



Dressing for Winter's Worst

Dressing in layers is the key to staying warm and regulating your body temperature. You can remove and add layers as needed. The clothing you use for other winter activities, such as sledding, skating or skiing, should do fine for ice fishing. Always bring more clothing than you think you need.

Remember:

- Wear a hat. Most of your body heat is lost through your head!
- A waterproof and windproof top layer is ideal for keeping the elements at bay.
- Wool, silk and fleece are great insulators; they'll keep you warm even if they get wet.
- Also bring: gloves or mittens; sunglasses; insulated, waterproof boots; extra clothing; food and hot drinks.

WAIT for a long cold spell.

TEST the ice.

FISH in small groups.

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Ice Safety Tips

- Always fish with a buddy.
- Test the ice.
- Beware! Wind and currents break ice.
- Don't gather in large groups.
- Don't build a fire on the ice.
- Bring blankets and a first-aid kit.
- Reach for solid ice, kick and roll to safety, if you fall in.
- Don't drive large vehicles onto the ice.



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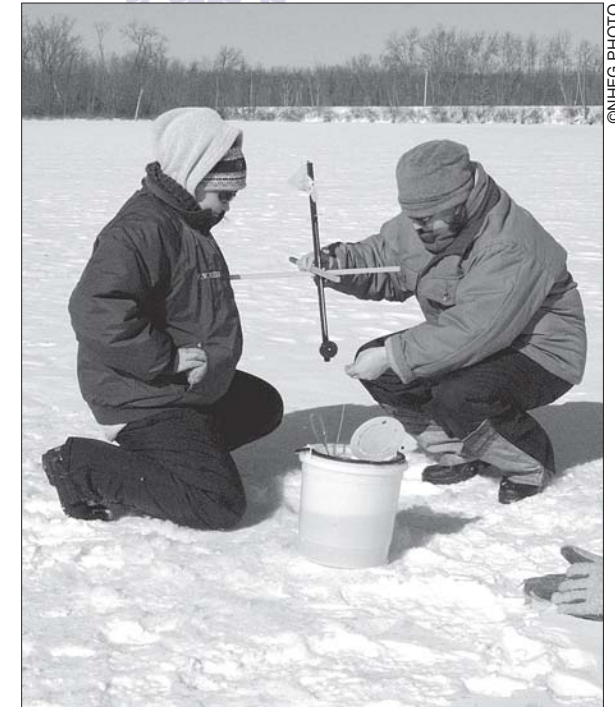


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New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

SAFETY ON ICE



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Tips for Anglers

www.FishNH.com

Judging Ice Conditions

Look for solid bluish-black ice:

- Four to 6 inches* of solid bluish-black ice can support a few well-dispersed people.
- Eight to 10 inches* of solid bluish-black ice can support OHRV activity.

Even if the weather has been below freezing for several days, don't guess about ice thickness. Ice does not form consistently across a water body. A water body's size, temperature, depth, currents, springs and wind exposure affect ice formation. Early season snow cover can insulate ice from cold temperatures and slow ice formation.

Checking the ice:

- Use an auger, spud or axe to make test holes.
- Check the ice in several places; start at shore and continue testing as you go out.



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Remember:

- **All ice is potentially dangerous.**
- Stay off the ice along the shoreline if it is cracked or squishy. Don't go on the ice during thaws.
- Watch out for thin, clear or honeycombed ice. Dark snow and ice may also indicate weak spots.
- Ice can remain dangerously thin in places with current, like inlets, outlets and spring holes.
- Choose small bodies of water; they tend to freeze thicker. Rivers and lakes are more prone to wind, current and wave action.

* Ice thickness recommendations based on information from Cold Regions Research Laboratory in Hanover, NH.

What if I break through the ice?

1. **Don't panic.**
2. Move or swim back to the place you fell in – where you know the ice was solid.
3. Lay both arms on the unbroken ice and kick hard. This will help lift your body onto the ice. A set of ice picks can aid you in a self-rescue. Wear them around your neck or put them in an easily accessible pocket. If you fall in, the spikes will give you added grip on the ice.
4. Roll away from the hole until you reach solid ice.



*“Thick and blue, tried and true
Thin and crispy, way too risky”*



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If the ice along the shoreline is cracked or squishy, stay off. Sun-warmed rocks can weaken surrounding ice.



HANNAH CLEMENTS PHOTO

Exercise extreme caution when using a bobsled on the ice.

What if my buddy breaks through the ice?

1. **Don't rush over to the hole.** Keep yourself safe. There is no need to have two victims in the water.
2. Look for something you can throw or use to reach out to the person – a rope, branch or ice spud.
3. Lie down flat and reach out with your tool or form a human chain.
4. After securing the person, **don't stand** – wiggle backwards to the solid ice.

The victim may need artificial respiration, CPR or treatment for hypothermia (cold exposure). Cover the victim with a warm blanket or extra clothing and seek medical assistance immediately.