



# THE WILD YEAR

## WINTER RHYTHM





# **The Wild Year: Winter Rhythm**

**A gentle seasonal guide for families to move through winter  
with presence, rhythm, and connection**

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The Largest Nature School In Texas**

# Welcome Letter

Hello and welcome,

I'm so grateful you're here. My name is Lindsay, and as both a mother and the founder of the largest nature school in Texas, I created this guide with so much care. Winter has always been one of the most meaningful seasons to me, and I wanted to share a way for families to experience it with more connection, presence, and wonder.

Winter has a purpose in nature. For generations, people have understood it as a season for resting, reconnecting, and turning inward. Indigenous communities have long viewed winter as a time of reflection and storytelling, a time to honor ancestors, gather close, and let the land teach through the quiet. The Winter Solstice marks the long night when we pause, breathe, and welcome the slow return of the sun. Winter doesn't ask for more from us. It asks for less. Less noise, less rushing, more noticing and warmth.

Children need this season more than we realize. They need space to be free, gentle moments of reflection, and simple experiences that help them feel grounded and connected to the world around them. They need the kind of slow magic winter naturally offers: a quiet walk at dusk, a warm drink after being outside, the wonder of seeing what changes from one morning to the next.

This guide is an invitation to return to that kind of winter. To offer your child small, meaningful rituals and nature moments that help them grow a deep sense of wonder, calm, and belonging. Everything inside is simple and doable. The ideas are designed to support you, not overwhelm you. You don't need perfection or elaborate plans. Just presence, curiosity, and a willingness to step outside with your child and notice what the season is offering.

My promise is that this guide will help you create a winter that feels intentional and memorable. A winter filled with gentle traditions, meaningful play, and quiet moments your child will carry into the rest of their life. I'm honored to share it with you, and I hope it brings beauty and ease to your season.

Warmly,

Lindsay Gkolomeev

Founder, The Wild School

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# How to Use This Guide

This guide is a simple, seasonal way to give your child a calm, cozy, nature-rooted winter.

It helps you move through the season with intention - spending time outside, playing in nature, creating small comforting rhythms, sharing stories, and slowing the pace of your days together.

You don't need experience with nature play.

You don't need special supplies.

You don't need to do this perfectly.

You are simply offering your child a few intentional moments each week.

That is more than enough.

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## What is this Guide?

The heart of this guide is a **12-week winter plan** designed to help you move through the season slowly and intentionally with your child.

Each week follows the same gentle **weekly rhythm**, so nothing feels overwhelming or complicated. What changes are the themes, activities, and adventures as winter unfolds.

You can use this guide in one of two ways:

- follow the **Winter Rhythm Plan**, where each week is already filled in for you, or
  - create your own winter plan by **filling the weekly rhythm with activities from the Winter Nature Library**.
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## The Winter Weekly Rhythm

Each week follows the same gentle structure. The activities change, but the rhythm stays the same - so children feel grounded and parents don't have to reinvent anything.

Each winter week includes:

- a seasonal theme
- a themed nature walk
- two outdoor activities
- a winter craft or project
- a winter ritual or tradition
- a book of the week
- Recipe of the week
- a short materials checklist

You don't need to do everything in one week.  
These are offerings, not obligations.

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## Choosing Your Winter Plan

There are two simple ways to use the winter plan.  
Both work. Choose what feels easiest in this season of life.

### Option 1: Follow the 12 Week Done For Your Winter Rhythm Plan

This is the most supportive option.

The **Winter Rhythm Plan** is a fully done-for-you 12-week plan. Each week is already filled in, so you can simply open the guide and follow along.

The activities are chosen based on the seasonal theme and arranged to create a steady, predictable flow through winter.

Choose this option if you:

- want minimal planning
- feel busy or mentally full
- want a clear, consistent winter plan
- prefer guidance without decision-making

You can follow the plan exactly as written or gently adjust it to fit your days.

### Option 2: Create Your Own Weekly Plan

If you prefer more flexibility, you can create your own winter plan using the same weekly rhythm.

With this option, you'll fill the weekly rhythm with activities from the **Winter Nature Library**, choosing what fits your child, your schedule, and your energy.

Choose this option if you:

- want to follow your child's interests
- need flexibility week to week
- enjoy choosing your own activities
- want to repeat favorites or skip weeks

The rhythm stays the same. You decide how full each week feels.

