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knit hats to keep you warm



1
Kate Spade glasses knit hat, \$68, katespade.com and retail stores



2
Add a cool detail such as a zipper. **Kate Spade** beanie, \$78, katespade.com and retail stores



3
Diane von Furstenberg Lola wool hat with fur pom, \$168, dvf.com



4
Forever 21 chunky-knit, rolled-hem, purl beanie, \$9.90, forever21.com and retail stores



5
Go with embellishments like this **Markus Lupfer** flower beanie, \$239.11, farfetch.com



6
Tory Burch cashmere multicolor hat, \$195, toryburch.com and retail stores
— Chicago Tribune



STAY WARM IN STYLE

The perfect coats, hats and boots to keep you warm and dry

Down or synthetic?

Why you need to know what's inside your coat

BY DANIELLE BRAFF
Chicago Tribune

We've all been told that sticks and stones can break our bones but words will never hurt us. But there are times when labels are very important.

Reading the label of a winter coat before buying could mean the difference between just surviving a bone-chillingly awful winter and playing contentedly in a delightful white wonderland.

Two winter coats might look exactly the same, but their labels will tell you otherwise.

Here's the definitive guide to everything you need to know about winter coats — and how to choose the correct one for your climate.

Down vs. synthetic

There are two key categories of insulation — down and synthetic — said Woody Blackford, vice president of design and innovation at Columbia Sportswear Co.

“On one hand, down



Shutterstock

Two winter coats might look the same, but their insides tell a different story in below-zero temps.

is expensive but has set the industry standard for lightweight, comfortable insulation and has been relied upon for years, despite issues with clumping when wet,” Blackford said. “Synthetic insulation, on the other hand, offers an alternative to down and excels with wet weather performance but doesn't offer the same degree of loft.”

Water-resistant down

A down coat, by its nature, is not water-resistant, said A.J.

Curran, director of outerwear for Columbia Sportswear Co.

“That's been traditionally the biggest downfall of down,” he said.

But in the last few years, water-resistant treatments have been added to down coats. If you live in an area where moisture is a big concern, such as Seattle, you're better off with a synthetic coat because the water-resistant treatment of a down coat won't be enough.

But for everyone else,

it's a good investment to get a down coat that has been treated.

The details on fill power

Keep fill power in mind when looking at a down coat, said Dawn Levy, director of design at Dawn Levy.

“The higher fill power down — anywhere from 650 to 850 — allows for better warmth-to-weight ratios, ensuring that you're protected from harsh temperatures.”

So higher is better when it comes to down fill power, Levy said.

Percentages

The greater the percentage of down, the better, Curran said.

“If you see that a coat is 5 percent down, then it's not a down coat. It really should be a 100 percent [down] coat.”

Curran said that he struggles with coats that are 50 percent down because they are only half as warm as a down coat — and they still won't keep you protected in the rain.

He suggested going with 100 percent — either with a synthetic coat or with a down coat.

Synthetic warmth rating

Synthetic coats are rated by grams of insulation.

A very lightweight coat would be 60 grams, and this would be suitable for a spring, summer, fall or warm winter day, Curran said.

A winter coat should be 150 grams or higher (they go to about 200 grams).

7

chic and practical winter boots



1
Frye Jamie Italian leather with rabbit fur-lined luxe moto boot \$438, www.thefryecompany.com



2
Sperry for J.Crew shearwater rubber-sole and fleece-lined, quilted boots, \$140, www.jcrew.com



3
Santana Canada Montreaux boot with waterproof rubber sole and faux-fur lining, \$228.95, www.nordstrom.com



4
United Nude Collection water-resistant rubber and faux-fur snow boot, \$395, www.nordstrom.com



5
Sorel Cate the Great waterproof wedge boot, \$260, www.sorel.com



6
Sorel 1964 premium wedge waterproof, full-grain leather and coated-canvas boot, \$220, www.sorel.com



7
Ugg Australia Blayre II water-resistant, leather and sheepskin buckled boots, \$200, www.uggaustralia.com

— Jessica Moazami, Chicago Tribune

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