

18 Fun Outdoor Winter Activities for Kids & Adults

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Every year, around this time, I start dreaming of warmer climates. Images of sunshine, bare feet, and tropical thunderstorms haunt my daydreams. And I know I'm not the only one.

Whether you battle [Seasonal Affective Disorder symptoms](#) or just get a mild case of the winter “blahs,” chances are – unless you live in Maui or Miami – you're not getting outdoors as much as you should.

I for one hate being shut inside with the windows closed, but I also don't like being cold. So, I'll admit, it's hard to drag myself out for fresh air and exercise. And here in Michigan (and other northern climates), winter lasts a very long time. So, it's important – for our health and sanity – to find some fun excuses to get outside.

There are so many benefits to doing so: being active outdoors is a good way to [cut calories and lose weight](#), the fresh air makes us feel better, and it's a lot more fun and inexpensive than [watching TV or surfing the Internet](#) all day.

Be Prepared for the Cold

If you want to enjoy yourself, then make sure you won't freeze outside. Don't just head out in sneakers, jeans and a sweater under your coat. Think layers. Wear thermal leggings and several layers under your sweater. Wear a hat and gloves. If you're not cold and uncomfortable, you're more likely to have fun and not run back inside after 5 minutes. It'll also help prevent you from having to come up with [natural cold and flu remedies and treatment](#).

18 Winter Fun Ideas

Here are 18 fun (and cheap) outdoor activities to get you motivated.

1. Go ice skating.
2. Build a winter bonfire and make s'mores.
3. Rent some snowshoes and go snowshoeing.
4. If you have the equipment, go winter camping. If that's too ambitious, check out your state parks for cabin or yurt rentals. Once you're there, go on beautiful winter hikes (afterwards, a cozy fire is in order).
5. Take your dog for a walk. It's one of the main [benefits of having and owning a dog](#).
6. Go cross-country skiing.
7. Attend a dog-sled race. You don't have to live in Alaska to see one of these – check your state's Department of Natural Resources page, they usually have a list of upcoming events.
8. Go sledding.
9. Build a fort and have a snowball fight with your kids (or your spouse/partner). Or buy a [snow block maker](#) and build an igloo.
10. Take a blanket and a cup of hot cocoa and sit outside on your front porch swing.
11. Shovel paths in the snow.
12. Feed the birds or go birdwatching. Make your own birdfeeders out of pine cones, peanut butter, and birdseed.
13. Go ice fishing.
14. Go on a winter picnic. Take blankets, sandwiches and hot soup in a thermos. This might give you some [fun, cheap date ideas for couples](#) as well.
15. Head out on a photo expedition to take pictures of the winter landscape.
16. If you live near a big city, set off on foot to explore it! You might want to check out some of the [group buying daily deals sites](#) like [Groupon](#) and [LivingSocial](#) to find new things to do in the area for cheap too.
17. Have kids or dogs? Set up an obstacle course in the yard with jumps, tunnels and other challenges.
18. Make snow paint. Simply add food coloring to water and put in a spray bottle, then go out and paint your yard!

Get out and Play!!!