

Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker: Winter Hiking Workshop

AMC Worcester Chapter
November 6, 2021

Presented by:

Debi Garlick, Keith Jylkka, Steph Keimig, Dave Kulpa,
Mike Morin, Chris Pignatiello



Agenda, Intro, Purpose: Keith Jylkka



Agenda

- ▶ Introductions: Keith
 - ▶ Purpose of the Workshop/Hike Series: Keith
 - ▶ Purpose of the Screenings: Keith
 - ▶ Getting Ready for Winter Hiking: Chris
 - ▶ Hydration & Nutrition: Mike
 - ▶ Heat Management/Clothing: Steph
 - ▶ Gear, Gear, and More Gear! Dave
 - ▶ Post Hike: Debi
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- ▶ Gear Demos: Walt, Denise, Paul

Introductions

- ▶ **Debi Garlick:** Hiking Chair, 4-Season Hike Leader. Worcester Master Leader
- ▶ **Keith Jylkka:** 4-Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Steph Keimig:** 4-Season Hike Leader. Worcester Master Leader
- ▶ **Dave Kulpa:** 4-Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Mike Morin:** Worcester Chapter Vice Chair, 4-Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Chris Pignatiello:** Communications Co-Chair, 3 Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Gear Demos:** Paul Glazebrook (Worc. Master Ldr.), Walt Lazarz, Denise Guillemette - all 4-Season Hike Leaders

Purpose of Workshop/Hike Series

- ▶ Audience
 - Beginner Winter Hikers (attract and prepare)
 - Gain knowledge, experience and confidence
 - Experienced Winter Hikers (refresher)
- ▶ “Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker” – Learn by Doing:
 - Beginner Track (I): Intro to Intermediate Local Winter Hikes
 - Advanced Track (II): Intermediate to Advanced Up-Country Winter Hikes
 - Check out Skills, Equipment, and Self
- ▶ Sign-Up priority given to workshop participants for “Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker” hikes
 - Listing opens to non-workshop participants three weeks prior to event
- ▶ Current list of Hikes: www.amcworchester.org
 - Keep checking website for new hike additions (or subscribe to AMC Activity Digests emails)

Screenings

- ▶ Chapter's goals are to keep hikes safe and fun
 - Need to match participant's hiking level (experience and physical ability) with posted hike
 - Expect detailed "Screening" Questionnaire
- ▶ Four Elements to Hike Ratings (Worcester Method)
 1. **Distance** in miles
 2. **Pace**: Slow (< 1.5MPH), Moderate (1.5–2MPH), or Fast (>2MPH)
 3. **Terrain**: Easy, Moderate, Strenuous, & Very Strenuous
 4. **Overall difficulty**: Intro, Easy, Intermediate, Advanced, Expert
- ▶ Be honest about your fitness level and experience

Getting Ready: Chris Pignatiello

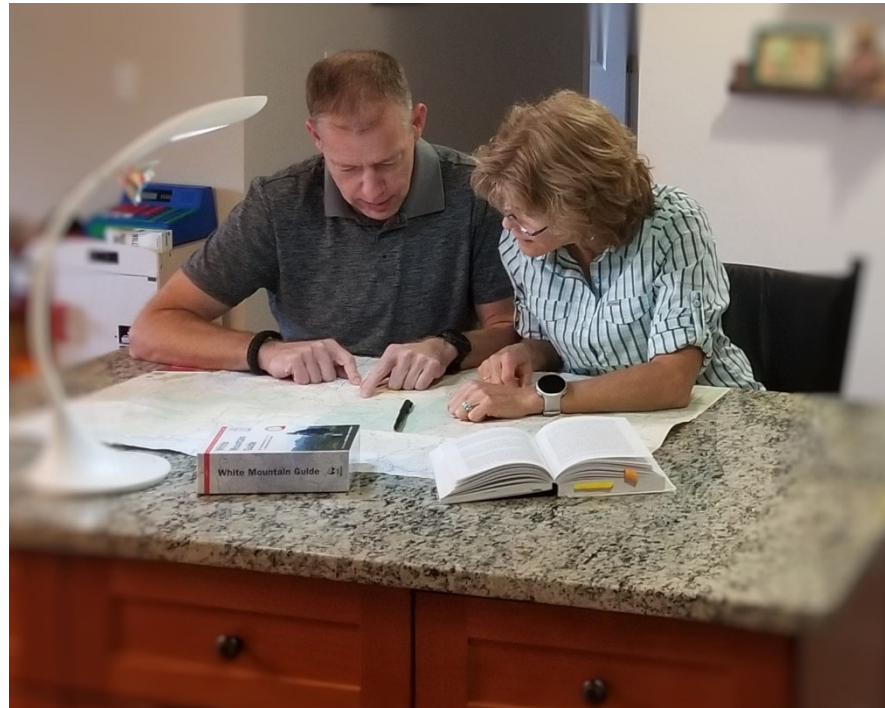


Get Ready to Hike!