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## **Where Do I Start?**

Winter is a season, not a schedule.

In nature, winter lasts about twelve weeks, beginning with the **Winter Solstice** and ending as we approach the **Spring Equinox**. This guide follows that natural arc.

If you are using the done-for-you 12-week plan, start with **Week 1: Winter Solstice Week**, then move forward one week at a time.

If you are opening this guide later in the season, that's completely fine. You can begin on any week that fits where you are right now.

There are no dates and no deadlines.

The weeks follow the feeling of winter, not a calendar.

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## **Is it Safe To Be Outside in Winter?**

Yes - it is safe to be outdoors in winter.

When done thoughtfully, being outside in winter is not only safe, it is deeply beneficial. Winter play is meant to happen in real weather, not only on perfect days.

Children benefit from spending time outside in:

- cold air
- rain
- wind
- mud
- overcast or gray days

As long as conditions are safe, we encourage getting outside often.

Stay indoors only during:

- thunder or lightning
- wind greater than 30 mph
- extreme weather warnings
- any conditions that feel unsafe

Cold, rain, and mess do not automatically mean unsafe.

They are a natural part of winter - and part of how children learn to navigate the world with confidence.

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## **Optional Winter Extras**

Beyond the weekly rhythm, this guide includes a few optional extras you can use when they feel meaningful. These are not required. They are here to deepen the season when you want to slow down a little more.

### **Winter Memory Book**

Included as an optional extra is a **Winter Memory Book** - a gentle place to collect pieces of your winter together.

You can use the memory book weekly, occasionally, or only once or twice during the season.

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## **Additional Extras**

Also included:

- **Winter Solstice Celebration Guide**
  - **Outdoor Dressing Guide**
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## **A Final Note**

You do not need to:

- do something every day
- complete every activity
- follow the guide perfectly

Most families:

- do one small activity a day or every few days
- take the nature walk when it fits
- save crafts for slower afternoons
- read the same book all week
- repeat what their child loves

Missing days does not break the rhythm.

This guide is not a checklist.

It is a seasonal rhythm meant to support real life.

Use the plan that feels easiest.

Adjust as needed.

Let winter unfold slowly.

That is where the magic lives.

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# **The 12-Week Winter Rhythm Plan**

**This is the weekly guided path. Follow this weekly plan through to completion.**

<b>WEEK 1:</b> WINTER SOLSTICE WEEK	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	The Shortest Day (Susan Cooper), Winter: A Solstice Story					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Winter Solstice Lantern  Solstice Centerpiece	Build a Winter Solstice Spiral	Winter Solstice Lantern Walk (Dusk Walk)	Solstice Spiral Walk with Lanterns	Hot Chocolate in the Kelly Kettle	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Winter Solstice Celebration Guide  Countdown to the Solstice Candle Holder					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Matches or lighter  
Water  
Milk or dairy-free milk  
hot chocolate powder  
The Shortest Day by Susan Cooper  
Winter: A Solstice Story  
Kelly Kettle or outdoor-safe kettle  
Fire pit or campfire setup

Glass jar  
Mod Podge  
Paintbrush  
Epsom salt or coarse sea salt  
Twine or string  
Tea light  
Evergreen boughs or branches

<b>WEEK 2:</b> QUIET LISTENING & WINTER SOUNDS	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	Owl Moon – Jane Yolen					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Winter Nature Mobile	Winter Howling at Dusk	Listening Walk (Deer Ears Walk)	Cold Breath Play	Winter Sun Citrus + Cinnamon Tea	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	End-of-Year Reflection Ritual  First Day of the Year Hike					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Lantern or flashlight (for dusk)  
Stick or small branch  
Twine or string  
Pinecones  
Twigs  
Seed pods (optional, if available)

Scissors  
Orange  
Cinnamon sticks  
Whole cloves (optional)  
Water  
Small pot or kettle  
Mugs

<b>WEEK 3:</b> TREES AT REST	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	Winter Is Here – Kevin Henkes					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Clay Impressions of Winter	Adopt-a-Tree Play	Bare Trees & Resting Trees Walk	Evergreen Sensory Play	Baked Oatmeal	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Winter Sit Spot & Nature Journaling					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Clay or play dough  
 Pinecones  
 Bark pieces  
 Leaves (fresh or dried)  
 Pine needles or evergreen needles  
 Small stones  
 Butter or oil  
 Optional add-ins: apples, raisins, nuts  
 Baking dish or pan



