

APPAREL GUIDE

Basic Running Apparel Needs

Running Apparel manufacturers and some apparel resellers would have you believe that you need a different outfit for every 5 to 10 degree change in temperature.

Don't believe it!

You really don't need that much gear to run comfortably year around. You probably already have at least some of the running apparel you'll need and even if you don't, everything doesn't need to be purchased all at once. **Buy it as you need it.** Good running clothes can last for several years (with the proper care). So, consider your purchase an investment in **You** that will pay off in increased comfort and health.

Listed below are your basic running apparel needs in order to run comfortably in most parts of the United States:

- A couple of pairs of **Running Shorts**: [Men's](#) or [Women's](#)
- A couple of short-sleeve and a couple of long-sleeve **T-Shirts**: [Mens](#) or [Womens](#)
- A **Singlet** (a tank top designed for running): [Mens](#) or [Womens](#)
- A pair of [tights](#) (snug leggings for cold weather running) or [pants](#)
- A **Jacket** (lightweight, breathable, and windproof): [Mens](#) or [Womens](#)
- A pair of [Running Gloves](#)
- A [hat](#)
- A few pair of **Running Socks**: [Mens](#) or [Womens](#)
- [Reflective Running Gear](#) (for night time or early morning running)

Having more of each running apparel item can be a plus as it reduces the number of times you have to do laundry and keeps you from worrying about whether your clothing has dried from a previous run.

Winter Running Clothes Essentials

The key to dressing comfortably for winter running is **Layering**. Not just one thick layer but two to three lightweight layers. Multiple lightweight layering allows perspiration to more easily escape while simultaneously holding in more heat so that you stay warmer and drier. If you become overheated during a run, just remove a layer. If later you become chilled, just re-add the layer you removed.

Upper Body Layering

At most, use three layers for the upper body depending on just how cold it is outside.

The **Base layer** (layer closest to your skin) should wick moisture away from your skin and move it to the next layer. It is imperative that you wear a CoolMax type of shirt (one with wicking properties). **At all costs, avoid cotton!** Cotton will get wet when you perspire and then stay wet, chilling you to the bone.

The **Middle Layer** should further insulate the body while still wicking moisture outward. Middle layers are often a bit heavier than the Base Layer, should only be used in very cold conditions and should fit loosely over the Base Layer. Due to fluctuating body temperatures and weather conditions, the middle layer should be easy to remove. Some suggested running apparel fabrics include Polartec, Thermax and fleece.

A lightweight, breathable, windproof jacket often serves as the **Outer Layer**. Whether you choose a jacket, shell or vest, the outer layer should protect you against cold, wind, rain or snow while still allowing perspiration to evaporate. My suggestion is to look for a microfiber, ventilated jacket.

Lower Body Layering

In extreme temperatures (below freezing), up to two layers can be necessary. Between zero degrees Fahrenheit and approximately 45 degrees, one layer should be sufficient. Above 45 degrees, your legs should feel fine uncovered especially once you are five to ten minutes into your run. Fabrics to look for include microfiber, micromesh, microfleece, lycra, tactel, and CoolMax.

Covering Your Extremities

Heads, hands and feet. Do they need to be covered in cold weather temperatures? You betcha! First of all, in freezing weather or below, wear a hat. Covering your head helps keep the rest of your extremities warm. The old saying that heat goes to your head is true. And, if your body is working to keep your head warm, your hands and feet are going to suffer. Second, wear moisture wicking gloves and socks. Although you may think you need to layer your socks, you don't. One pair is enough.

Dressing Guide for Cold Weather Running Apparel

-10 to 0 degrees	10 to 30 degrees	40 to 45 degrees
3 upper body layers	2 upper body layers	1 upper body layer
2 lower body layers	1 lower body layer	optional
thick gloves	thin gloves	gloves optional
hat and headband	hat	optional

Note: [Wind Chill](#) not considered in table above. Dress a little warmer on windy days. Click link to determine [wind chill factor](#).

Summer Running Gear Need To Knows

Planning on running this summer? **Get ready to sweat.** It's inevitable.

However, you can make it cooler and more comfortable **IF** you choose running apparel made from the right materials.

Take my advice and **save your favorite cotton T-shirt for after your run.**

Consider choosing a **mesh top made with CoolMax polyester** that will wick perspiration away from the body to outside the fabric, where evaporation can occur. Choose **shorts made of Supplex nylon** that will hang comfortably and not stick to sweaty skin.

Many men like to run without a shirt on during the summer. This can have a dangerous long-term effect on your skin leading to premature aging and some forms of skin cancer. My recommendation is to wear **sunscreen** and a **CoolMax T-shirt** to protect yourself from the sun's damaging UV radiation.