



## **Technical Running Apparel Fact Sheet**

Running apparel technology has probably advanced faster than footwear technology in the last few years. When it comes to running, cotton is Enemy No.1. Cotton absorbs heat and moisture and keeps it clinging to your body like a wet rag.

Every specialist sports manufacturer now produces lightweight breathable running clothing that helps your body cool more efficiently therefore enhancing your running performance. The apparel is not only lighter but will also cause less irritation because of the special fabric that expels moisture.

Technical running apparel is built to keep a runner comfortable. If it's hot, the fabric will work to cool you. If you're cold, the fabric will insulate you. If it's raining, the fabric will shield you. Running is hard enough as it is and performance running apparel will keep your mind on your run and not on clothes.

"Wicking" is a word you should add to your running vocabulary. This is how fabric deals with the moisture (sweat) the body creates. A good piece of running clothing will transport moisture away from the body towards the outside environment, so even with intensive sweating you stay comfortable and dry.

The easiest way to regulate body temperature is by layering your clothing so you're able to adapt to the weather as it changes.

In the Winter you're going to be running even when the weather's awful (aren't you!?). Multiple layers of lightweight clothing keep you drier and more comfortable than a single heavy garment. They retain warmth while venting moisture to the outside. Remember that the layering guide is just that-a guide. Some runners in very harsh climates need all three layers when they train. Others, running in less severe weather, may need only two. It's up to you. Let your individual running habits and conditions determine your choices.

### **BASE LAYER**

It all starts here. This layer must move moisture away from your body to prevent chill. Cotton won't work-it just gets soggy with sweat. A fabric like CoolMax, on the other hand, captures the moisture and moves it to the outside. Your base layer can be as little as a bra or singlet and briefs, or as much as a thermal top & windproof underwear.

Half-zips (shirts with a zip that goes from your neck half-way down your chest) are great because they provide extra ventilation on warm days but can be zipped up completely in cool weather.

If you run in a sweatshirt type top and often find you overheat and end up running with it tied round your waist then team a half-zip up with a thermal top in the Winter and often that's all you'll need - with no overheating!

### **LEGS**

Shorts should be comfortable, lightweight and have the ability to wick away sweat when you train. Most running shorts now come with an inner liner so you don't have to wear anything else with them although if you're a man who prefers more support you can now get underwear in a moisture managing fabric (great for under lycra shorts & tights). Check the split up the side, often this is quite large to allow for a greater ventilation but make sure you are happy with how much leg it shows when you run. Otherwise most companies offer a squarer cut short

Either way avoid cotton. Cotton absorbs and holds moisture, the last thing any runner needs!



When the weather gets cold it is advisable to wear tights to keep your legs warmer and thus reduce the chance of injury. Fabric technology has exploded recently with the aid of new synthetic materials.

Running tights hug the leg more efficiently and can stop the wind and rain penetrating the leg itself. This helps to reduce injuries from cold muscles and also means that you can enjoy running when the weather is not ideal

### **OUTERWEAR**

When the weather gets really cold or wet it is advisable to run in a gillet or jacket. These offer wind protection and rain-resistance capabilities keeping you warm and dry throughout any run.

Generally showerproof jackets are fine if you're out for a run in light rain for 30mins, as an extra layer if you get caught in the rain, or if you wouldn't go out if it's pouring anyway!

However, the most popular are the various Windstopper jackets. These offer 100% protection from the wind, have good water-resistance and generally offer more breathability than a completely waterproof top. Although a waterproof like Gore-Tex may suit you if you are out for more than 1 1/2 hours, in the worst weather

New advances in apparel mean there are now single tops designed to be worn next-to-skin but with wind & rain proof qualities so there is no need for extra layers under or on top.

### **THE FIT**

Running tops should be reasonably tight (not necessarily figure-hugging) and likewise they shouldn't flap around when you run in them. It is a fine balance between well fitted and slightly baggy you should aim for. For thermal tops and winter tights, generally the closer the fit the better it works - keeping you warm and dry. If you prefer a looser fit, then put the closer fitting top on underneath.

And don't forget

### **HATS & GLOVES**

FACT: A total of 70% of heat loss is through the head, hands and feet with about 40% body heat lost through your head. Modern thermal hats & gloves keep you comfortably warm without overheating. Conversely, take off your hat or gloves to vent quickly.

### **SPORTS BRAS**

A proper fitting sports bra is strongly recommended for women runners. In addition to the embarrassment the absence of a proper sports bra can cause, it may also damage the bust. The Cooper's Ligaments that hold up the bust stretch with excessive movement. Repetitive bouncing and the bust will sag - permanently!