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## HOW TO DRESS FOR ICELAND

### Climate:

Thanks to the Gulf Stream, Iceland enjoys a cool temperate maritime climate: cool in summer and fairly mild in winter. However, the weather is very changeable and tourists should be prepared for the unexpected. In Iceland, normal day-temperatures during the summer usually are between 12 and 18 °C, although it can be warmer. In the highlands however, it can be colder than that, even in summer. Often, the temperatures there go down to only a few degrees above 0°C. Iceland is also a very windy place. It's very important to remember this when you're packing!

### Weather & Clothing:

For weather information in English, Tel.: 902-0600 Extension 1

E-mail: [office@vedur.is](mailto:office@vedur.is)

Website: [www.en.vedur.is](http://www.en.vedur.is)

### Necessary Basics:

- Clothes for warm weather (shorts, t-shirt, blouse).
- Clothes for cold weather: warm trousers, a woolen pullover or fleece sweater, a wind-jacket and waterproofs.
- It never harms to bring a hat, scarf, and gloves if you don't like cold weather and strong winds.
- Sturdy boots that are comfortable to walk in are also very useful. If you don't bring waterproof shoes, rubber boots are perhaps a good idea.
- Your swim-suit is essential, since there's a lot of natural hot water in Iceland, which is used to fill swimming pools – so you find swimming pools all over, even a few very natural ones!
- Binoculars, especially if you're a bird watcher!
- Sun glasses can come in handy, since the air is very clear in Iceland so if the sun shines, it shines brightly. Therefore, sun-protection lotion can be very useful too.
- For travel in the summer months (May-September) pack an insect repellent, especially if visiting the Lake Myvatn area in the north, where there are a lot of the small black flies (midges). There are no mosquitoes in Iceland, so ensure you buy a repellent that is effective against black flies/midges.
- For those who take pictures: bring enough film or memory cards (many people say they shoot twice as many pictures in Iceland, as what they are used to on other holidays!).
- A small alarm clock can be very practical, since not all hotels offer wake-up calls.
- If you like a drink every now and then, it can be very practical to bring your own (tax-free from the airport!) because alcoholic beverages are expensive in Iceland. The same applies to tobacco. Travellers are allowed to bring 1 liter of strong liquor as well as 1 liter of wine or similar drinks into the country, and 1 carton of cigarettes.

### Additional Activities Recommendations:

- For cold weather: a woolen pullover or fleece sweater, a warm wind-jacket, woolen socks and even thermo underwear.
- Hat, scarf, and gloves.
- Comfortable footwear and a pair of very good walking boots, well broken in before arrival are indispensable for walking tours.
- Hiking poles (sticks) can be helpful.
- Rainwear is necessary and rubber boots can be very, very useful when it's raining! Rainwear should be waterproof, not just water resistant!
- Bring a small back-pack for the daily walks, to carry your camera, binoculars, sun glasses, lunch package, rainwear and personal items.



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**Iceland** isn't as cold as its name implies, but it's not exactly a tropical paradise either. In summer, low temps range from 5-8 °C with highs between 10 and 13 °C (which means you can generally expect temps between 45 and 55°F). But Iceland's weather can fluctuate wildly and a warm sunny day can quickly become chilly and wet. Add in the fact that Reykjavik is known for its forward-thinking fashionistas while you'll also need certain gear for outdoor activities, and figuring out what to pack and wear in Iceland becomes a more daunting task.

### **Packing Tips for Iceland:**

#### **Pack for activities first!**

Start by figuring out what you'll be doing on your trip to Iceland. Most outdoor activities (horseback riding, spelunking, hiking, glacier walking, etc.) will require basically the same gear: heeled boots, such as hiking boots, moisture-wicking socks, long pants, and t-shirts. You'll also want a lightweight, waterproof but breathable shell for rainy or misty days, and a few wool (not cotton) or fleece sweaters for cooler days and evenings. If you're coming from a very warm climate, you might even feel more comfortable with a hat, scarf, and gloves at night, though the Icelanders running around rejoicing in the warmth might look at you a little funny.

#### **Add in some "city clothes"**

In Reykjavik and Akureyri, the only unifying theme of fashion is "unique." It's all about personal style, from the frilly dresses and stiletto heels you'd expect to find in New York and London to the hippie-chic styles you might imagine as the norm in any modern city. What you won't find is anything boring and basic – no plain jeans, white t-shirts and sneakers here. Dressing for Reykjavik isn't about changing your personal style, but it is about taking it to the next level. Though, if you plan on going on the weekend Runtur, you'll want to add a few dressier items to your wardrobe. Women generally wear heels and dress/skirt or jeans with trendy tops. Men wear tailored dark jeans and button-up shirts, or even dark pants and sport coats. For footwear, men usually sport loafers or Converse, while women wear anything from high-heeled boots to open-toed stilettos to fashionable flats.

#### **Be prepared for anything**

A day that starts out rainy and cold can become warm and sunny by mid-afternoon (and vice versa) and when it's pleasant in the city it may be frigid twenty minutes away, so always plan on wearing layers and bring ready for a range of conditions. A light, breathable, waterproof shell jacket that can be layered with a wool sweater or cardigan, a scarf and hat will prove invaluable. And don't forget the bathing suit. Icelanders love swimming and there is a municipal pool in nearly every town. Admission prices are generally just a few bucks, though the rental of a bathing suit is a bit more, so you may as well bring your own. Visiting one of these hot spring pools is one of the best ways to experience Icelandic culture, so be sure to come prepared for a soak.

### **Land of the Midnight Sun:**

During summer the nights are bright all over Iceland. In the month of June the sun never fully sets in the north. There are even special excursions to the island of Grímsey on the Arctic Circle where you can experience the midnight sun. Bear in mind, however, that the sun at midnight is not as warm as at midday, so bring along a sweater.