000g.

Cut

Ski pants come in different cuts just like a regular pair of pants. Higher cut pants decrease the likelihood of snow and cold entering your pants but are less mobile. The type of cut you choose really comes down to personal choice and what's most comfortable for the skier.

Seams: Fully Taped v Critically Taped

***Fully Taped**

Full taped seams means the stitched seams have been taped for waterproofing. This is done with a waterproof tape that is glued on the interior and exterior of the seam. Fully taped seams are the best option if you want to resist the possibility of moisture seeping through your ski pants. They will, however, cost more than pants with critically taped seams.

***Critically Taped**

Critically taped seams means that only some of the seams are taped and protect against moisture penetration. This is not necessarily a bad thing, so don't be scared off by the fact that not all seams are covered. These types of seams are ideal for skiers planning on spending most of their time inbounds on groomers and cruisers. As long as you don't spend long periods of time in wet weather, or are at a more advanced level where you tend to not fall a lot, critically taped seams will offer the protection you need.

Leg Opening

Look for pants that go over your ski boots as it's not a good idea to tuck extra layers in your boots. This style also creates a less likely chance of getting snow into your boots. Pants that fit over boots frequently have a rubberized snow cuff that snaps shut at the ankle to prevent snow getting into your boots.

Boot Gaiters

A Boot Gaiter is an elastic fabric that is positioned at the bottom of ski pants. This fabric fits snugly over your boots to prevent snow from going up your leg. It also helps to retain heat that can escape through the bottom of your pants.

Articulated Knees

To help with flexibility and also to reduce bulkiness at the knee, many pants will offer the feature of an Articulated Knee. Articulated knees have a seam sewn in the pant that has a natural bend form. This feature is not a must have, but certainly a nice option for improving flexibility.

Scuff Guards

A Scuff Guard is extra durable fabric that is positioned inside of the ankle of a ski pant. Its purpose is to keep the pants from fraying in an area that is highly prone to friction. This feature is considered by many as a must have because it helps to protect the investment made in ski pants.

Reinforcements

For those women who love to spend a lot of time on the slopes or tend to ride hard, make sure that the pair of ski pants you buy has reinforced knees, lower legs, and seat areas. These are the parts of a pair of ski pants that are prone to damage due to constant use.

Waist Adjustment

To help with comfort and fit, many ski pants will offer some adjustability features such as a waist adjustment. This adjustment feature is usually present as a Velcro strap, cinch cords or snaps. While not a must-have feature, it certainly is a luxury to be able to adjust your pants at the waist, particularly if you need to wear more or remove base or mid layers throughout the day. If these adjustments are not available, many pants provide belt loops so you can wear a belt and adjust the waist yourself.

Suspenders

Another adjustment feature that is available on select styles of ski pants are pants with suspenders. Pants with suspenders will work in a similar fashion to regular dress pants with suspenders. The difference is that most pants with suspenders will have the suspenders sewn into the pants. Some suspenders are optional and will zip or button out.

Side Zips

Located near the bottom of the leg, side zips are a convenience feature that helps position your ski pants over your boots after you've put your boots on. Zippers can be left unzipped on warmer days. They also serve as a ventilation feature as they can be unzipped after heat enters your pants and you need to get a bit of cool air flowing through your pants.

Thigh Zip Venting

Thigh Zip Venting is an important temperature regulating feature that is present on many ski pants. Thigh Zip Vents are zippers located on the inner thigh that can be adjusted on the fly to help retain or

release heat that builds up inside a pair of pants. If you are cold, or the temperature starts to drop, you can close them up to help keep heat close to the body. On warmer days these can be opened up fully to allow heat to escape while you remain fully protected from the elements everywhere else.

Leg Lifts

Located inside of the pant, ski pants with the Leg Lifts feature have a cord with a snap located at the bottom of the pants. This allows you to fold the pants up and snap them higher when you are done skiing, walking in your street shoes or after ski boots. This is a great feature for many skiers because it helps prevent damage to the cuff of the pant when it is hitting the ground. It will also keep your ski pants cleaner by not having to drag them through mud.

Jacket-to-Pant Link

While not offered by all brands, this feature allows you to snap or zip the powder skirt of your ski jacket to your ski pants. This help to further protect you from wind and any snow that may creep up your back.

Pass Pocket

Offered on select pants is a Pass Pocket. This pocket is provided so you can stow your lift ticket pass while you are skiing and have it readily available if it just so happens that you have to take it out at any given time.

Cargo Pocket

Just in case your ski jacket does not have enough pockets for all of your essential items, some models of ski pants will offer a cargo pocket to put any remaining items. Look for pockets with zippers covered by flaps to keep the snow out in case of a spill.

