



Wear Layers Being Active Outdoors

It is usually a good idea to dress in layers when you work out, no matter what time of year it is. In Nebraska, the weather can change quickly, so by wearing layers, you can always adjust zip up, unzip, or remove. Reaching for your favorite T-shirt when you exercise may be habit, but cotton, once wet, has little or no insulating value. Here are the layers you should think about wearing:



1. **The inner layer (next to your skin).** You'll want to keep your skin comfortable and dry. Look for fabrics that will transport moisture from your skin to the outer layer you're wearing. Silk and polypropylene are good fabrics.
2. **The middle layer (temperature control).** These are the adjustable garments that offer insulation even if they get damp from sweat or from rain or snow. Wool is the traditional choice, but polyester fleece materials are currently in style. They are light and come in a variety of styles and weights. In colder weather, you might layer more than one garment—such as a lightweight fleece turtleneck with a medium-weight jacket. In milder weather, a shirt or fleece vest may suffice.
3. **The outer layer (wind and water resistance).** This layer is intended to shield you from biting winds and the frigid cold that can chill your skin. Traditional materials include oil-soaked canvas, nylon, and rubberized nylon jackets. Certain fabrics permit some sweat to escape as water vapor while preventing rain from penetrating. For many warm-weather hikers, a reasonably priced treated nylon jacket is sufficient. If you anticipate facing heavy wind and rain, it's wise to consider adding wind and rain pants to your gear. For your safety, choose brightly colored outerwear, and always wear a reflector when walking on country roads after dark.

Sources:

1. Weiss, Cynthia, Exercise safety in cold weather, Mayo Clinic: <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/mayo-clinic-q-and-a-exercise-safety-in-cold-weather>
2. Step up your walking game, Harvard Health Publishing: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/step-up-your-walking-game>
3. No excuses: How to layer up for walking in cold weather: Harvard Health Publishing: <https://bit.ly/2RXWt50>

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