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**Press Release 16th October 2024**

**How well do you know your head torch?**

**Why mastering this essential bit of kit is the key to epic winter adventures**

As the days grow shorter and the clocks go back at the end of the month, mountain safety experts are asking outdoor enthusiasts, just how well do you know your head torch?

Whether you’ve intended to be out in the dark or not, it’s easy to underestimate journeys in the colder months and, if it does get dark, you’re going to need more than just the light on your phone to get yourself safely home. A fully charged head torch, spare and extra batteries are essential additions to your outdoor kit, but you also need to feel confident using them.

Senior Mountain Safety Advisor, Mountaineering Scotland said “Navigating in the dark with a head torch is very different from navigating during the day, requiring a higher level of navigation skills. Preparation is key. Familiarising yourself with your headtorch at home—learning its features, such as different brightness levels, how far and wide it illuminates the ground around you, battery-saving modes – and practicing using it in a safe environment, like your back garden or local park, will mean you feel more confident when it comes to actually being out on the hill in the dark.”

Inspector Matt Smith, Police Scotland lead for Mountain Rescue said, “Knowing how to use a headtorch isn’t just about seeing the path in front of you —it’s also about being seen if you’re lost or injured. A bright, flashing headtorch can greatly aid mountain rescue teams in locating you”.

Proper storage is also important. Keep your headtorch in a waterproof bag and place it somewhere easily accessible, so you can retrieve it before darkness falls. And remember, gloves can make operating a headtorch more challenging, so practice turning it on and off and switching between settings while wearing them.

If you’re looking to build your confidence with night navigation, Glenmore Lodge and Mountaineering Scotland run Night Navigation courses throughout October and November. To find out more, visit: [www.glenmorelodge.org.uk](http://www.glenmorelodge.org.uk) and [www.mountaineering.scot](http://www.mountaineering.scot).

To find out more about the annual ThinkWINTER campaign, visit the landing page [here](https://mailchi.mp/glenmorelodge.org.uk/thinkwinter) and keep up to date with all the latest news using the hashtag #ThinkWINTER.

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**Notes to Editors:**

**Images and videos**

* Download an image to illustrate this story [here](https://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/Getting_to_know_your_head_torch_-_Mountaineering_Scotland.jpg)
* Watch our ‘Getting to know your head torch’ Reel [here](https://www.instagram.com/p/DBLrJGvi4hf/)

**For further information, quotes, and images, please contact:**

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**Trusted information sources for winter mountaineering include:**

**General mountaineering information:**

* [www.mountaineering.scot/safety-and-skills/thinkwinter](https://www.mountaineering.scot/safety-and-skills/thinkwinter) – planning, decision making, equipment, skills and more.

**Skills courses and training:**

* Mountaineering Scotland: [www.mountaineering.scot/safety-and-skills/courses-and-events/courses](http://www.mountaineering.scot/safety-and-skills/courses-and-events/courses)
* Glenmore Lodge: [www.glenmorelodge.org.uk/winter-mountain/](http://www.glenmorelodge.org.uk/winter-mountain/)
* Mountain Training’s winter qualifications: Winter Mountain Leader, Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor. More info: [www.mountain-training.org](http://www.mountain-training.org)

**Avalanche and weather information:**

* Scottish Avalanche Information Service: [www.sais.gov.uk/](http://www.sais.gov.uk/)
* Free training in avalanche awareness for hill walkers and climbers: [Be Avalanche Aware](https://be-avalanche-aware.teachable.com/p/be-avalanche-aware)
* Mountain Weather Information Service: [www.mwis.org.uk/](http://www.mwis.org.uk/)
* Met Office Mountain forecasts: [www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/specialist-forecasts/mountain](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/specialist-forecasts/mountain)

**Information for editors:**

**Mountaineering Scotland**

Mountaineering Scotland is the membership and representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and ski tourers in Scotland, with a membership of 16,000 individual and club members and 150 affiliated clubs. We aim to inspire and encourage people to enjoy the benefits of walking, climbing and ski touring and provide information and skills training to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and responsible access in Scotland’s mountains and climbing venues. [www.mountaineering.scot](http://www.mountaineering.scot)

**Scottish Mountain Rescue**

Scottish Mountain Rescue (SMR) represents 25 Mountain Rescue Teams (MRTs) made up of highly trained volunteers. We also represent three Police Scotland MRTs and one RAF MRT. The teams are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to respond to emergencies and carry out a specialist search and rescue service in the mountains and remote communities in Scotland to keep people safe and help people if and when they get into difficulty. [www.scottishmountainrescue.org](http://www.scottishmountainrescue.org).

**Mountain Training**

Mountain Training Scotland is the awarding organisation for mountaineering leadership qualifications and skills courses in Scotland. Mountain Training Scotland is part of the Mountain Training network, a member of Mountain Training UK and Ireland, and leads on mountain safety matters in Scotland. Mountain Training Scotland’s [Winter Mountain Leader](https://www.mountain-training.org/qualifications/walking/winter-mountain-leader) qualification builds on the Mountain Leader qualification to train and assess candidates to lead groups on winter walks in the mountains in winter conditions. [www.mountain-training.org](http://www.mountain-training.org)

**Glenmore Lodge**

Glenmore Lodge is Scotland’s National Outdoor Training Centre. For 75 years it has delivered skills training and qualifications enabling individuals to discover their potential in the outdoors safely and responsibly. Offering over 250 courses across a range of disciplines and for all ability levels, Glenmore Lodge works to support and enable the continued growth and development of Scotland’s outdoor community by working with our partners in the sector. [www.glenmorelodge.org.uk](http://www.glenmorelodge.org.uk)

**Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland**

Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Scottish Mountain Bike Strategy and delivering many of the actions within it. We are proud to be part of Scottish Cycling. [www.dmbins.com](http://www.dmbins.com)

**Snowsport Scotland**

Snowsport Scotland is appointed by sportscotland (the National Agency for sport) to act as the Scottish Governing Body (SGB) for snowsports in Scotland. As such we work in partnership with like-minded organisations to encourage more participation in snowsports and to develop and support our best athletes to perform on the world stage. [www.snowsportscotland.org](http://www.snowsportscotland.org)

**Scottish Avalanche Information Service**

The Scottish Avalanche Information Service (SAIS) provides daily forecasts of the avalanche hazard for the six most popular areas of Scotland during the most popular period of the winter season. [www.sais.gov.uk](http://www.sais.gov.uk)

**Police Scotland**

Police Scotland’s purpose is to improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland. This focuses on keeping people safe in line with our values of integrity, fairness and respect. [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)