Notebook or paper  
 Clipboard (optional)  
 Crayons or pencils  
 Rolled oats  
 Baking powder  
 Cinnamon  
 Salt  
 Eggs (or flax eggs)  
 Milk  
 Maple syrup or brown sugar

<b>WEEK 4:</b> WINTER SHELTERS	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	Bear Snores On – Karma Wilson					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Salt Dough Hedgehogs	Animal Homes in Winter	Winter Shelter & Warmth Walk	Winter Shelter Building	Campfire “Stone Soup” Vegetable Stew	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Campfire or Flame Gathering					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Sticks  
Leaves  
Snow or soil  
Salt dough

Seeds or pine needles  
Fire pit or candle  
Pot  
Root vegetables  
Water or broth

<b>WEEK 5:</b> TRACKING & AWARENESS	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	Over and Under the Snow – Kate Messner					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Animal Track Investigation	Winter Animal Tracking	Animal Signs Walk	Animal Track Investigation	Roasted Chestnuts	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Winter Gratitude Pebbles					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Smooth stones or pebbles  
Washable paint  
Paintbrush  
Cup or jar for water  
Paper towels or rag  
Notebook or paper  
Pencil or crayons

Small bowl or jar (for gratitude pebbles)  
Chestnuts (raw)  
Sharp knife (adult use)  
Pan, skillet, or campfire-safe pan  
Stove, campfire, or hot coals  
Oven mitts or heat-safe gloves  
Over and Under the Snow – Kate Messner

<b>WEEK 6:</b> WHAT STAYS IN ALIVE	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	The Tomten – Astrid Lindgren					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Nature Garland	Try Maple Tree Tapping	Evergreen Walk	Decorate an Outdoor Winter Tree	Traditional Winter Honey Spice Bread	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Candlelit Story Night					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

The Tomten – Astrid Lindgren  
 Evergreen sprigs or clippings  
 Pinecones  
 Twine or string  
 Orange slices (fresh or dried)  
 Maple tree (optional, if available)  
 Maple tap or small drill/spile (optional)  
 Small bucket or jar (for sap)  
 Loaf pan

Candle or lantern  
 Matches or lighter (adult use)  
 Flour  
 Honey  
 Warm spices (cinnamon, ginger, cloves, nutmeg)  
 Eggs  
 Butter or oil  
 Mixing bowl  
 Spoon

<b>WEEK 7:</b> WIND & WEATHER	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	The Snowy Day – Ezra Jack Keats					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Winter Texture Board Painting	Winter Obstacle Course	Wind & Weather Walk	Make Your Own Snow	Campfire Cinnamon Apples	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Hot Drink Ritual					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

The Snowy Day – Ezra Jack Keats  
 Cardboard  
 Glue  
 Natural textures (bark, leaves, sticks, pine needles, stones)  
 Logs or sturdy outdoor objects (for obstacle course)  
 Rocks  
 Snow or mud (if available)  
 Baking soda

Shaving cream  
 Bowl or tray  
 Spoon or hands  
 Apples  
 Butter  
 Cinnamon  
 Knife  
 Cutting board  
 Foil or pan  
 Campfire, oven, or stove

<b>WEEK 8:</b> LIGHT & DARKNESS	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	The Snowman – Raymond Briggs					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Winter Snow Globe	Shadow Flashlight Play	Shadow Flashlight Walk	Campfire Gathering	Campfire Bread on a Stick	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Candlelit Story Night					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Flashlights  
Lantern or battery lantern  
Glass jar with lid  
Water  
Glitter or eggshells  
Clean roasting sticks or skewers  
Fire pit or grill with hot coals  
All-purpose flour

Baking powder  
Salt  
Optional sweetener (sugar or honey)  
Oil or melted butter  
Water  
Mixing bowl  
Spoon

<b>WEEK 9:</b> SLOWING DOWN	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	Snow – Cynthia Rylant					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Salt Dough Winter Ornaments	Winter Picnic	Shadow Flashlight Walk	Winter Texture Play	Roasted Winter Vegetables	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Winter Sit Spot & Nature Journaling					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Salt dough (flour, salt, water)  
Rolling pin  
Cookie cutters or natural objects  
Blanket  
Evergreen branches