Base Layer

Dressing properly for skiing means dressing in layers that will work to keep you dry, warm and protected under a variety of weather conditions. One of the most important layers is the base layer. The base layer is the first layer you put on and has the most contact with your skin. You want to start with a base layer that help regulate your body temperature by moving perspiration away from your skin, which will help keep you dry. Staying dry allows you to stay warm . This means avoid cotton as cotton does not wick away moisture. The best options are normally made of synthetics like Polypropylene or natural fibers like Merino wool. Base layers usually are offered in light, medium and heavy weights, with the thicker or heavier options offering more warmth.

There are two pieces that are essential for base layers ...your top and your bottoms.

Base Layer Tops

The best choice for your top is a long sleeve option. Long sleeve base layers will allow for maximum warmth and also make sure to wick away moisture from your core all the way down to your wrists. They come in a variety of styles such as pull over, crew neck, half zip and turtlenecks and while designed to serve as a layering piece but also as a stand alone garment to be worn on warmer days.

Base Layer Bottoms

The second important base layer piece are the bottoms. For this I recommend Capri length pants or tailoring your long underwear bottoms to Capri length. The only thing you want in your ski boot is your ski sock and you don't want to be tucking in your long underwear legs into your boots.

Weights

Base layers come in different weights from light to heavy. Choosing the right weight for you depends on the type of skiing you do and the weather conditions you encounter. If you get cold easy or the conditions are colder than normal, you'll want to wear heavy weight base layers.

Softness:

You want something soft as this is the first layer next to your skin.

Moisture Wicking:

This is probably the most important function of a base layer. Performance fabrics whisk perspiration away from your body to the outside of the garment where it can more quickly evaporate rather than absorb it which is likely to leave you cold and clammy.

Anti-odor/Anti-microbial:

Good if you plan on wearing your layers for several days in a row without washing them.

Materials

Synthetic Fabrics like polyester are a good choice.

Natural Fabrics that have moisture wicking abilities are also good. Those would include silk and wool.

Avoid cotton! Cotton is rotten. It retains moisture and you will get cold.

Base Layer Care

Base layers should not be treated as typical clothing as they have special qualities. Make sure to read the label on the inside of the garments, as different fabrics and materials require different washing requirements. It is important to never use fabric softener when washing your long underwear. It will wreck the wicking properties and you will unfortunately not be able to comfortably wear them again.

Mid Layers

Mid layers are the middle layers, mind blown right? In all seriousness though, this is going to be the layer between your base layer or long underwear and your outer layer or ski jacket. Mid layers include fleeces, merino wool sweaters, vests, technical tees, turtle necks or lightweight polyester sweatshirts.

Why Wear Mid Layers?

Mid layers offer a substantial amount of warmth with little weight. And you can wear more than one!

Mid layers are made to fit snug to maintain body heat and to fit under outerwear yet leave enough room to comfortably wear a base layer beneath. Keep with a traditional snug fit as a mid layer that's too large will hang down and collect snow and moisture and a mid layer that is too small will allow exposed skin which is no fun in colder weather.

What Mid Layers NOT to Wear.....COTTON!

Fleece

Fleece works pretty well as an insulating layer under a waterproof/breathable shell for skiing and snowboarding as long as it doesn't get wet. It's highly breathable, which can be good during strenuous activity but a disadvantage if you're trying to stay warm on top of a windy peak.

A disadvantage of fleece is that it doesn't have the same warmth-to-weight ratio as a good down or synthetic layer, and it's not very compressible so if you need to stash it in your pack, it'll take up more room.

Jackets

When it comes to buying a ski jacket, it is important to purchase a jacket that will keep you warm, but also keep you looking good too.

Types of Ski Jackets

There are two main types of ski jackets: insulated ski jackets and shell ski jackets. There is no exact answer for which is better because there are many factors to consider when making this choice. When looking for the perfect ski jacket to purchase, always remember to factor in the type of skiing you will be doing and the weather conditions.

Insulated

The construction characteristics of an insulated ski jacket is similar to ski pants and includes an outer layer that is waterproof and windproof, along with an insulated layer that is built directly into the ski jacket to provide extra warmth. Just like ski pants, look at what the insulation rating is.

Many insulated ski jackets will contain an additional insulator piece that can be removed. These types of insulated jackets are sometimes referred to as system jackets or 3-in-1 jackets. Both pieces can be worn alone or together so that you are prepared for a change in temperature.

Shell

Shell jackets are ski jackets that have no internal insulation...shocker. They are waterproof, breathable outer layers help keep skiers protected from the wind and rain, while allowing sweat to evaporate and escape. This type of ski jacket is ideal for someone who is warmer person by nature. Another reason that one may choose this type of ski jacket is because they prefer to have added mobility that is not available with an insulated ski jacket. As shell ski jackets are usually worn over a base layer and a mid layer, they do not have the added bulkiness of an insulated ski jacket.

