



How to Avoid the Worst Cold-Weather packing Mistakes by

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You can definitely blame the Bulk of winter layers for your overstuffed suitcase. After all, warm clothing takes up a lot more room than summer T-shirts and shorts. But we are here to help. Here are nine winter packing mistakes we learned the hard way, and the tips you need to pack like a sub-zero pro.

Packing the Wrong Materials: I love cotton for travel most times of the year because it's lightweight and breathable, but it's a terrible choice for the winter. Instead of wicking away moisture and sweat, it absorbs it, which will make you cold. Opt for warmer materials like fleece, Thinsulate, or wool. Merino wool is one of the best choices for travel, as it's naturally odor-resistant and breathable, plus it's less itchy than regular wool.

Forgoing a Hat: Yes, we have all experienced the dreaded hat hair, but if you leave your hat behind you are not only exposing your ears to frostbite, you are also losing significant body heat through your uncovered head. A thermal beanie that is made from moisture-wicking thermal wool will prevent sweaty hair and keep you toasty. Throw in a pocket-sized folding hairbrush with a mirror if you are concerned about hat head ruining your look.

Packing the Wrong type of Gloves: Gloves are not going to keep your hands warm if you keep taking them off to use your phone. Get a pair that is compatible with touch screen.

Leaving behind Sunglasses: Since you are not headed to the beach you might forget to pack your sunglasses. The sun can shine brightly on freezing days too though, so be sure to pack yours. Throw some sunscreen in there while you are at it as you can get sunburned in winter, especially where there is snow on the ground.

Not Bringing Multi-Use Items: Warm clothing tends to be bulkier than summertime items so maximize your space by bringing pieces that will pull double duty. Bring items that you can wear more than once without washing, like jeans and sweatshirts as well as clothes that can be worn in different ways. Leggings for women can be worn alone as pants or under a dress for warmth. Plus, they let you leave the money belt behind as they normally have pockets.

Not Bringing Layers: When the temperatures are really low and winds are really high, one layer of clothing just is not going to cut it. Ideally, your outfit will include a base layer to wick away moisture and keep you dry, an insulating layer to trap warmth and an outer layer to stay wind and water protected. My tip? Wear fleece lined leggings or thermal long johns under pants, with a heat trapping shirt and a Merino wool sweater plus a synthetic down jacket and you will be good to go on even the coldest days. You want to choose synthetic insulation over down because real down is basically useless if it gets wet.

Wearing the wrong shoes: Your shoes face a big challenge in the winter. They need to be insulated, waterproof and warm; provide great traction in case of ice; be able to withstand salt, and be comfortable to walk in. Your sneakers aren't going to cut it. Men - boots from London Fog fit the bill and offer basic black design that won't stand out as snowshoes. For women - try Sorel Waterproof boots. Just remember to wear your heavier snow boots on the plane, train or bus; otherwise, they will take up half of your suitcase space.

Choosing the Wrong Coat for your Destination: Before you pack, think about what exactly you will be doing on your trip and check the forecast closely. If it is not going to be freezing, you may get overheated especially if you will be doing a lot of walking which will warm you up. There is nothing worse than sweating through your coat when you go from cold temperatures outside to an overheated subway train or public transportation. Consider a lighter weight packable winter coat instead.