

Safety, Health & Fitness—

Layering

When skiing or snowboarding, the trick to staying warm and dry is layering. Clothing helps keep a layer of air next to your body. Multiple layers help hold more air, which increases the insulating effect.

To avoid overheating, simply peel off a layer or two when your body heat goes up with exercise.

The layer next to your skin should be a light synthetic fabric that can pull moisture away from your body.

Add a cozy thermal layer or two for warmth. Polar fleece works well.

Top it off with a wind-proof jacket. Remember, jackets with closures at the waist, wrist and neck do a better job of trapping warm air, and a breathable fabric will prevent your layers underneath from getting damp.

Layering works just as well for your pants and gloves too.

Canada Avalanche Safety Advise

Every year, more people head into Canada's mountains, which offer some of the best off-trail skiing and snowboarding in the world. But that puts them at risk of being caught in an avalanche.

Before heading into the backcountry, check with the proper authorities about the risk of avalanches in your ski area.

Knowing when, where and how to plan your trip comes with proper education and experience. To reduce your risks:

Never go into the mountains alone.

Always carry the proper safety equipment, such as an avalanche beacon.

Know what to do if you are caught in an avalanche.

To learn more about how to play safely in Canada's mountains, visit the Canadian Avalanche Association web site at www.avalanche.ca

Snow Blindness [Protect your Eyes]

Sunny days are the most enjoyable for skiers. But remember! You must protect your eyes. In the winter, your eyes are exposed to light from above and below when it's reflected up off the snow. This doubles the intensity of ultra violet rays.

Prolonged exposure can actually burn your eyes, and eventually cause snow blindness. Symptoms of snow blindness include:

Pain in the eyes and

Extreme sensitivity to light.

If you ever experience snow blindness, go inside to a dark or dimly lit room and apply cool compresses to your eyes until the pain subsides and tolerance to light returns.

With a good pair of sunglasses or goggles, you can protect your eyes from both the sun and the wind.

Avoid sunglasses with metal frames that are cold against your face.

Be sure your lenses have the proper UV protection. For the best protection, choose sunglasses that block UVA and UVB rays between 290 and 400 nanometers (nm).

Fitness Recommendations

If you ski or snowboard, you probably love winter. But before you head outside, it's a great idea to channel your enthusiasm into a fitness program.

Skiing and snowboarding are physically demanding sports. And anyone, from beginner to expert, can benefit from an exercise program. Exercise will help prevent injuries and improve your stamina on the slopes.

All it takes is:

Two or three workouts a week, such as a 20 to 30 minute warm-up of jogging or biking.

Follow this with a series of strength and flexibility exercises that focus on your legs, core body strength, and upper body.

A fitness professional can help you establish a program. Stay fit, and you'll be carving up the slopes with confidence and style.