

HOW TO EMBRACE COLD WEATHER RUNNING

jaci wilson runs

4 PRINCIPLES OF COLD WEATHER RUNNING

- 1 Mindset is KEY.** You CHOOSE to run. Maybe you are training for a race, building mileage or speed in the off-season, and working towards goals, but ultimately running is a choice! Accept the fact that winter is winter. You can't pick the seasons and you can't change the weather. Focus on what you CAN control. Remove all expectations and set the intention to have fun. Go into it with a positive attitude and remember that it could be much worse – it could be -60, white out conditions with roads of pure ice. You will have a great run. Don't think about the temperature or the wind. Just get dressed, warm-up, and start running as soon as you open the door!
- 2 Warm-up FIRST.** It's one of the reasons I lift before I run (the first reason being for strength gains) – my body is warmed up so the shock of the cold is less! You'll find you won't over-dress AND you'll actually start warmer and stay warmer while running. Here's a [5-10min warm-up](#) that you can do before you run. If you plan to do running drills, I suggest doing them inside. Check out this [reel](#).
- 3 Dress in layers.** Layers layers layers! Have lots of options. A 10 degree wind-chill because of a 2mph wind or because of a 30mph wind makes a HUGE difference! See discussions below on layering, but in general your base layer should be sweat-wicking, your middle layer should be for warmth and your top layer should be wind-blocking (if 3 layers is necessary for your conditions). Also, make sure your layers aren't too tight – pockets of air are good because they hold warm air.
- 4 Remove ALL expectations (including pace) & have FUN** – unleash your inner child! Plan a snowy run with a friend! You can either plan around the weather OR you can embrace it and plan to run on a day with BIG snowflakes, 6 inches of snow or crazy runs. Remember that pace doesn't matter – winter running is focused on time on your feet and running in the snow and on ice is A LOT of work. 6 miles will probably feel like 10. Focus on time and HAVE FUN.

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BUYING GEAR TIPS & SUGGESTIONS

You should always have lots of options. I'm not going to give you some chart that says wear X when it's 0 F, and Z when it's -20 F. You have to PRACTICE your layering because everyone is different and everyone FEELS cold differently. It's a trial and error process.

DON'T go the cheap route. Running in the cold can be dangerous, especially if you aren't dressed properly. Quality gear costs more but it's worth your life. Test out your gear on shorter runs or run loops close to home. Remember that you can't rely on your cell phone – it will shut off when it gets too cold.

And remember, warming up beforehand will help you TREMENDOUSLY; so will your mindset.

KEEP A WEATHER & GEAR LOG

I have suggestions on my website but YOU need to figure out what works for you. Track the weather, track what you wear, and track if you were hot, cold or just right. Then adjust your next run. Pretty soon you'll have a good idea of what YOU need. Check out this [reel](#).

TIPS ON GETTING OUT THE DOOR

1. Run with a friend so you have to leave at X time to leave them
2. Don't think about the wind – it sounds worse than it really is
3. Warm up beforehand – it will lessen the shock of the cold and prevent overdressing
4. Think about how you will feel after your run
5. Count down from 5 and JUST DO IT!

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OTHER DRESSING & GEAR TIPS NO ONE TELLS YOU

- 1 Tuck your shirt into your pants. It traps in heat and the wind won't go up your shirt.
- 2 If your hands and/or feet are cold, you don't have enough clothing on your core. Keep your core warm and the rest of your body will stay warm. Check out this [reel](#).
- 3 Mittens over gloves. Mittens keep your fingers together which means more warmth. Gortex mittens are highly recommended. Use handwarmers when needed. But again, focus on your core.
- 4 Cover your nose and mouth. This keeps heat in from breathing. Make sure your cover is loose – if it is tight around your face you will feel suffocated.
- 5 Your outer layer should be both waterproof and wind breaking. Both will keep you warmer.
- 6 Add salt and maple syrup to your water bottle to slow down the freezing of your hydration.
- 7 Keep your ankles covered (tall socks) otherwise they will crack from the dry air and cold.
- 8 Make sure your layers aren't too tight. Pockets of air hold heat.
- 9 You can't rely on your phone. Once it gets to a certain temp (too cold) it will shut off until it warms up again.
- 10 Remember that your heart-rate is going to be higher than usual when your nose and mouth are covered. Slow down – focus on time on your feet! Check out this [reel](#).