- ▶ 2 most important pieces of gear that everyone of us possesses, even if never hiked in winter:
 - Body
 - Brain
- ▶ Physical conditioning a must!
 - Winter hiking physically harder than 3-season hiking
 - The best gear on the market can't remedy poor physical fitness
 - Know your limitations and when to postpone a hike to a better time
 - The mountains will be there another day!

Get Ready to Hike!

- ▶ Take Time to Plan Your Hike & Navigation Methods
 - Review the area you will be hiking
 - Look at trail map and other relevant references
 - BRING: Waterproof map – or protected map



Get Ready to Hike!

- Trail descriptions/recent experiences:
 - Alltrails.com
 - Hikingproject.com
 - AMC Guides: White Mountains, Maine, Day Hikes
 - The 4000 Footers of the White Mountains
- Check weather conditions for trails and driving (up and back!)
 - Local weather forecast
 - NewEnglandTrailConditions.com
 - Higher Summits Forecast (google)

Get Ready to Hike!

- Review your gear/Bring what is on **Gear List**
 - Emergencies happen on short and long hikes
 - (injuries, weather changes, wrong turns)
 - Rescue will likely be many hours away
 - Be prepared to hike in the dark (hike duration can be longer than expected when the “unexpected” occurs)
 - Weight vs safety



Get Ready to Hike!

- ▶ Policy of all AMC led Hikes – Stay Together!
 - Start as a group, hike as a group, end as a group
 - Hike at the pace of the slowest hiker
 - Participants should hike close enough to see the person in front and the person behind
 - Hike leaders have the right to change the plans of a hike in the best interest of the group for safety and comfort.

A wide-angle photograph of a snowy mountain landscape. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and casting long shadows. The foreground is covered in snow with some dark rocks visible. In the distance, there are more snow-covered mountain ranges under a clear sky.

Hydration & Nutrition: Michael Morin

Winter Hydration – Techniques

- ▶ Hot Water and Insulate
 - Insulated bottle holder, wool socks, neck flask
 - Back up thermos
 - Invert wide-mouth Nalgene, Freezes at top
- ▶ Lower Freezing Temp with Sugar
 - Gatorade
 - Jell-O
 - Real sugar (not artificial sweetener)
- ▶ Keep Water Accessible
 - Reach without taking off pack
 - Encourages hydrating

Winter Hydration – Techniques

- ▶ Caution Use of Hydration Packs /AKA “Camelbacks”
 - Prone to freeze
 - Keep hose close to your body
 - Blow water back into the bladder to prevent water from freezing in hose
 - Insulate tubes and mouthpiece
 - Have back-up –> Wide-mouth Nalgene bottle

Nutrition = Fuel

- ▶ **Fuel your Furnace**
 - Normal 1,200 – 2,500 cal/day
 - Summer Hiking 3,500 – 4,000 cal/day
 - Winter Hiking 4,000 – 5,000 cal/day
- ▶ **Carbs**
 - Simple sugars – quick fuel (minutes)
 - Candy, dried fruit, gel packs, chocolate
 - Complex: starches – longer fuel (hours)
 - Bagels, cookies, granola bars
- ▶ **Fat** – Long Term Fuel (4 – 6 hours after eating)
 - Cheese, meat, peanut butter, nuts
- ▶ **Protein** – Post hike recovery
- ▶ **Fancy Energy Bars vs. Snickers ...If you like Snickers, bring Snickers!**

Nutrition = Fuel

- ▶ Have a good breakfast
 - Balanced and nutritious pre-hike
- ▶ Bring what you like
 - Think about what appeals to you on a hike; “Dark Chocolate”
- ▶ Don't skimp on calories
 - Diet before and after hiking
- ▶ Skip food that freezes easily
 - Keep chewy (moist) food close to your body
 - Precut food into bite-size pieces
- ▶ Light and simple
 - Easy to eat; can eat while wearing gloves
 - Max calories per weight