Pinecones  
Candle or battery candle  
Root vegetables  
Olive oil  
Baking sheet

<b>WEEK 10:</b> SEASONAL CHANGE	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	Snowflake Bentley – Jacqueline Briggs Martin					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Ice Nature Ornaments	Turn Water Into Ice	Seasonal Change Walk	Ice Breakers	Quick Pickles	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Winter Morning Greeting					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Water  
Shallow pan or bowl  
Jar  
Cucumbers  
Cabbage

Rocks or natural objects  
Vinegar  
Salt  
Vegetables for quick pickling

<b>WEEK 11:</b> GIVING & CARE	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	The Mitten – Jan Brett					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Simple Bird Feeders	Gifts for Forest Friends	Gratitude Walk	Feed the Winter Birds	Gingerbread Soft Cake	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Winter Treasure Jar					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Birdseed  
Pinecones  
Peanut butter  
Twine or string

Small jar  
Milk  
Cocoa powder  
Kettle or pot

<b>WEEK 12:</b> REMEMBERING WINTER	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>	Winter: A Solstice Story – Fiona Waters					
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Winter Pomanders	Winter Nature Museum	Winter Color Walk	Winter Treasure Box	Traditional Winter Spiced Milk	
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>	Sit Spot and Nature Journaling					

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Oranges  
 Whole cloves  
 Twine or ribbon  
 Nature items for museum (pinecones, feathers, bark, stones, dried leaves)  
 Small jars or containers  
 Notebook or paper

Crayons or pencils  
 Jar  
 Milk  
 Spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves)  
 Kettle or pot

# **Create-Your-Own Winter Rhythm Plan**

**You can create your own weekly plans by printing 12 Create-Your-Own Winter Rhythm Templates and filling in the activities of choice from the Winter Rhythm Activity Library.**

<b>WEEK _____</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
<b>BOOK OF THE WEEK</b>						
	<b>CRAFT OR PROJECT</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 1</b>	<b>THEMED NATURE WALK</b>	<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITY 2</b>	<b>RECIPE OF THE WEEK</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>						
<b>TRADITION OR RITUAL</b>						

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

# The Winter Rhythm Activity Library

No matter which option you choose, every rhythm pulls from the same Winter Library:

## Themed Nature Walks

### 1. Winter Solstice Lantern Walk (Dusk Walk)

**Why This Walk Matters:** To help children understand the Winter Solstice as the longest night of the year and feel the quiet turning point when light begins to return.

#### Priming Story

“Tonight is the longest night of the whole year.

The sun has been away from us longer than any other night.

For thousands of years, people have walked with light on this night.

Not to rush the darkness away,

but to honor it.

Tomorrow, the light will begin to return.

Just a little at first.

But it will grow.

Tonight, we walk slowly.

We carry light.

We notice the dark.

And we remember that even in the longest night,

the sun always comes back.”

Pause.

“Let’s walk like keepers of the light.”

**How To Do The Walk:** Walk at dusk as daylight fades. Let the lantern light the path. Notice how darkness arrives, how the air feels, and how light looks different against the night. Move slowly and intentionally.

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## 2. Listening Walk (Deer Ears Walk)

**Why This Walk Matters:** To help children tune deeply into their sense of hearing and experience winter through sound and silence.

### Priming Story

“Winter is a quiet season.

The land speaks more softly now.

Animals know this.

They listen before they move.

They listen to stay safe.

They listen to know where to go.

Today, we’ll listen like deer.

Put your hands behind your ears.

Feel how your hearing changes.

Out here, listening is a skill.

And today, we’re practicing it.”

Pause.

“Let’s walk slowly and let the land speak first.”

**How To Do The Walk:** Begin the walk with deer ears on. Pause often. Try short stretches of silent walking. Let your child lead when they want to stop and listen. Point out distant and nearby sounds without naming everything for them.

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## 3. Bare Trees & Resting Trees Walk

**Why This Walk Matters:** To understand why trees lose their leaves and how winter rest connects to shorter days and less sunlight.

### Priming Story

“Trees don’t lose their leaves because they are weak.

They let them go because they are wise.

In winter, the sun stays away longer.

The nights are longer than the days.

So trees rest.  
They save their energy.