A shell ski jacket can be worn on its own on warmer days or layered with base and mid layers for colder days. However, for extremely cold temperatures and extended periods of time outdoors, a shell ski jacket is probably not the best option.

Waterproof Rating & Breathability

Just like what we covered in ski pants. The higher the number, the more waterproof and breathable the ski jacket is and the longer it will withstand snow and rain.

Cut or Length

Womens ski jackets come in different lengths and these cuts can be ideal for different reasons. A shorter athletic cut is better for hardpacked and groomed snow riding. Longer lengths are ideal for

backcountry and powder skiing, or for wetter conditions. It will provide your behind with more coverage and warmth from moisture and snow.

Seams: Fully Taped v Critically Taped

Again just like what we covered in ski pants.

Front Zipper Cover

AKA a storm flap. The purpose of this feature is to cover the front zipper of your ski jacket to prevent the wind and moisture from penetrating inside. Additionally, some storm flaps have soft fleece over the top of the zipper so your face does not get irritated from cold metal.

Powder Skirt

A powder skirt is an elastic band that is located inside of a ski jacket at the waist. It provides a snap closure in the front and is intended to keep snow from going up the front or back of your ski jacket. Additionally, when used, it helps retain heat and keeps you warmer when you are out on the slopes. This feature is highly recommended for anyone planning on doing any powder skiing.

Hood

While not all ski jackets offer a hood, those that do will offer a hood in one of several options: attached (non-removable), detachable, or stowaway. Attached hoods are fixed to the ski jacket and cannot be removed. Detachable hoods offer the luxury of protection on windy or snowy days, while also offering the versatility of being able to be removed on warmer or fair weather ski days. Stowaway hoods offer the same luxuries as a detachable hood with the difference being that stowaway hoods do not need to be removed from the ski jacket. Instead, they will roll or fold up and be tucked into a designated area of the ski jacket.

As your hood is intended to protect your head and neck from the elements, you want to make sure that it can fit over your helmet. Your hood should have enough room so that you can look from side to side, and it should also comfortably fit your helmet. The bill of your hood should be generous enough in size to shed rain from your goggles and eyes. Many hoods come with a drawstring in order to adjust to your head or helmet. Hoods, regardless of their style, are highly recommended for protection against the elements.

Wrist Closure

Wrist closures are one of the more common adjustability features you can expect to find on ski jackets. Wrist closures will be present as an elastic, Velcro, snap or thumbhole adjustment at the wrist, that will close around your wrist or over your glove. This purpose of such an adjustment is to help keep cold air and snow from going up your arms.

Pit Zips

Pit Zips or underarm zippers are zippers located under the arm that can be adjusted on the fly to help retain or release heat that builds up inside of a ski jacket.

Lift Ticket D-ring

These are small D-shaped rings that are typically located at the bottom of the ski jacket or along one of the pockets. They give skiers a convenient place to put their lift tickets.

Internal Cuffs

These are additional cuffs, typically made of lycra, that are attached to the inside of the womens ski jacket's sleeve cuff. Some have thumbholes and extend out over the hand while others just extend to the wrist.

Electronics Pocket

For those who enjoy listening to music while on the slopes, this pocket is extremely useful because electronics pockets have openings for wires to be run for headphones. This keeps the electronic device protected and the wiring internal so it is not ruined.

Goggle Pocket

Like an electronics pocket, the goggle pocket is designated specifically to house your goggles when you are not wearing them. They are typically made out of mesh to keep from damaging the goggles and allowing for ventilation. This pocket will also typically house a goggle cloth that can be used to wipe your goggles, should they get foggy.

Internal or External Data Card Pocket

Data card pockets are designed to keep your important cards, like I.D.'s or credit cards, safe and in one place instead of putting them in a regular pocket where there is a higher possibility of the cards falling out when unzipped.

PUFF

What the puff, is this really something I need?

Down & synthetic down have become very popular. They make great layers or can be worn alone as your jacket. They offer the best warmth to weight ratio and are highly compressible. Down is rated by a "fill power" system, with the fill power of down used in garments typically in the 500 to 800 range. The higher the number, the more efficient the insulation and the more you can expect to pay. The weakness of down though is moisture..when it gets wet down clumps together and doesn't trap body heat. Once it get wet it's slow to dry. Synthetic down on the other hand is rated in gram weights with common fill weights ranging from 40 to 120 grams. It provides warmth similar to down but retains heat more effectively if it gets wet. The downside is that it isn't as compressible.

