

Gloves are not an accessory to overlook

By Kathryn Reed

Every element of outdoor wear is important. Hours can be spent researching the best skis and boots. But seldom is the same amount of time and effort given to finding the best accessories.

Gloves often fall into the category – they fit, I’ll buy them. And while fit is a huge component, there are more things to consider when choosing the fabric to protect your digits.

“When a glove fits you are going to want to be able to pinch in front of the fingers. You don’t want it so tight because blood flow won’t reach the end of the finger,” Lindsay Thayer, marketing manager at Tahoe Dave’s in Kings Beach, said.



Gloves are an important accessory for skiers.

Then there is the question whether gloves or mittens are better. Mittens were the overwhelming response for kids. It’s easier to get them on and often they are warmer.

The warmth factor is also why adults like mittens. They are recommended for people with poor circulation or those who always are complaining about cold hands.

“All the fingers get to snuggle together,” is how Thayer explained it to *Lake Tahoe News*.

A hybrid of a glove and mitten is the lobster claw. The index finger and thumb are separate from the other three fingers. This allows for more dexterity.

“What you want is balance between warmth, dexterity and waterproofness,” explained Matt Gibely, glove guru at Alpenglow Sports in Tahoe City.

He said it’s important to have gloves for each sport – downhill, Nordic and backcountry.

Dexterity is not critical for most people skiing the slopes of Lake Tahoe. A glove with waterproofing material, along the lines of Gore-Tex, is recommended. The waterproof layer is usually not the outer shell, but instead goes in between the shell and the warming layer.

Synthetic insulation will not be affected by moisture as much as down.

“Nordic gloves are a whole different animal. Those tend to breath very well because Nordic skiers are exerting energy the whole time,” Gibely told *Lake Tahoe News*.

As with most gear, the price for a pair of gloves is all over the board. *Ski* magazine in September came out with its top six picks. They ranged in price from \$40 to \$375.

Dave Salazar, salesman at Sports Ltd. in South Lake Tahoe, said heated gloves are the most expensive – topping out at about \$400. A battery makes the gloves warm; then there are settings to adjust the amount of heat.

Salazar and Thayer are proponents of the one-time use hand warmers. But don’t put them in your palm because the blood does not circulate there. Use the compartment on top of your glove – that’s what it’s there for – not your money or a key.

The top of your hand is where the blood is circulating and what you want heated so the warmth reaches your fingertips.