



CLIMB WALES

KIT LIST



**Clothing and Equipment Advice for
Cold Weather Walking and Scrambling**



WELCOME

SECTION

01

During the colder months when scrambling in the mountains with a Climb Wales Guide, the clothing you wear will have significant impact on your level of comfort.

In the UK, the temperature can drop to minus 10 and beyond. If the wind is blowing, this can easily feel like minus 30. Hypothermia is a real risk!

Whilst our expert guides will keep you safe on the hill, this brochure will help you to get prepared for the challenge ahead.

On the back page you will find details on how to hire clothing and equipment should you need to.

We look forward to welcoming you to the hills and having a fantastic and memorable day out.

Get ready for your next adventure!

The Team @ Climb Wales



CLOTHING

SECTION

02

LAYERS

In terms of clothing, many thin layers are better than one thick layer.

Avoid cotton at all costs (Cotton retains moisture) and instead go with synthetic materials with wicking properties to draw moisture away from the skin.

FEET

Given the weather and the terrain, wear boots instead of trainers. Boots need to be worn-in: when going on a big trip, you shouldn't be wearing a new pair of boots for the first time.

For scrambling, boots with a stiff sole will make it easier to stand on small foot holds. However, stiffer soles make walking more uncomfortable. Finding the right balance is largely personal preference.

Blisters can absolutely ruin a day in the hills. To avoid this, your boots should have a tight enough fit that your feet can't move around in them yet have plenty of room for your toes. Pay particular attention to your heel; when walking, make sure your heel doesn't slide up and down.



A good pair of walking socks is a must. If your feet are particularly prone to blisters, or if you find that your extremities often get cold, then wear two pairs of socks.

LEGS

Keep away from cotton or denim trousers. Joggers, Leggings and Jeans for example should all be avoided. Opt for a good pair of walking trousers instead.



A pair of base/thermal “tights” worn under your trousers will help to keep your legs warm.

In addition, you should also carry a pair of waterproof trousers. For regular use, you’ll want a pair with zips that extend the whole way down the leg as this makes it far easier to get them on and off whilst you’re out on the hill.

They should also be “breathable” to let the condensation from your body our trousers escape. For occasional use, a cheap pair will do, but expect to get quite sweaty inside them.





TORSO

Getting the torso right is the most important part as this is where all your internal organs are.

Again, your best bet here is to opt for many thin layers rather than one thick layer. Your typical thin base/thermal layers are great.

In cold weather, consider wearing three layers of this type if possible. Perhaps one short sleeved and two long sleeved. These layers are difficult to change on the hill, so either put them on at home, or before leaving the car.

On top of your base layers, (avoiding cotton again) you should have a thick fleece jumper (Depending on your coat options, you may wish to keep your fleece in your bag).

In terms of coats, a water and windproof (Goretex etc) coat is a must. A hood with draw-strings is better than one without, and a cap or visor can help to keep the rain off your face.

A thin waterproof coat, combined with a separate goose down or “puffy” coat is the best option.

The waterproof coat will keep the wind and rain off without making you too warm.

If it gets cold, then the “puffy” coat can be worn underneath the waterproof layer.



Again, supporting the “multiple thin layers are better than one thick layer” ethos.

As the weather gets colder, you should also carry a gilet or “body warmer” in your bag.

HANDS

Consider a pair of fingerless wrist warmers as a base layer, coupled with a pair of silk glove liners or similar.

You will also need a pair of warm winter gloves. Mittens are better at keeping your hands warm but you lose the dexterity of your fingers. Having a pair of both gives you best options.

Having an extra pair of warm gloves is beneficial too – When walking or climbing in the rain your gloves will inevitably get wet. If you then take your gloves off for any reason (to undo a zip, reach into a bag, eat, operate a phone etc) it's always better to have a dry pair of gloves to put on.

HEAD

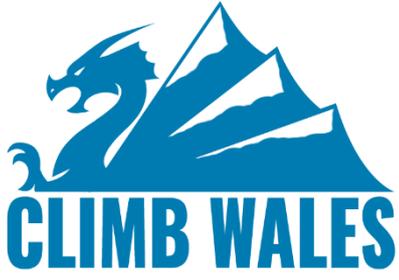
We lose a lot of heat from your heads so you should have a hat available. This should be tight fitting (yet comfortable) so that it doesn't blow away in a strong gust of wind.