Today, we'll visit the trees while they are resting.  
We'll notice what stays when the leaves are gone.  
The strength.  
The shape.  
The quiet patience."

Pause.  
"Let's walk gently. The trees are sleeping."

**How To Do The Walk:** Observe bare branches, bark, knots, and branching patterns. Trace shapes with your finger. Compare different trees. Let children touch bark and notice textures.

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#### **4. Winter Shelter & Warmth Walk**

**Why This Walk Matters:** To explore how living beings stay warm, protected, and safe in winter.

##### **Priming Story**

"Every animal has a home.  
Not one built for them,  
but one they create using what the land gives.

In winter, staying warm matters.  
Staying dry matters.  
Staying protected matters.

Some animals dig.  
Some tuck themselves under roots.  
Some build with sticks and leaves.

Pause.  
"Let's go and see if we can find any winter shelter today."

**How To Do The Walk:** Look for dense bushes, leaf piles, hollow trees, covered spaces, and wind-protected areas. Let your child crouch, peek inside spaces, and imagine who might rest there.

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## 5. Animal Signs Walk

**Why This Walk Matters:** To notice animal life through signs and traces rather than direct sightings.

### Priming Story

“Winter doesn’t mean animals are gone.  
It means they move differently.  
They leave quiet messages behind.

Tracks in the mud.  
A feather on the ground.  
A branch chewed just a little.

Today, we’re not looking *for* animals.  
We’re listening for their stories.  
We’re learning how to see what they leave behind.”

Pause.

“Let’s walk like trackers and see what the land tells us.”

**How To Do The Walk:** Look for tracks, feathers, chewed bark, nests, scat, or disturbed ground. Avoid correcting guesses. Let imagination and curiosity lead.

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## 6. Evergreen Walk

**Why This Walk Matters:** To notice plants that remain through winter and explore resilience.

### Priming Story

“Most plants rest in winter.  
But some stay awake.  
They stay green when the cold comes.

These plants know something special about winter.  
They know how to hold on.  
How to keep going when others sleep.”

Pause.

“Today, we’re looking for the ones who stay.”

**How To Do The Walk:** Observe pine, cedar, juniper, moss, ivy, or any winter-green plant. Compare textures and scents. Invite gentle touching and smelling.

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## 7. Wind & Weather Walk

**Why This Walk Matters:** To experience winter through the body and senses.

### Priming Story

“Winter isn’t just something we see.  
It’s something we feel.

On our skin.

In our breath.

In the way the air moves around us.”

Pause.

“Today, let’s notice what winter feels like.”

**How To Do The Walk:** Walk during wind, light rain, or overcast weather. Notice moving branches, clouds, breath in the air, and temperature changes.

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## 8. Winter Color Walk

**Why This Walk Matters:** To cultivate appreciation, presence, and a sense of connection to the season through simple noticing.

### Priming Story

“Winter is often quiet.

It doesn’t offer its gifts loudly.

Some gifts are small.  
Some are easy to walk past.  
Some only appear when we slow down enough to notice them.

Winter gives us rest.  
It gives us space.  
It gives us moments of calm we don't always find in busier seasons."

Pause.

"Today, we're not walking to get somewhere.  
We're walking to notice what winter is giving us."

**How To Do The Walk:** Walk slowly with no destination in mind, pausing whenever something draws your child's attention and allowing them to lead what is noticed. Acknowledge their observations simply, and let the moment unfold without teaching or directing - gratitude grows through presence, not performance.

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## 9. Shadow Flashlight Walk

**Why This Walk Matters:** To explore light, shadow, and winter darkness.

### Priming Story

"In winter, the nights grow longer.  
The world changes when the sun goes down.

Light becomes something special.  
It doesn't fill the whole world at once.  
It moves slowly. It reveals small pieces at a time.

Tonight, our light will help us notice what usually stays hidden.  
A shape on the ground.  
A shadow on a tree.  
Something quiet waiting to be seen.

We're not rushing and we're not looking for anything in particular.  
We're simply letting the light guide our eyes.

Let's walk gently and see what the light shows us."

**How To Do The Walk:** Bring flashlights at dusk or after dark. Shine lights on trees, rocks, and the ground. Watch shadows grow, shrink, and move. Let children experiment freely.

