

# How to get the most warmth out of your sleeping bag

In the interest of lightness of weight, everything you carry in your pack should serve as many purposes as possible. Clothing and sleeping gear constitute the greatest amount of bulk in your pack and probably the most weight. Thus, you should choose clothes and sleeping gear with a great deal of versatility in mind. Get the maximum use from the various items of clothing and sleeping gear and combinations of them.

For example, instead of two pairs of long pants, carry one pair of long pants and a pair of shorts. You can wear the shorts alone, or the long pants alone, or both at the same time.

The same with shirts. Instead of one heavy shirt, carry two medium-weight shirts—one with long sleeves, one with short sleeves.

Carry two light-weight wool sweaters instead of a heavy sweater or jacket. Even better, carry a light-weight wool sweater and a wind shell. This gives you three possibilities: sweater alone, shell alone,

sweater and shell together.

Additionally you will be warmer in several layers of clothing than in one layer of heavy clothing. The shell, light sweater and two shirts will keep you warmer than one shirt and a heavy sweater or jacket.

This same layering principle applies when you sleep. Better to have a light-weight sleeping bag and wear several layers of clothing than to have a heavy duty low-temperature sleeping bag.

Of course, different people sleep warm or cold, depending upon their body metabolism. And those needs should obviously be considered in the assembly of clothes they carry. The chart below is meant merely to illustrate the incremental warmth gained from layering of clothing and sleeping bag—and the versatility gained thereby. It is not intended to be a guide to any particular sleeping bag or for any particular person, although, it was patterned after actual use by one of our editors.

## Guide to Loft/Temperature Ratios of Sleeping Bags

Roughly the following table indicates the amount of loft one needs for temperature rating of his bag. Many factors influence the actual warmth of any bag at those temperatures, including "cold spots" in the bag itself, your own body metabolism, wind, and humidity. But, as a rule of thumb these are the ratios.

loft	temperature
1"	40
2"	30
3"	20
4"	10
5"	0

## Getting The Most Warmth Out Of All Of Your Gear

Should you find yourself in a freak situation such as zero temperature, when you started out in weather that should not have dropped below 30 degrees there are a number of things you can do to improve the warmth of your sleep.

1. You can sleep inside a tent, of course. This increases the temperature by 5 to 10 degrees and it cuts the wind chill factor substantially.
2. Camp out of the wind if possible. This cuts down the wind chill factor.
3. Place your sleeping bags close together. This retains the heat for all of you.
4. Camp on the side of a hill instead of on the valley floor, especially on clear nights. Warmer air lifts up off the valley floor on clear nights. There can be as much as 15 degrees difference between the temperature on the valley floor and that half-way up a hill.
5. Use stuff sacks, or poly bags to put your feet or hands into on very cold nights, but be aware that when you wrap yourself inside any plastic you will cause moisture to condense inside, and that will cause you to get wet.