You should also have a scarf or similar to protect face in your strong winds and horizontal rain.

The versatility of a buff (see buff headwear) is great.







FOOD

SECTION

03

What food you take comes largely down to personal preference and dietary requirements, however, there are some general tips you should follow.

Ideally, you want a mix of fast burning (sugary), and slow burning (carbohydrates) foods.

Fast burning foods can be absorbed quickly by the body and can give you a short “boost” when you’re feeling fatigued. They’re useful for getting you up that really steep bit of hill. Fruits, dairy products, honey, maple syrup, candies and cakes are all examples of fast burning foods.

Slow burning foods take longer to be absorbed by the body so will slowly release their energy for a much longer time. To avoid spikes in your energy levels, you should mostly be consuming slow burning foods. Starches and fibres, such as wheat products (bread, pasta etc), beans, nuts and root vegetables (potatoes etc).

The act of digesting food requires oxygen, so eating a large meal before tackling a big hill can starve your muscles of the oxygen they need (This is why you can feel lethargic after a big meal). On a big hill-day you should aim to have a hearty (slow burning) breakfast and give your body plenty of time to start digesting this before you start the walk.

Whilst on the hill, several (or many) snacks are far better than one big meal. Making fast burning (sugary) snacks easily accessible (in a pocket or hip pouch) is helpful.

WATER

In the summer, 2 litres would be considered a minimum for a big hill-day. In the winter though, you will drink far less and 1 litre is usually about right. If you're somebody who sweats a lot, then consider 1.5 litres.



Sipping at water throughout the day is far better than going for long periods without water than drinking a large quantity. For this reason, the more accessible your water is, the better. For this reason, a water bladder (Hydration Bladder / Backpack reservoir / Camelbak) is better than a water bottle which is difficult to reach.

Carrying a thermos flask with a hot drink such as tea, or hot fruit juice can give some much-needed comfort on colder days.





OTHER

SECTION

04

ALCOHOL / DRUGS

We have a strict no drug or alcohol policy.

CLIMBING EQUIPMENT

Helmets, Harnesses, Ropes etc.

So that we can ensure the safety of our customers, we only use our own climbing equipment. If any climbing equipment is required for your course, then your instructor will provide these. If you have your own climbing harness, then these can sometimes be used following an inspection by your instructor.

HEADTORCH

A head torch is a must in the winter given the shorter days. You may wish to consider carrying spare batteries, or better yet, a spare headtorch!

INSECT REPELLENT

By far the most annoying insect in the hills of Wales in the midge. Midges are similar to mosquitos but smaller. They are usually found near ponds, streams and marshlands where they lay their larvae. They prefer warm days with little wind. In the summer they can appear in large swarms, but they are seldom seen in the winter. Other insects to be mindful of include wasps and bees etc.

MAP & COMPASS

If a map and compass is required then your instructor will provide further details.

MEDICATION

Obvious things to consider are, for example, inhalers for people with asthma, insulin for people with diabetes, or adrenaline for people allergic to insect stings. This will be different for everyone and it's likely that if you have a medical condition, then you will have a better understanding of it than your instructor. If your instructor has any concern as about a medical condition then this will be discussed with you before the course.

SUN BLOCK

Sun block is particularly important in the summer, and perhaps more-so in the winter (when it's too cold to feel the sun burning your skin).