**Heat Management &
Clothing:
Steph Keimig**

Heat Management/Clothing

- ▶ Biggest Challenge to Winter Hiking: Minimize Sweating
- ▶ Sweating → Hypothermia
 - Start hiking cold
 - Dress in layers (like an onion)
 - Wear breathable clothing
 - Adjust clothing or slow pace before you sweat
 - Hydrate early and often
 - Snacks (salts)

Heat Management/Clothing

- ▶ Clothing – Look for
 - Wicking material
 - Designed to pull moisture away
 - Allow for air flow
 - Venting options
 - Zippers at neck, arm pits, side zips on pants
- ▶ No Cotton!!!
 - Cotton pulls heat from your body!
- ▶ No Jeans!!!

Clothing: Tops

- ▶ Base Layer (long underwear)
 - Synthetic or wool
 - Long or short sleeves
- ▶ Mid Layer
 - Lightweight synthetic or wool
 - Long or short sleeves
- ▶ Outer Layer
 - Fleece and/or wool
- ▶ Insulating Layer
 - Down “puffy” jacket with hood if possible
- ▶ Outer Shell: Water & wind proof layer (not water resistant)

Clothing: Bottoms

- ▶ Base Layer (long underwear)
 - Synthetic or wool

- ▶ Mid Layer
 - Light weight synthetic
 - Can be hiking pants

- ▶ Outer Shell
 - Water & wind proof layer (not water resistant)
 - Full side zippers recommended

Clothing: Feet

- ▶ Socks:
 - Wool or synthetic (bring extra)
 - Liner socks
- ▶ Gaiters:
 - Keep snow/water out of boots
- ▶ Insulated/Waterproof boots
 - Proper fit (not too big!!)
 - Break in on shorter hikes
 - Different feet – Different boots

Clothing: Hands

- ▶ **Gloves:**
 - Synthetic (fleece) or wool gloves (No Leather!)
 - Liner gloves
 - Bring extra pair
- ▶ **Mittens:**
 - Waterproof/windproof mitten shells to slip over liners

Clothing: Head

- ▶ Hats
 - Synthetic (fleece) or wool
 - Pack an extra

- ▶ Face:
 - Goggles – if very cold, windy, going above tree line
 - Sunglasses
 - Face mask or Balaclava
 - Neck gaiter

Gear: Dave Kulpa



Gear

- ▶ For the Winter Hiking Program, leaders will send out the gear list for your hike
 - Also find it on AMC Worcester web site [here](#)
- ▶ “Full Winter Gear” means everything on the list marked required
- ▶ If you don’t own an item on the list, before you buy it:
 - Rent (e.g., snowshoes)
 - Borrow
 - Contact leader, who just may have an “extra”

Winter Gear Track I

Additional Gear

Z*	Backpack - big enough to fit all of your gear (use stuff sacks to organize gear)
Z*	Pack cover and pack liner (plastic compactor bag works well)
*	Microspikes – some kind of non-snowshoe foot traction
Z*	Snowshoes – designed for flat to rolling terrain (adjust/try on at home before the hike)
Z*	Trekking poles - (flick-lock style recommended) – snow basket on bottom
*	Water Bottle and Water Bottle Holders – insulated (camelbacks will freeze in the winter)-
*	Personal first aid kit and toiletry articles (personal meds)
*	Whistle
*	Headlamp (check batteries before hike)
*	Map of hiking area (remember to leave copy and hiking itinerary at home)
	Chapstick and sunscreen (20+SPF)
	Hand Warmers (activate at the beginning of the hike)
	Small Cell Foam Pad (to sit on)

“*” Denotes required items

“Z” Denotes items recommended for rental before purchase or borrow from a friend

Winter Gear Track II

Additional Gear

Z*	Backpack - big enough to fit all of your gear (use stuff sacks to organize gear)
Z*	Pack cover and pack liner (plastic compactor bag works well)
*	Stabilizers/microspikes -- some kind of non-snowshoe foot traction
Z*	Snowshoes – designed for steep terrain (adjust/try on at home before the hike)
Z*	Crampons (adjust/try on at home before the hike; only required if specified by the leader)
Z*	Trekking poles - (flick-lock style recommended) – snow basket on bottom
*	Water Bottle and Water Bottle Holders – insulated (camelbacks will freeze in the winter)
*	Personal first aid kit and toiletry articles (personal meds)
*	Whistle
*	Headlamp (check batteries before hike)
*	Map of hiking area (remember to leave copy and hiking itinerary at home)
	Emergency kit containing compass, lighter, knife, fire starter & rope, duct tape
	Chapstick and sunscreen (20+SPF)
	Hand Warmers (activate at the beginning of the hike)
	Biyy sack and/or sleeping bag (emergency shelter)
	Cell Foam Pad (to sit on)
Z*	Ice axe (only required if specified by the leader)

