

A Practitioner's Guide to OUTDOOR PLAY BASED LEARNING

WHAT TO WEAR

“Help – We have no idea what to wear outdoors”



“There’s no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing.” People say this all the time, none less than the British explorer Ranulph Fiennes. Ah! We hear you cry, “we aren’t all outdoorsy like Ranulph, we simply don’t have the gear.”

The right clothing is **key** to ensuring that time outdoors with children is as enjoyable as possible. A little planning and thought can prevent us from being distracted and/or miserable due to cold feet, wet hair or chattering teeth.

For a summary of all tips, Our friends at Baltic Street Adventure play in Glasgow with Earthtime in Elgin have created this must watch video!
<https://youtu.be/q07lpPGopyM>

Sunny and Dry Weather

As warm, sunny days are quite rare in Scotland, understandably, we want to make the most of them and so maybe tempted see the sun and dress for the beach. However, shorts, exposed ankles, vest tops and flimsy sandals not only increase the risk of sunburn, but also provide bare skin for ticks, bites and stings. It is a myth that Flip Flops are banned from workplaces by the HSE, however, slips, trips and falls do account for more than 30% of all



workplace accidents, and what you wear on your feet can make a difference. Wearing shoes that fit well and have a good grip are always a better choice than flip-flops. Have you seen people running in flip flops?

Look out those loose and comfortable T Shirts or long sleeve cotton/linen mix shirts as these provide protection from the sun, nettles and insects. Allergic reactions to midge bites can be very uncomfortable, so invest in a good repellent and/or, an over the counter antihistamine (do not take any medication without reading the instructions and seeking medical advice where necessary).



Rain

Light rain and summer showers can pass quite quickly, if you have a T-shirt or a top that is made of quick drying material that wicks away moisture, you may decide to skip wearing a jacket. Otherwise a lightweight rain jacket and a pair of lightweight over trousers will keep those underlayers dry. Loose fitting ones can pop off and on quickly.

Heavy rain need not stop play. A fully waterproof jacket and trouser set will keep you dry in the heaviest rain. Clothing worn by the Mountain Rescue Teams, Emergency Services and Off Shore workers are seriously waterproof. Care about the budget and the planet? Re-purposed and pre-loved items of quality clothing can be found online. You can pick these up at a reasonable price, remember to re-proof (wash or spray with 'waterproof top ups').



Cold, wind and rain require layers.

Master this and you will be comfortable in all weathers, forever. First off, **DON'T WEAR COTTON**. Your base layer should keep you warm and dry underneath the rest of your gear. Sweating and exposure to moisture in the air can cause your skin to become cold, so a first layer of wicking fabric is critical.

The key to comfort outdoors is proper insulation. You can sport a super expensive jacket, but if you match it with a cotton t-shirt, cotton hoodie and cotton socks, you'll be hating it! Each part of this layering formula – the base layer, insulating layer and outer layer – has its own important function. On most winter days, you'll want to start out wearing all three groups to keep you comfortable and outdoors as long as possible, though if you get too hot you can shed some of it.

Cotton, on the other hand, is a hydrophilic material (it easily absorbs water) and shouldn't be worn as an inner layer. Be sure to use both a top and bottom base layer, and wear socks that are made for outdoors and use similar wicking materials. Did we mention, don't wear cotton!

How it looks. We know that most outdoor clothes are not the most fashionable. If this is important to you, try on a ton of options until you find a fit and a style that suits you. It sounds vain, but if you hate the way you look in outdoor clothing, you'll never want to wear it no matter how great it is.



Useful Links

<https://creativestarning.co.uk/general-commentary/outdoor-clothes-for-adults-will-we-ever-learn/>

<https://www.fionaoutdoors.co.uk/2019/05/tips-for-clothing-for-different-outdoor-activities.html>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/introduction.htm>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/myth/jun09.htm>