



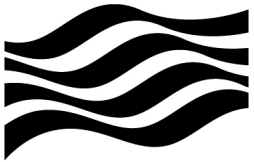
## Planning for winter conditions

Walking the mountains during the winter season can be a very different challenge from that of the summer season. There are far more hazards and having the wrong equipment and insufficient skills can put you and your companions' safety at risk. So in this video we will cover the type of equipment needed and the skills to learn to remain safe on those mountains.

It's important to have the correct equipment all year round so you stay safe on the mountains. This includes the correct footwear, map and compass, a good sized rucksack that allows hands to be free to scramble over rocks, warm and waterproof clothing, a head torch and spare batteries, an emergency whistle, a mobile phone and a basic first aid kit. During the winter seasons it's crucial to have the right equipment to deal with the snowy conditions on the peaks. For footwear, it is essential to have mountaineering boots that are crampon compatible. It's a good idea to test that your crampons fit properly before heading out. An ice axe is also essential in winter as well as additional clothing and several pairs of gloves and socks in case they get wet. Keeping dry is key and gaiters are recommended to keep the snow out. Always pack more food than you think you might use. More energy is used in winter so additional high energy foods and warm drinks are essential.

In the winter months the paths and trails can become choked with ice and snow which can make routes hard to find in poor conditions. Crampons are essential in these conditions to allow for safe walking. Because paths and trails can become hard to find during the winter months, a high level of navigational skill is required. Dangers exist such as corniced edges above steep slopes, low cloud and snow on the ground can make for white out conditions. In a white out it is harder to see these dangers so having the right skills and knowledge are essential.

One of the main dangers during the winter season is the risk of avalanche. This occurs particularly during and following heavy snowfall. It's advised that before you head out onto the mountains you hire a qualified mountaineering instructor to teach you the winter essentials.



**Met Office**

Avalanche risk is very serious and knowing how to assess whether the risk is high is a skill that can save lives.

For further information on how to learn the right skills for the winter season, do talk to a qualified mountaineering instructor or visit the [British Mountaineering Council website](#).