“*” Denotes required items

“Z” Denotes items recommended for rental before purchase or borrow from a friend

Winter Gear Topics

- ▶ Backpack
- ▶ Hydration
- ▶ Insulation
- ▶ Traction
 - Micro Spikes
 - Snowshoes
 - Crampons
- ▶ Trekking Poles
- ▶ Sit / Seat Pad (highly recommended)

Backpack with pack cover and liner

- ▶ **BIG enough to carry all of your gear!**
 - Clothing Layers you peel off and put on
 - Wind/Rain Gear, Puffy Jacket
 - Extra socks, gloves, hat
 - Microspikes, Snowshoes, Crampons
 - Food, Water
 - Safety gear (headlamp, first aid ...)

RECOMMEND 35–45-liter backpack,
with side compression straps or other
attachment points onto which you can lash
snowshoes to the sides, back, or top.



Attaching snowshoes to a pack

Side Mount



Back Mount



Under Lid Mount



Credit: Sectionhiker.com

<https://sectionhiker.com/how-attach-snowshoes-to-backpack/>

Hydration / Insulation

- ▶ Nalgene bottle
- ▶ Wool sock
- ▶ Insulated bottle holders
 - Forty Below Neoprene Bottle Boots
 - Mountainsmith Insulated Bottle Holster
 - Outdoor Research Water Bottle Parka ??

Wide mouthed
32 oz

Easy
Sipper



Traction

- ▶ Micro Spikes
- ▶ Snowshoes
- ▶ Crampons



Microspikes



- ▶ Required gear for most winter hikes
- ▶ Best traction for hard-packed and/or slippery snow, “crunchy” ice

Kahtoola
MICROspikes



Hillsound
Trail Crampons





"Crunchy" Ice

Snowshoes

- ▶ Your needs depend on your goals
 1. Flat Terrain
 2. Rolling Terrain
 3. Mountaineering / Backcountry
 - e.g., White Mtns, Monadnock, Greylock ..
- ▶ Consider snowshoe weight, ease of entry, durability, amount of traction, heel lifts, expert opinions
- ▶ Sizing usually based on your weight, but for maneuverability in the mountains and back country, the recommendation is no larger than
 - 25” for men
 - 22” for women

Snowshoes – continued

For front country, flat terrain

- ▶ Any snowshoes will do
- ▶ Light weight and ease of entry are desirable

For rolling hills

- ▶ You want some bite; teeth under the ball of foot at a minimum
- ▶ Heel lifts are nice



MSR EVO Trail



MSR REVO Explore

Snowshoes – continued

For Mountaineering / Backcountry

- ▶ “Aggressive” teeth pattern to bite into steep terrain
- ▶ Heel Lift to reduce fatigue on the steps



Backcountry snowshoe models

MSR Lightning Ascent



MSR Lightning Explore



Best Snowshoes of 2021



MSR Lightning Ascent



Tubbs Flex VRT










Atlas Montane



MSR Evo



Tubbs Panoramic

Awards					
Price	\$329.95 at REI	Check Price at Backcountry Compare at 2 sellers	Check Price at Backcountry Compare at 2 sellers	Check Price at Backcountry Compare at 2 sellers	\$249.95 at Amazon
Overall Score ▾					
Star Rating	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Pros	Rigid, precise, excellent binding security, traction, flotation	Fully featured for steep and technical use	Good traction, and an easy-to-use, comfortable binding	Inexpensive, simple, reliable	Easy on/off, versatile
Cons	New binding trades ease-of-use for comfort	Loud decking and bulky harness	Mediocre flotation for the length, strapped deck/binding attachment	Loud decking on crusty snow	Can fall off when paired with bigger boots and feet, pricey
Bottom Line	The best snowshoes in our test, complete with high end features and simple engineering	This contender provides excellent traction, heel lifts, a comfortable binding, and moderate weight	This is a great traditional snowshoe that's outshone in a few areas by newer designs	This molded snowshoe is reliable, inexpensive, and offers widespread appeal	A well-rounded snowshoe for most winter hikers

