

**COLD WEATHER HIKING & CAMPING**  
**• TIPS TO STAYING WARM •**

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- Your body loses body heat in three [3] ways. Keep these in mind to help you be more aware of what you are or could be doing to keep your body warm:
  - RADIATION:** the emission of body heat, especially from skin exposed to the elements.
  - CONDUCTION:** the absorption of cold by the body when sitting on cold ground or handling cold objects such as a stove fuel bottle.
  - CONVECTION:** the loss of body heat from wind blowing across unprotected body areas.
- If possible, position your tent where it can catch the early morning sun, warming you and evaporating the dew or frost on you tent.
- Choose a protected site to set-up camp, especially if there is a cold wind or falling snow. Some lowland meadows can be colder than sites higher up because wind moves down the hills or mountains at night and the cold air settles in the valleys.
- Dehydration (loss of water from the body by evaporation) seriously impairs the body's ability to produce heat. Drink fluids as often as possible during the day, and keep a full water bottle by your side at night.
- If you feet are cold, do not put on extra socks if your boots are already snug. Constricted toes are colder than those toes with room to wiggle.
- DO NOT overdress. Layers of clothing always work best because you can take something off when you are sweating or add layers when you are chilly. Choose garments with zippers because they increase airflow and reduce sweating.
- If you have to reprime a balky stove, let it cool first before relighting. The lingering vaporized gas fumes are highly volatile.
- Carry extra stove fuel bottles if you plan to heat up extremely cold water or melt snow.
- Your cooking stove will work better if you cut a small section of closed cell foam to use as an insulator under the stove after you have started it. This same piece of foam can be used as a seat during rest breaks.
- A cook stove exposed to cold wind takes twice as long to cook with, so make a shelter around your stove and pot with a heavy gauge aluminum foil wind screen. Fasten it with clothes pins, binder or paper clips. Create additional wind breaks using you water bottles, food sacks and rocks.
- Always use a lid when cooking. If you have stackable pots and are preparing a sauce after you have cooked your main dish, put that pot on top so the bottom pot's rising heat keeps it warm until meal time.
- After every meal, refill you stove fuel bottle with fuel so you will not run out halfway through the next use. Fill the fuel bottle only 80% full of capacity to allow room for expansion.
- The same is true for your water bottle, water jugs or canteen. Refill after use and treat with water purification tablets when taking water from an unknown water source. Use one [1] tablet per quart of water or as the Directions for Use indicate on the label. In cold weather, only fill your water containers 80% full to allow for expansion if the water freezes; otherwise, you water container may crack or burst.
- To prevent your wet and muddy hiking boots from freezing solid overnight, place them in a stuff sack and sleep with them under the foot of your sleeping bag.
- Sleep with your water bottle, water jug or canteen under the foot of your sleeping bag, to prevent water from freezing over night. If large jugs of water have to left outside overnight, store in a sheltered area, free from wind, and turn the sealed jug upside down. Water freezes from the top down, so only the bottom of the water jug may be found frozen in the morning. Make sure your water bottle and jugs do not leak to cuddle up with or to store upside down.
- Fill half-emptied water bottles with snow. The jostling movement, while hiking, will turn the snow to water.
- For an inexpensive sleeping bag liner, sew an old bed sheet into a liner, by folding in half lengthwise, stitching the feet closed and three quarters of the way up the side. Sew on Velcro or fashion a draw string to close the top. Using a simple bag liner can add -10°F to your existing sleeping bag.
- If you must eat snow to combat dehydration, melt the snow in your mouth before swallowing. This will keep your mouth moist and prevents you stomach from chilling. NEVER EAT ICE!
- Attach a cord to your water bottle and jug, so you can toss it into a creek or lake without getting your hands wet. This also keeps you away from dangerous or unstable edges. Whenever possible, get your water from an unfrozen source and treat with water purification tablets.
- Keep your camera inside of the tent wrapped up in your clothing. When you hike, carry it inside your jacket so it stays warm enough to operate.
- Film should also be carried close to the body to prevent it from becoming brittle in freezing weather. Wind film very slowly in cold weather to keep it from breaking.
- When there is snow on the ground, never bury your toilet paper or theater tickets. No matter how deep of a hole you dig, it will be there in the Spring, for all to see after the snow melts. Either burn your theater tickets or pack them out in a plastic zip-lock baggy.
- Dinner calories burn quickly on a cold evening. To avoid going to bed with an empty stomach and a chill, snack on high calorie foods such as cheese or gorp before turning in.
- DO NOT sleep in the same clothes you have been wearing all day. Not even the underwear! They will be damp from body perspiration and provide very little insulation. Pack an extra set of long underwear (or sweat suit) and wool socks for sleeping at night.
- Contact lens and solutions can go in your sleeping bag to keep them from freezing. Make sure you carry normal eye glasses and sun glasses.
- Always wear a knit ski hat to bed to keep the chill off your head and neck. A balaclava is best because it also covers your neck and ears.
- If you sleep cold, carry along an extra foam pad for insulation under you sleeping bag.
- To keep cold air out of your sleeping bag when you roll over, take your down vest, sweater, or pile coat and lay it across your neck and chest, then tuck it in so it acts like a collar.
- Keep you nose and mouth out side of your sleeping bag; otherwise your breathing will dampen the inside of your bag.
- The best way to keep your feet warm is to keep the rest of your body warm and well covered. If your feet are cold, put on a hat and gloves!