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## 10. Winter Rest & Stillness Walk

**Why This Walk Matters:** To notice how winter invites rest, slowness, and conservation of energy in the natural world.

### Priming Story

"In winter, nature rests.

Trees stop growing.

Animals slow down.

The land becomes quieter.

Rest is not doing nothing.

Rest is how living things stay strong.

Today, we're going to walk slowly.

We're going to notice places that feel calm, protected, or still.

This is a listening walk for the whole body."

Pause.

"Let's move like winter moves."

**How To Do The Walk:** Walk slowly and intentionally.

Pause often. Sit when it feels right.

Notice still branches, quiet spaces, sheltered areas, and places where nothing seems to be happening.

Allow silence. Let your child set the pace.

No searching. No collecting. Just being.

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## 11. Seasonal Change Walk

**Why This Walk Matters:** To compare winter to other seasons and build seasonal awareness.

### **Priming Story**

“Every season leaves its mark on the land.  
Some things arrive.  
Some things fade away.  
Some things rest quietly until the right time returns.

Winter doesn’t rush in loudly.  
It changes things slowly.  
Leaves fall.  
Light shifts.  
The land feels more open.

Today, we’re not looking for anything new.  
We’re noticing what’s different now.  
What winter has taken away.  
And what it has chosen to leave behind.”

Pause.

“Let’s walk and see how the land has changed since the warmer days.”

**How To Do The Walk:** Notice what’s missing, what has changed, and what remains. Move slowly and let memory guide observation.

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## **12. Gratitude Walk**

**Why This Walk Matters:** To cultivate appreciation and presence.

### **Priming Story**

“Winter is often quiet.  
It doesn’t offer its gifts loudly.  
  
Some gifts are small.  
Some are easy to walk past.  
Some only appear when we slow down enough to notice them.

Winter gives us rest.

It gives us space.

It gives us moments of calm we don't always find in busier seasons."

Pause.

"Today, we're not walking to get somewhere.

We're walking to notice what winter is giving us."

**How To Do The Walk:** Walk slowly with no destination in mind, pausing whenever something draws your child's attention and allowing them to lead what is noticed.

Acknowledge their observations simply, and let the moment unfold without teaching or directing - gratitude grows through presence, not performance.

## Outdoor Nature Play Activities

### 1. Snow Play Exploration

Invite your child to step into the snow with no goal other than noticing how it feels and changes. Encourage them to dig, scoop, pack, crumble, throw, or lie down and make body shapes, letting their hands and feet lead the play. You might wonder aloud how snow feels different in shade versus sun, or when it's packed tightly versus loose. Stay nearby, but let the snow decide what the play becomes. If you don't have snow you can make your own with shaving cream and baking soda. Mix in a bowl until it's the proper consistency.

**Materials:** Snow, winter clothing, gloves, boots



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## 2. Frozen Treasure Rescue

Before beginning, tell your child that winter sometimes hides things inside ice and that today they get to be the one who discovers what's trapped inside. Offer frozen ice blocks with small objects inside and invite your child to explore how to free them using hands, sticks, tapping, or sprinkling salt. Allow trial and error, frustration, and patience to unfold naturally as the ice slowly changes.

**Materials:** Ice blocks with frozen objects, sticks or spoons, salt (optional)



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## 3. Winter Obstacle Course

Tell your child that winter landscapes turn into adventure paths when we know how to move through them. Use logs, snow piles, rocks, branches, or uneven ground to create a simple course they can climb over, crawl under, balance across, or jump between. Walk the course together once, then step back and let them repeat, change, or rebuild it.

**Materials:** Logs, rocks, snow piles, branches, open outdoor space



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#### 4. Adopt-a-Tree Play

Invite your child to choose one tree that will be “theirs” for the winter season. Spend time touching the bark, looking up into bare branches, and noticing what lives on or around the tree right now. Encourage your child to visit it again on future days to see what has changed or stayed the same.

**Materials:** A tree, outdoor space, optional notebook or clipboard



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#### 5. Animal Homes in Winter

Begin by sharing that animals don’t disappear in winter... they adapt. Invite your child to imagine where a fox, bird, squirrel, or mouse might stay warm and dry. Using sticks, leaves, snow, or mud, start a simple shelter together, then let your child decide how it grows or changes.

