

GOTTA HAVE GEAR

PEAKWOOL BASE AND MIDLAYERS FROM STIO | Review by Christina Yao

Wearing the right base layers is similar to a home's foundation: built properly, it can mean the difference between a reliable structure and one that collapses in a windstorm. Images from "The Three Little Pigs" keep coming to mind, but strong winds are no fairy tale. I learned that Wyoming gets its share of gale force winds during a recent road trip from Denver to Jackson last December, and it gave me the chance to try my Stio base layers.

I tested the Stio Basis PeakWool Crew and Half Zip while catching scenic views in teeth-chattering 50MPH winds, and on drizzly days while casting for trout in a myriad of jaw-droppingly beautiful mountain creeks. Not only did I stay warm and dry, I was keenly aware of how cozy and soft Stio's proprietary merino wool blend felt against my skin.

The base layer is a form-fitting, next-to-skin design with a smaller neck to optimize body temperature retention. The crew is light and thin enough to layer easily, allowing you to customize the layers and optimize comfort based on your outdoor activity.

I pulled on the Stio Midweight Half Zip over the base to lock in a solid foundation that I could then finish with a wind-proof rain jacket. Together, they weighed less than a pound! The Midweight Half Zip is a double-knit jersey with a structured collar that's also a merino wool blend, which is among the best for odor control; after a full day of sweating in them, I'm grateful I didn't have to hide or change out of my clothes. I also didn't feel damp or hampered since the stretchy material (they've included synthetic fibers in the blended wool) allowed me to move freely while retaining their shape.

The little things go a long way with these Stio garments. Both feature heat-transfer interior labels and flatlock seams that don't itch (yes!), easy thumbholes, and hanger loops on the neck for easy storage. It's not a stretch to say that these features have made the base crew addictive for me. I've started to wear it to bed at home on chilly nights, and on short runs during the balmy spring mornings. The versatility of these base layers makes them reliable when I travel to much cooler climates and comfortable to wear when I'm not.

Cheaper alternatives exist, but Stio's functionality and reliability are top notch — plus you get great color choices, pleasing design aesthetics, and an adorable pinecone logo. Stio may well be worth the higher price tag.



Stio Women's Basis PeakWool Lightweight Crew LS

- 62% RWS-Certified Merino Wool, plus synthetics
- Weight: 5.6 oz. (size S)
- Available in Abyss (shown here), Neon Bloom Heather, Nightfall Heather, and Mountain Shadow Heather

MSRP US\$109

Stio Women's Basis PeakWool Midweight Half Zip

- Double knit; 56% Merino Wool with synthetics
- Weight: 10.1 oz. (size S)
- Available in Magnet Heather (shown here), Mountain Shadow, and Cedar Blush

MSRP US\$159

Website: www.stio.com

Available from the Stio website, some retailers, and from any of Stio's 14 Mountain Studios