

# Do you need to wear sunscreen while skiing or snowboarding?

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Yes, you definitely do. While the cold winter months may not immediately bring to mind warmth and sunshine, ultraviolet (UV) rays still pose a risk and you need to apply sunscreen before heading

outdoors, just like in the summer. Protecting your skin now will help prevent skin cancer, wrinkles, age spots and more.

## Why do I need sunscreen in the winter?

While UV rays may not be as strong during this time of year, reflecting off the snow and hitting your skin will amplify their effect. Additionally, when skiing and snowboarding, you are at a higher altitude where the sun's impact will be stronger. Even if you are cold and the sky is overcast, harmful rays will still reach your exposed skin. Your [goggles](#), helmet and coat may come off as you head to the lodge, take a break or wipe your face, so be sure to apply [sunscreen](#) everywhere before bundling up. Apply indoors and allow time for it to fully dry before heading outside.

## What sunscreen should I apply?

As always, choose a sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher. Aim for a cream or lotion, as spray sunscreens have been shown to provide less accurate and less thorough coverage. Waterproof is key to maintain protection in the snow and while sweating. Re-apply every two hours at a minimum. Some sunscreens are made specifically for snowsports and provide extra protection from wind, dry [skin](#) and other concerns.

Skin cancer can be devastating, but it can also be preventable. Wear sunscreen, no matter what season and no matter what the temperature.

Provided by Roswell Park Cancer Institute

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