**Materials:** Sticks, leaves, grass, snow or mud, optional animal figurines



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## 6. Winter Howling

As daylight fades, explain that winter nights are longer and quieter, just like when wolves call to one another. Step outside together and pause to listen before lifting your heads and howling into the night. Encourage different kinds of howls—soft, loud, short, or silly—and notice how the sound travels.

**Materials:** Flashlight or lantern, warm clothing



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## 7. Shadow Flashlight Play

Tell your child that light helps us discover what darkness is hiding. Head outside at dusk or after dark and use a flashlight to explore trees, the ground, and your own moving bodies. Watch shadows stretch, disappear, and overlap as the light moves.

**Materials:** Flashlight, outdoor space at dusk or night



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## 8. Winter Texture Play

Invite your child to become a winter texture explorer, searching for things that feel crunchy, smooth, rough, cold, wet, or slippery. Move slowly and encourage touching with hands, boots, or gloves. Let sensation come before words.

**Materials:** Outdoor winter environment



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## 9. Ice Breakers

Tell your child that ice is strong, but not unbreakable. Offer pieces of ice and invite them to explore how ice cracks, chips, or shatters using rocks, sticks, or careful pressure. Listen to the sounds ice makes as it breaks and notice how the pieces change shape.

**Materials:** Ice chunks, rocks or sticks, outdoor surface



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## 10. Feed The Winter Birds

Begin by sharing that winter can be a hard season for birds to find food. Invite your child to help choose a quiet spot to scatter seeds or oats and talk about which birds might visit. Return later in the day or week to look for birds, tracks, or signs that the food was discovered. Over time, this becomes a familiar place to notice patterns and changes.

**Materials:** Bird seed or oats, outdoor space



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## 11. Snow or Frost Footprint Play

Invite your child to notice how their body leaves marks behind in winter. Walk, stomp, jump, tiptoe, or slide and observe the footprints or tracks created. Encourage experimenting with different movements and comparing shapes, sizes, and spacing.

**Materials:** Snow, frost, mud, or damp ground; winter boots



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## 12. Winter Shelter Building

Tell your child that winter shelters help protect from wind, rain, and cold. Using branches, snow, leaves, or found materials, begin a simple structure together, then step back and let your child lead. They may test strength, rebuild after collapse, or decide the shelter is finished when it feels right.

**Materials:** Sticks, branches, snow, leaves.



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## 13. Snow Rolling Play

Invite your child to roll snow into balls of different sizes and notice how snow sticks—or doesn't—depending on temperature. Let them stack, knock over, or simply roll balls across the ground. This play often turns physical and joyful very quickly.

**Materials:** Snow, gloves



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## 14. Winter Mud Kitchen Play

After rain or thaw, invite your child to explore winter mud. Offer space to scoop, pour, mix, and transform mud into whatever the imagination calls for. Let them test thickness, water content, and texture without worrying about outcomes.

**Materials:** Mud, water, old containers or spoons (optional)



## 15. Evergreen Sensory Play

Share that some plants stay green all winter and invite your child to explore them closely. Touch needles, smell crushed leaves, and compare evergreen textures to bare branches nearby. Encourage gentle handling and slow noticing.

**Materials:** Evergreen branches or trees

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## 16. Winter Animal Tracking

Explain that animals leave clues behind even when we don't see them. Invite your child to search for tracks, disturbed ground, feathers, chewed bark, or droppings. Let guesses stay guesses and allow imagination to guide interpretation.

**Materials:** Outdoor winter environment



## 17. Cold Breath Play

On a cold day, invite your child to notice their breath in the air. Experiment with blowing slow breaths, fast breaths, or pretending to fog up the sky. This simple play often leads to laughter and calm focus.

**Materials:** Cold air, warm clothing



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## 18. Snowball Target Toss

Invite your child to pack snow into balls and choose a target—a bucket, tree stump, chalk circle, or marked spot in the snow. Encourage throwing from different distances and angles, adjusting strength and aim. Let the game evolve into counting hits, changing targets, or inventing new rules together.

**Materials:** Snow, bucket or target



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## 19. Build a Snow Person

Invite your child to roll and stack snow into large, medium, and small shapes. Let them decide what the snow person becomes—human, animal, or something imaginary—and

decorate using natural materials found nearby. Talk about how the snow person will change as the day warms.