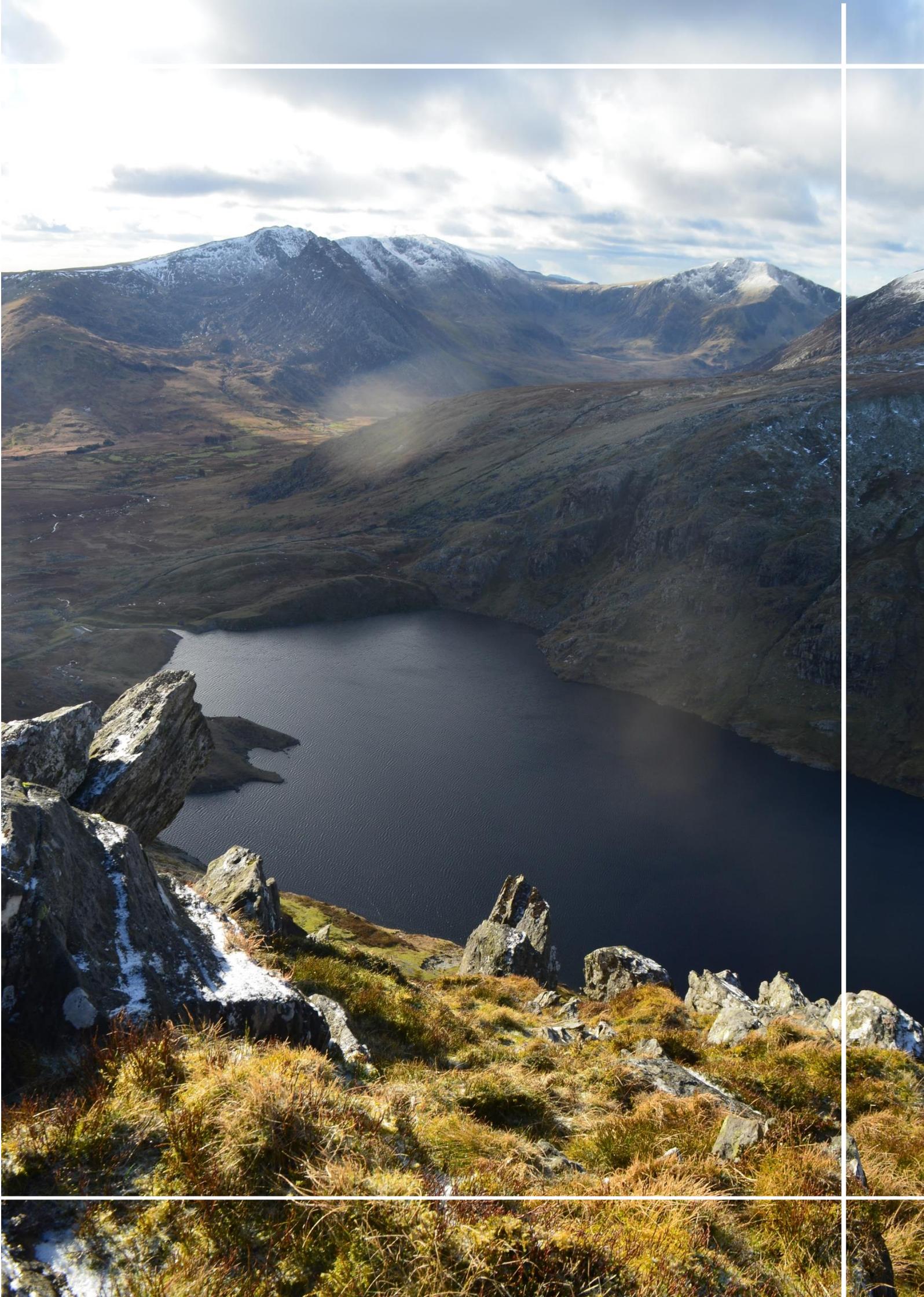
WALKING POLES

Walking poles can be very useful, particularly if you are unfit or are prone to pain the lower body.

Poles with quick-release mechanisms are better than the twist-lock type (Which are prone to becoming stuck).

WINTER / ICE CLIMBING EQUIPMENT

Crampons, Ice Axes etc – Require considerable training and experience to be able to use safely. If, on the day of the event, winter climbing equipment would be needed to achieve the planned event goals, your instructor will instead suggest an alternative route or activity. One which is equally as challenging and enjoyable, but where winter equipment is not needed.





KIT HIRE

SECTION

05

If you need to hire any of the equipment mentioned in this list, you can do so by going to www.outdoorhire.co.uk

Outdoor Hire provide quality equipment at fair prices. And what's more, Climb Wales customers can use the code CWOH966 to get a further 10% discount off the hire costs.