

KEEPING SAFE, WARM AND DRY!

Playing in the snow, whether we're skiing or riding, can be a lot more fun and safe if we wear suitable clothing. Here are some basics to consider:

LAYER – wear several layers of clothing rather than one or two thick garments. Layering allows us to remove or add clothing, depending on weather conditions. Also, layering provides insulating air and warmth between layers.

BREATHE – garments that breathe, like fleece and wool, retain warmth even when wet. On the other hand, cotton does not breathe and can get clammy and cold.

DRY – outerwear should shed snow and rain. Look for technical parkas from well-known makers like North Face, Patagonia, Columbia Sportswear, Lowe, Marmot, Spyder, etc. Good apparel is available from quality stores like REI and Sturtevant's, or thru many websites.

PROTECT – protect your skin from frostbite. Goggles keep the upper part of your face warm. Neck gaiters keep lower body warmth trapped in your parka, and can be pulled up to keep your lower face warm and protected. Neck gaiters are probably one of the best (and cheapest) ways to stay warm!

SIZE – proper sizing is essential to good performance, especially with boots. On the other hand, we should recognize that young feet and bodies are still growing. Clothing and boots passed down from siblings may not be the best fit, but most of us don't have an unlimited budget to spend on ski gear! Your ski/ride instructor is aware of common-sense realities. Only when clothing or boots are so misfit they seriously impair safety or performance will your instructor suggest changes.

HELMETS – note that many skiers and riders are wearing helmets. They recognize that accidents can happen. A helmet will help protect your head from impact with hard-pack or icy snow, collision with other skiers/riders and their equipment (think hard edges banging your head), trees, and other possible causes of head injury. A side benefit of helmets is they are warm and dry! Helmets require proper sizing, so buy them from a store that knows how to fit them.

Along with apparel is nutrition. It's important to eat nourishing meals and stay hydrated with sufficient liquids when playing in the snow. So stay warm and dry, eat a good breakfast and healthy lunch, drink liquids, and wear a helmet. Now you're ready to go have some fun on the snow!