

TABLE 2-1. FABRIC COMPARISONS

FABRIC	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	USES
Cotton	Good in hot weather. Breathes well. Comfortable when dry.	Highly absorbent; dries slowly. Loses insulating qualities when wet. Inappropriate for cool or wet conditions.	Sun protection, bandannas, hats, T-shirts.
Wool	More abrasion- and wind-resistant than many synthetics. Retains insulating qualities when wet. High friction on snow, ice. Does not melt with high heat.	Heavier; absorbs more water and dries less quickly than most synthetics. Can be bulky.	Skin layers, insulating, and outer layers (sweaters, shirts, pants), hats, gloves, socks.
Polyester or polypropylene	Most types absorb little water. Retains insulating qualities when wet. Lightweight.	Some types retain odors. Not wind resistant. Can be bulky. Melts with high heat.	Many different forms. Skin layers (underwear, T-shirts) Insulating layers (pile, fleece), hats, gloves, socks.
Nylon	Strong, durable, lightweight. Good wind- and abrasion resistance.	Fairly absorbent if not treated. May dry slowly. Slippery. Melts with high heat.	Outer layers (parkas, wind garments, rain pants, overmitts), hats, vapor-barrier socks.
Stretch or woven nylon blend	Versatile. Stretchy, durable, fairly insulative and wind resistant. Usually dries quickly. Wide comfort range.	Some types dry slowly. May snag. May be expensive.	Skin layers, light outer or midlayer (pants, shirts).

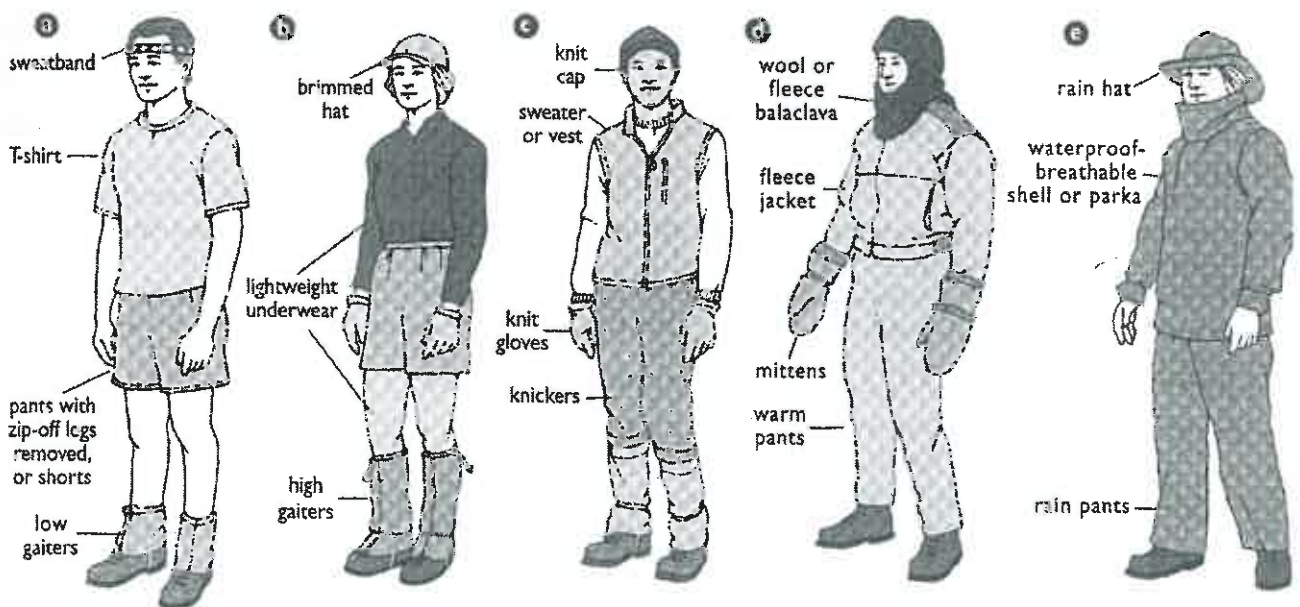


Fig. 2-1. Typical examples of clothing layering systems: a, hiking in warm weather; b, hiking in cool weather; c, cool weather in camp; d, cold weather in camp; e, rainy or windy weather.