Outdoorgearlab.com

Crampons

- For the most challenging terrain: hard, steep, ice
- Required for some Track 2 hikes
- Leader will tell you if these might be required for your hike

Model:
Camp Stalker



- 12 point
- Universal Fit

▶ Ice Axe

- For self-arrest, steep icy climbs
- Requires special training
- Not required for Intro Series



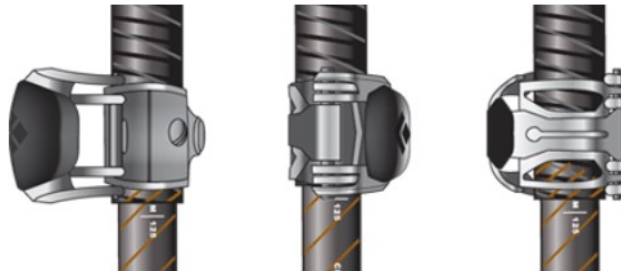
Trekking Poles

- ▶ Help you maintain balance and stability
- ▶ Reduce fatigue; especially on downhill
- ▶ Good to test snow depth and ice solidity
- ▶ Used to raise/lower snowshoe heel lifts!

- ▶ With Snow Baskets



- ▶ Adjustable, “flick-lock” style is best



Sit/Seat pad

- ▶ Foam padding for a comfortable dry seat
- ▶ Adds warmth when resting on rocks, logs, snowbanks



Before you buy

- ▶ Do some online research
 - Outdoorgearlab.com
 - Sectionhiker.com
- ▶ When you have a good idea of what you want, go to a retailer to get hands on for fit and feel
- ▶ Compare prices online
 - Backcountry and Campsaver often offer 10–20% discounts on 1 full priced item when you sign up for their mailing lists.
- ▶ Now that you are ready to buy, earlier is better
 - Manufacturers, Supply Chains, Delivery companies are still suffering from affects of COVID, including labor shortages, and economy recovery pressures.

Where to buy

- ▶ REI, EMS, Amazon, Backcountry.com, Campsaver.com
- ▶ Suggestions for low-cost winter gear, besides big-name gear stores:
 - Craigslist
 - Ebay
 - steepandcheap.com
 - geartrade.com
 - gearx.com – Outdoor Gear Exchange, Burlington VT
 - International Mountain Equipment (North Conway, NH; all sorts of used gear)
 - REI Outlet (on-line)
 - REI Garage Sale: as-is, used/returned gear (check REI web site for dates, locations)

Renting

REI

- ▶ Carries different rental gear in different store locations, so your local REI may not rent everything listed below. Give your store a call to see if they have what you need

Snowshoes

A la carte	REI Member Pricing		Non-Member Pricing		
	First Night	Each Additional Night	First Night	Each Additional Night	Non-member Deposit
Basic	\$18	\$5	\$27	\$8	\$100
Premium	\$22	\$7	\$33	\$11	\$100
Youth	\$8	\$2	\$12	\$3	\$100

- Minimum rental duration may vary by location

- Snowshoe rentals include free trekking poles where inventory exists

Post Hike & More: Debi Garlick



Post-Hike

- ▶ Celebrate the accomplishment
- ▶ Bring a change of clothes
- ▶ Drink more water
- ▶ Have a snack
- ▶ Email those pictures to everyone
 - Especially the awesome ones with the hike leaders...
 - May find the picture in the next newsletter or on AMC Worcester website







Post-Hike

- ▶ Make plans for your next hike
- ▶ What worked? What didn't work?
 - Equipment, skills, fitness
- ▶ Check for hikes for Worcester Chapter and registration info at: amcworchester.org
- ▶ Check out hikes with other AMC Chapters
 - www.outdoors.org
 - Don't limit hikes to Worcester Chapter

Schedule of Winter Hikes

- ▶ “Fixin’ to Get Ready”
 - Pack your winter gear and go out and hike
- ▶ “Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker: ...”
 - Beginner to Advanced Hikes
- ▶ Ad Hoc Events – Ice Axe Self Arrest clinics and crampon clinics
- ▶ Check web for winter hikes outside the series

Advanced Adventures in Winter