Many experienced skiers and snowboarders have more than one insulated jacket—synthetic for warmer wetter days and down for colder days.

I'm baffled

The shape and size of the compartments used to hold the down also matter. The tubes, or "baffles" can be either stitch-through or box wall construction, with box wall being the warmer of the two (stitch-through allows heat to escape in the stitched areas). Smaller baffles also help keep the down from shifting and help keep the garment uniformly warm.

Down Care

It's best to wash down garments yourself in a front loader washing machine. Wash the garment once at warm temperature with just water, then again with a down-specific product like Nikwax Down Wash. Rinse again with no added cleaner to remove any residue. Dry the garment at low heat in a dryer with a couple of tennis balls thrown in to restore the loft – this may take several hours. Don't store your down garment in a compressed state (like its stuff sack) – hang it up in a dry place.

Mittens/Gloves & Liners

For \$200 can get rechargeable battery powered heated gloves

Gloves vs. Mittens

This is your first decision. Do you prefer the dexterity of gloves or the warmth of mittens? There are gloves and mitts for all occasions and conditions, and manufacturers will often make both gloves and mittens with the same basic construction and materials. Mittens generally provide more warmth because your fingers will share one compartment and generate more heat that way, as opposed to being separated like in a glove. However, mittens limit mobility in certain circumstances and may have to be removed to access your pockets, answer your phone or adjust your goggle strap while on the slopes (to be fair, you might have to take off your gloves to do these things as well). You'll also find 3-finger hybrids (sometimes called "lobster mitts") that fall between gloves and mittens.

Waterproof and Breathability

Waterproofing is essential. Once your ski gloves are wet your hands will get cold and damp. Breathability in ski gloves is also great because it allows any sweat or moisture that condenses inside your glove or mitten to escape keeping your hands warm, dry, and comfortable. The breathability of a glove allows for much-needed airflow.

Insulation

It is very important to find a glove with the proper insulation for you, catered to your specific type of skiing. For skiers who get cold very quickly or tend to ski in colder conditions, thicker insulation is a good choice. But just because the insulation in a pair of ski gloves is thicker, that does not necessarily mean that it is going to be warmer. Good insulation will also allow vapor to pass through and out to the outer fabric to keep your hands dry and therefore warmer. High tech insulators, mainly synthetics, can be woven tighter making them thinner while providing better warmth and allowing for maximum mobility. This type of glove can be a bit pricey but when you look at how it can positively affect your comfort level, the extra expense will be worth it. Down Insulation is also a viable option, especially in dry climates.

Fit

If your ski gloves do not fit properly, they will not provide the proper warmth, nor will they give you the comfort you expect. Ski gloves that are too big will require more body energy to heat up the air space inside the glove and also make it much more difficult to maintain a good grip on your poles. Ski gloves that are too small will limit movement and comfort and most likely leave more of your wrists exposed. A proper fitting glove should allow enough room at the end of outstretched fingers for you to pinch about a quarter of an inch of fabric. This allows for a comfortable fit when you grasp your poles and the correct amount of air space to keep you toasty warm.

Cuff Length

There are two basic cuff lengths when it comes to ski gloves: a short length that will end at the base of your wrist, or with a longer cuff that extends past the sleeve on your jacket. While, longer ski gloves will offer more protection for times you may find yourself in the snow. The shorter cuff lengths available offer greater mobility especially in the wrist area.

Extra Features

zippered pockets for disposable hand warmers

Grips are included on ski gloves for durability and a better grip on your poles.

soft nose wipe areas on the thumb for those drippy nose days

mini squeegee to help wipe your goggles clear

wrist loop

Glove Liners

Gloves & mittens may have removable liners which help to dry them. But I also like to wear a second liner. They are made to provide extra warmth and they fit snug inside of your ski gloves as an extra layer of protection against those chillier days. Also are great when you need to pull your mitten or glove off to get something in your pocket as will still keep your hands somewhat protected.

Nose Pinch/nozewarmer

Generally made of fleece or neoprene it attaches to the bottom of your goggles and keeps the top of your cheeks and the tip of your nose warm.

Boot Gloves

Combination of adding heat tape to your footbeds and a neoprene cover that goes over your ski boot helps retain heat and keep your feet warm.

Backpacks

Want to select one that is designed for the cold. If it has a hydration pack you'll want to make sure the water line is insulated. Some are designed to carry your ski or boards.

Cell Phone Cases-otter box or lifeproof

Lifeproof are waterproof. You can drop them in a puddle and your phone will be fine. Otter box are water resistant. Both offer get added durability to your phone in case you drop it.

Neck Gaiters

Great added layer of warmth and protection on your neck and handy to pull over your face on those cold windy lift rides to keep your face warm.