

Proper Clothing When Working

Wearing the correct clothing for outdoor conditions matters for your health because your body works best within a fairly narrow temperature range, and the right clothing helps protect it from environmental stressors.

Why Proper Clothing is important:

1. Temperature Regulation

- **Freezing weather:** Without proper insulation, you lose body heat quickly, increasing your risk of **hypothermia** and **frostbite**.
- **Hot weather:** Without breathable, light-colored fabrics, your body struggles to shed heat, raising your risk of **heat exhaustion** and **heat stroke**.

2. Skin Protection

- **UV rays:** Long-term sun exposure can cause skin damage, premature aging, and skin cancer. Clothing with **UPF** (ultraviolet protection factor) or simply covering up helps reduce UV damage.
- **Wind & dust:** Wind can chap and dry skin; dust can irritate eyes and lungs—covering exposed areas minimizes irritation.

3. Injury Prevention

- Proper clothing or gloves can prevent scratches, cuts, and insect bites.
For example:
 - o Hiking pants protect against thorny plants and ticks.
 - o Closed-toe shoes prevent foot injuries.

4. Comfort & Performance

- The right fabrics wick sweat away from your body, preventing **chafing**, **rashes**, and **overheating**.
- In freezing conditions, moisture-wicking base layers keep you dry so you stay warm.

5. Reducing Illness Risk

- Staying dry and warm helps your immune system focus on normal defense, rather than fighting temperature stress.
- Proper coverage can prevent vector-borne diseases (e.g., wearing long sleeves in mosquito-heavy areas to reduce malaria or West Nile virus risk).

Cold (Below 45°F / 7°C)

Layers: Base (moisture-wicking), middle (fleece/wool), outer (wind/waterproof)
→Prevents hypothermia & frostbite; keeps heat in, sweat out

Cool (45-60°F / 7-16°C)

Long-sleeve shirt, light sweater, light jacket/windbreaker, closed shoes.
→Prevents wind chill & keeps core warm.

Mild (60-75°F / 16-24°C)

Light, breathable fabrics (cotton, blends). Optional light jacket for wind.
→Allows ventilation & comfort.

Hot (75°F+ / 24°C+)

Loose, light-colored, breathable fabrics, wide-brim hat/cap, sunglasses.
→Prevents heat exhaustion & protects skin from UV.

Very Hot/ Humid (85°F+ / 29°C+)

Ultra-light, moisture-wicking fabrics, UV-protective clothing.
→Helps sweat evaporate & reduces overheating.

Rain

Waterproof jacket/poncho, quick-dry pants, waterproof shoes/boots.
→Keeps you dry & prevents chill.

Snow / Extreme Cold

Thermal base layers, thick insulating coat, waterproof boots/gloves, scarf.
→Prevents frostbite, hypothermia, and breathing issues.

Windy

Windbreaker/windproof layer, sunglasses or goggles.
→Prevents wind chill & protects eyes.

Bug-Prone Areas

Long sleeves, pants tucked into socks, light colors.
→Reduces bites & disease risk.

Dressing appropriately outdoors is not just about comfort—it's a preventive health measure that protects your skin, regulates body temperature, reduces injury risk, and helps prevent illness.