

Layering

Practical skills

The three-layer system, and the fabric to avoid entirely.

Each layer does one job.

1

Base layer — move moisture

Merino or synthetic. Never cotton.

2

Mid layer — insulate

Fleece or down. Traps warm air.

3

Outer layer — block wind and rain

Waterproof and breathable shell.

4

Adjust before you need to

Vent before you sweat; add before you are cold.

WHY NOT COTTON

Absorbs many times its weight

Loses all insulation when wet

Dries very slowly

Conducts heat away from the body

Be slightly cool when you set off. You will warm up within ten minutes, and sweat is the main cause of getting cold later.