



Press Release

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For immediate release

#ThinkWINTER in the mountains

How to get the best out of your hill trips this winter

Mountaineering organisations have teamed up to help those who love to walk, climb or ski get the best out of Scotland's mountains this winter.

The ThinkWINTER campaign understands the great attraction and challenges of winter in the Scottish Mountains and aims to inspire and encourage people to read up and 'up-skill' to meet those challenges, to achieve their aspirations and make the magic happen.

A joint venture by Mountaineering Scotland, Scottish Mountain Rescue, Glenmore Lodge and Mountain Training Scotland, ThinkWINTER aims to get across the message that getting the best from Scotland's winter mountains depends on being well prepared and having a flexible approach to planning and what happens on the day.

Throughout the winter social media posts will go out on Facebook, twitter and Instagram with the hashtag #ThinkWINTER, with advice and tips on winter mountaineering.

Heather Morning, Mountain Safety Adviser with Mountaineering Scotland, said: "We all love to get out and enjoy Scotland's Mountains in winter when they can reward us with some truly magical and memorable experiences. The ThinkWINTER campaign is all about making this happen by encouraging people to improve their skills and knowledge so they can enjoy the magic of Scotland's winter mountains safely."

Many of Scotland's mountains are serious undertakings, particularly so in winter conditions, and will require skills and equipment beyond those needed for normal summer hill walking.

ThinkWINTER recommends that people new to winter mountaineering should first make sure their navigation and hillcraft skills are up to scratch under summer conditions and then look to develop those skills so that they are ready for the added challenges of winter. Organisations such as

Mountaineering Scotland and Glenmore Lodge, and individuals with Mountain Training's winter qualifications run specific winter navigation courses, winter skills and avalanche awareness courses to help people learn and refresh their skills.

Damon Powell, Chairman of Scottish Mountain Rescue, the umbrella organisation for most mountain rescue teams in Scotland, said: "Do go out into the outdoors and enjoy Scotland's mountains when many would say they are at their finest, but do it safely with the appropriate skills and equipment, as highlighted in the #ThinkWINTER campaign."

Shaun Roberts, Principal of Glenmore Lodge, Scotland's National Outdoor Training Centre, said: "One of the best things you can do to prepare for a winter day on the hill is to spend a little time getting prepared now. So gather all your winter kit from its hibernation and think, is it all there? A bit of time now will ensure you can focus on the forecast, conditions and planning for your day."

Mountain Training oversees walking and climbing qualifications in the UK and Ireland. Mountain Training Scotland's Executive Officer, George McEwan, said: "We develop leaders, instructors and coaches who are able to manage hazards, make decisions and facilitate the safe enjoyment of mountain activities for others. Our candidates are part of the mechanism of developing good safe practice and #ThinkWINTER is an opportunity to join with other organisations to share that good practice as far and wide as possible."

Heather Morning added: "With so much information now available online and on social media, we want to make sure people know how to access accurate and up to date information to help them plan and enjoy their winter adventures."

Trusted information sources for winter mountaineering include:

General mountaineering information:

www.mountaineering.scot/activities/thinkwinter – our guide to planning, decision making, equipment, winter skills and more.

Skills courses and training:

Mountaineering Scotland: www.mountaineering.scot/safety-and-skills/courses-and-events/courses

Glenmore Lodge: 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

Avalanche and weather information:

Scottish Avalanche Information Service: www.sais.gov.uk/

Mountain Weather Information Service: www.mwis.org.uk/

Met Office mountain forecasts: www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/specialist-forecasts/mountain

Information about Mountain Rescue:

www.scottishmountainrescue.org/

Ends

Notes for editors:

Image: A classic winter's day in the Highlands. The Ring of Steall, in Lochaber. Photo by Duncan Gray.

http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/ThinkWINTER_photo_by_Duncan_Gray_reduced.jpg

Further information contact:

Neil Reid, Communications Officer, on 01738 493941 or 07444545293 or neil@mountaineering.scot