WINTER TIP 1
12 Winter Workout Tips for Exercising Outdoors

It can be tough to head outside on rainy or snowy days. But not with these 12 winter exercise tips to stay warm and injury-free when working out in cold weather.

1. **Dress dry not just warm.** The quickest way to lose body heat is to get wet. If you are cold and wet, you may be more inclined to cut your workout short. Skip active wear made from cotton, which soaking up sweat and rain, and holds moisture. Opt for synthetic fibers instead, such as polyester or nylon.

2. **Layer up.** You also need layers to trap warm air next to your body and keep out the elements. First, put on a thin base layer made of synthetic fabrics to help pull sweat away from your skin. If it is colder outside, wear a middle layer for extra warmth. Then, add an outer layer to protect you from wind, snow, and rain.

3. **Opt for bright colors.** Not only is it colder outside, but it is darker too. Poor visibility makes it tougher for others to see you. Wear brightly colored clothing whenever possible, and consider purchasing reflective gear or blinking lights.

4. **Protect your extremities.** Fingers, ears, nose, and toes are affected most by chilly temperatures. To keep your extremities from freezing, wear a hat or headband, and gloves or mittens.

5. **Protect your skin.** Winter air is not just cold, it is dry. To keep your skin from drying out with it, drink plenty of water per day, and rub on moisturizing cream or lotion. In addition, here is something you might not have thought about: the sun. Yes, you can get sunburn in the winter. Even if it is cloudy, UV rays can reach and damage the skin, so wear sunscreen.

6. **Check your traction.** Winter workouts can get slippery if any rain, snow, or ice is involved. Back roads and trails may not be as well maintained, and may have hidden obstacles that could lead to injuries.
7. **Do a warm-up first.** Dynamic warm-ups increase blood flow and temperature to muscles to help decrease the risk of injuries. The best dynamic warm-up for you depends on what type of workout you are doing. But for all warm-ups, be sure they include low-intensity movements that mimic the exercise you’re about to perform.

8. **Breathe right.** Breathing in through your nose can help warm and humidify air, but that is not always feasible when you are exerting yourself and breathing heavily. Wrapping a bandanna or scarf around your mouth can help trap water vapor in when you breathe out to keep air more moist as you continue to breathe.

9. **Remove layers as you heat up.** The biggest mistake in dressing for cold weather exercise is putting on too many layers and not peeling them off in time. Exercising will considerably warm you, and you do not want to get ridiculously sweaty when you are in freezing temperatures. Discard layers when you need to, you can put it back on if you get cold.

10. **Drink up.** Some people do not feel as thirsty during cold-weather workouts as they do during warmer-weather workouts, but you are still losing fluids through sweat and breathing, and you need to replace those fluids by drinking water.

11. **Head into the wind.** The faster you are moving, the higher the wind-chill factor. To help reduce the impact and keep your core body temperature up, make sure that you head into the wind at the beginning (if you are performing an activity in a loop, like skiing or running). That ensures that, on your way back, when you are at your sweatiest and have the greatest risk of losing body heat, you are not fighting the wind chill as well.

12. **Cool down.** Whatever the weather, a cool-down is important after sustained exercise. It helps your body eliminate exercise by-products and reduce potential muscle soreness. Gradually taper your exercise intensity during the final 5-10 minutes. Then, once breathing and heart rate normalize, repeat your warm-up and do some static stretching.