

SCOTTISH WINTER EQUIPMENT



Undoubtable one of the great challenges of Scottish Winter Mountaineering is the variable and changeable climatic conditions that we can find ourselves experiencing throughout a single day on the hill.

Getting out of the car into a damp dreary and breezy day, walking into a head strong wind with the blast of sleet into the face, trudging through deep soft snow, crossing a patch of clear water ice, front pointing up a neve filled gully with spin drift blowing from every direction, toping out on a high plateau into a icy gale, navigation blindly in search of a cairn to be greeted by a sudden and unexpected break in the clouds and the unveiling of the surrounding beauty that is Scotland in winter under a blue sky.

Throughout this day we constantly manage both comfort and safety, keeping a careful balance between expelling wasted energy and minimising the risk associated with our environment. Having the correct equipment for our needs will go a long way in assisting us towards our goals.

Kieran Creevy is a keen active winter mountaineer, holding both the International Mountain Leader and Winter Mountain Leader qualifications. Working in the **Great Outdoors** retail shop in Dublin, I thought he would be the perfect person to pass on some top-tips, guidance and recommendations to all of us in planning our trip to the MCI Scottish Winter Meet.

Below is a list of recommended equipment that Kieran has picked out from the shop that will help get you through the hardest of possible days in the Scottish Winter Mountains. The Great Outdoors shop are also offering a 20% discount on the below gear, to anyone attending the **Free MCI Scottish Winter Meet information evening on Tuesday 13th January**.

Ice Axe

Grivel Munro - €80

Depending on your height, when standing upright with the axe held in your hand by the head it should reach roughly between your lower calf to ankle bone (generally between 55 and 70 cm)

Crampons

Grivel G10 - €100

Black Diamond Sabertooth - €140

The G10 (10 point crampons) would be suitable for the winter walking course while candidates on the winter mountaineering course will require a 12 point crampon (sabertooth)

Harness

Black Diamond Blizzard - €85

Be sure to try it on for size, allowing for plenty of extra winter layers

Helmet

Petzl Elios - €59.90

Again make sure to test for size and comfort with a thin (not Aran knitwear) hat below

Head torch

Black Diamond Icon - €69.90

Do not think you will get away with a hand held torch, and remember spare, spare batteries

Sling

Wild Country Nylon 120cm - €9

Only for those of you on the Winter Mountaineering course

Screw Gate Krab

Petzl Mini Pearbiner - €17

Again only for those of you on the Winter Mountaineering course

First Aid Kit

Around - €20

Although there will always be one group first aid kit carried by leader, it is always good to have your own personal small emergency kit.

Boots

Winter walking – Meindl Burma - €199, Scarpa ZG10 €210

Winter mountaineering – Meindl Makalu - €249

Winter climbing – La Sportiva Nepal Extreme - €359

Flask

1 litre size - €25

Although not essential it can be an added luxury (don't be expecting long leisurely tea breaks on the winter hills)

Water Bladder

2ltr Camelbak of platypus - €25

Can be a good alternative to a normal bottle of water as help encourage ongoing hydration. Can create freezing tube problem.

Ski Goggles

Big range €40-€50

Goggles can be very important for climbing and walking in Scotland, in fierce winds the spindrift (blown snow) can get into your face making it virtually impossible to see.

Sunglasses

Category 2/3 - €50 - €100

Don't believe what you have heard, the sun can shine in the snowy hills of Scotland

Rucksack

Winter walking 30/40 litre – Deuter Guide - €130

Winter mountaineering 40/55 litre – Mountain Hardwear Doretissima €160

Gloves

Liners – lightweight wool/synthetic mix - €7.50

Mid – Fleece or power stretch €25-€35

Outer – Gore Shell - €50-€80

The alternative is to buy an outer glove that has a removable fleece liner. Ski gloves are a good backup, but if the liner is too heavy it can take along time to dry out in Scottish conditions.

Headwear

Balaclava or Ninjaclava - €30

You should carry two fleece or wool hats on the hill to allow for the one that will blow away.

Base Layer

Helly Hansen Crew Neck top - €36

Helly Hansen long johns - €36

Mid Layer

Lowe Alpine Power stretch tights - €75

North Face Apex soft-shell pants - €120

Lowe Alpine Atlantis Fleece Jkt - €99

North Face Apex Bionic Soft-shell - €150

Shell Layer

Sprayway jacket (non-Gore Tex) - €125

North Face Primavera Jkt €250

Sprayway rain pants (non- Gore Tex) - €85

Lowe Alpine Side Zip pants - €180

Belay Jacket

Mountain Equipment Lightline Jacket - €220

Kieran can normally be found lurking amongst the mountaineering gear section of the Great Outdoors, Chatham St, Dublin 2 (just off Grafton St).

He would be happy to assist and give further guidance on equipment for the MCI Scottish Winter Mountaineering Meet and can also be contacted at:

www.greatoutdoors.ie or on 01 679 4293

**Free MCI Scottish Winter Meet information evening
+ 20% discount on gear (for one night only)
Tuesday 13th January 7pm - Great Outdoors**