

20) SALOMON STH 16

In the late '70s Salomon introduced the 727, a binding capable of absorbing lots of shock without popping you out prematurely. The design was such a success that its legacy lives in this season's freeride-oriented STH 16. Even with your DIN at your recommended setting, you can hit a cat track in flat light without walking out of your boards at 35 miles an hour. And they still go *clunk* when you step in. —S.B. [\$475; salomonski.com]

21) ARC'TERYX KNEE CAPS

Banging your knee on a stump or submerged rock is a season ender, whether you're a freeheeler or not. The Knee Caps fit snugly under your pants, don't slip, and help wick moisture from that sweat pit behind your knees. —M.M. [\$59; arcteryx.com]

22) BLACK DIAMOND RAVEN PRO

You're ready to take down that line you've been eyeing all season. But the ascent is 1,000 vertical feet of frozen corn. If you take a digger, you'll need something to arrest yourself on your slide toward death. This is it. Lightweight and durable and made for ski mountaineering, the Raven Pro ice ax offers comfort in no-fall situations. —MARK LESH [\$100; bdel.com]

23) PATAGONIA R1 FLASH

We're fans of this stretchy, breathable midlayer because of its welded pocket, offset front zipper (read: no chin scratch), and astounding versatility. All that, and this year, it's made from used soda bottles and secondhand clothes. —M.M. [\$115; patagonia.com]

24) CASIO G'ZONE

Casio's G'zOne is water-resistant, shock-absorbent, and GPS-enabled (but only when you get service). It shoots pictures and takes video. The only thing it doesn't do is make using it on the lift acceptable. —R.O. [\$150; casiogzone.com]



25) HARDWARE-STORE WORK GLOVES

I got my first pair of Kinco gloves the winter I worked for the Squaw Valley Race Department. I was one of two girls on a motley staff of bearded, slightly overweight former ski racers who drank PBR in the locker room after every shift. We all wore the same pigskin work gloves that we slathered with water-repellent treatment and baked in the oven to ensure they'd stay dry. And they did—even when I hauled gates in the rain. They kept my fingers warm when I dug bamboo poles out of three feet of dense snow with my hands. I could leave them on while operating the timing system or eating my peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich, just like everybody else. And if I accidentally lost them on the mountain, it wasn't a big deal. I'd go to the hardware store and throw down another 24 bucks. The Kinco 901 gloves—with the reinforced leather patches on the palms and fingers—made me feel tough. Like I fit in. Even though I didn't. —Megan Michelson [\$24; kinco.com]



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