

Winter Hiking Gear Checklist

Print or save this checklist to build a reliable cold-weather layering system, test traction, and pack essential winter safety gear.



1 Clothing Worn or Immediately Available

- ☐ Moisture-managing base-layer top
- ☐ Base-layer bottoms when conditions require them
- ☐ Breathable active midlayer
- ☐ Hiking pants suited to the forecast
- ☐ Waterproof or wind-resistant shell
- ☐ Insulated jacket for stops
- ☐ Warm hat
- ☐ Neck or face covering
- ☐ Liner or active gloves
- ☐ Warmer outer gloves
- ☐ Dry spare gloves
- ☐ Wool or synthetic hiking socks
- ☐ Dry spare socks

3 Navigation & Communication

- ☐ Official trail map
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Downloaded offline map
- ☐ Charged phone
- ☐ Backup battery and cable
- ☐ Satellite communicator or personal locator beacon when appropriate
- ☐ Written trip plan shared with a trusted contact

5 Food & Water

- ☐ Safe drinking water
- ☐ Insulated bottle or cover when needed
- ☐ Water-treatment backup where appropriate
- ☐ Easily accessible snacks
- ☐ Extra food for delays
- ☐ Electrolyte option when needed

2 Footwear & Snow Travel

- ☐ Properly fitted winter hiking boots
- ☐ Gaiters when snow depth requires them
- ☐ Light traction for packed snow or ice
- ☐ Snowshoes for deep unconsolidated snow
- ☐ Trekking poles
- ☐ Snow baskets
- ☐ Manufacturer-compatible storage or attachment straps

4 Emergency & Safety Equipment

- ☐ Headlamp
- ☐ Spare batteries
- ☐ First-aid supplies
- ☐ Personal medication
- ☐ Emergency shelter
- ☐ Fire-starting supplies where permitted
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Repair kit
- ☐ Multi-tool appropriate to the trip
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Sunscreen

6 Before Leaving Home

- ☐ Current weather forecast checked
- ☐ Wind conditions checked
- ☐ Official trail conditions checked
- ☐ Road and parking access confirmed
- ☐ Closures and alerts reviewed
- ☐ Required pass or permit packed
- ☐ Avalanche forecast checked when applicable
- ☐ Turnaround time established
- ☐ Gear fit and operation tested

Winter Trip Conditions & Setup Logs

ROUTE & WEATHER

Trailhead, expected temp/wind chill, trail surface conditions, snow depth...

TRACTION & LAYERS

Traction Used _____

Poles & Baskets _____

Active Midlayer Used _____

PRE-HIKE SAFETY

Avalanche Risk Checked _____

Turnaround Time _____

Road Access Open _____