**Materials:** Snow, natural decorations (sticks, stones, leaves)



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## 20. Winter Scavenger Hunt

Before heading outside, share that winter hides its treasures quietly. Offer a simple list such as: something crunchy, something green, something left by an animal, something cold, something surprising. Let your child search freely and share discoveries as they go.

**Materials:** Optional scavenger list



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## 21. Winter Nature Museum

Create a small nature museum using items collected on winter walks or brought in from nature. Arrange pinecones, bark, stones, feathers, dried herbs, and winter scents on a low table and invite your child to explore them closely using magnifying glasses. Talk about

where each item came from and how winter changes the world outside. Leave the museum set up for several days so your child can return to it again and again.

**Materials:** Pinecones, acorns, bark, feathers, stones, dried herbs, orange slices, cinnamon sticks or cloves, magnifying glass, tray or table



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## 22. Build a Home for a Hibernating Animal

Begin by telling your child that some animals sleep through winter and need safe, warm places. Using sticks, leaves, snow, and earth, build a small shelter together, then step back and let your child improve it. Ask where the animal would curl up and how the home protects from wind and cold.

**Materials:** Sticks, leaves, snow, soil



### 23. Salt Dough Hedgehog Walk

Create a small salt-dough or clay hedgehog ahead of time. Take it outside and explain that this hedgehog needs help finding a safe winter den. Walk together to look for protected spots—under roots, logs, bushes—and choose the best place to “settle” the hedgehog.

**Materials:** Salt dough or clay hedgehog



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### 24. Gifts for Forest Friends

Invite your child to gather food or materials to leave as gifts for animals—seeds for birds, nesting materials like dry grass or fur, or fruit peels where appropriate. Choose quiet places to leave the gifts and talk about giving without expecting anything back. Return another day to see what has changed.

**Materials:** Bird seed, oats, dried grasses, natural fibers



## 25. Winter Nature Journaling

Invite your child to draw or dictate what they notice about winter, including weather changes, animals, plants, or how winter feels. You can prompt gently with questions like, “What looks different outside now?” or “What do you notice about the light?” This is not about writing neatly, but about slowing down and noticing the season. Revisit the journal throughout winter to see how observations change.

**Materials:** Notebook or paper, crayons, pencils, markers



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## 26. Campfire Gathering

Build a small, safe campfire together outdoors and invite your child to help gather sticks, notice dry versus damp wood, and observe how fire needs air, fuel, and care. Share that people have gathered around fires in winter for thousands of years to stay warm, cook food, and tell stories during the long nights. Sit together watching the flames, listening to the crackling sounds, and feeling the warmth on your faces. Keep the moment slow and intentional, letting your child ask questions and stay as long as feels right.

**Materials:** Fire pit or safe fire ring, dry sticks and kindling, matches or lighter, water or fire extinguisher for safety



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## 27. Kelly Kettle Hot Chocolate

Heat water in a Kelly Kettle or similar outdoor kettle over the fire and prepare warm hot chocolate together. Invite your child to notice the steam rising, the sound of boiling water, and how warmth feels especially comforting in winter. Share the drink together near the fire, holding mugs with both hands and slowing the pace of the day. This activity naturally invites conversation, reflection, and quiet connection.

**Materials:** Kelly Kettle or outdoor kettle, water, hot chocolate mix, mugs, spoons



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## 28. Build a Winter Solstice Spiral

Create a large spiral on the ground using evergreen boughs, sticks, stones, or leaves, working from the outside inward. Share that the Winter Solstice marks the longest night of the year, and that after this night, the days slowly begin to grow longer again as the light returns. Walk the spiral together slowly, entering quietly and exiting with intention, letting the body feel the rhythm of the season. This is a grounding way to physically experience the cycle of darkness and light.

**Materials:** Evergreen boughs, sticks, stones, or leaves; optional candle or lantern for the center



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## 29. Winter Treasure Box

Invite your child to create a special box meant for collecting winter nature treasures or gifting to someone they love. Begin by explaining that winter is a season of noticing small, meaningful things, and that this box will hold those discoveries. Head outside together to collect fallen or found objects such as pinecones, leaves, bark, or seed pods, then decorate the box using the treasures and art materials. When finished, decide whether to keep the box as a winter keepsake or gift it as an offering of nature and care.

**Materials:** Cardboard or wooden box, collected nature items, glue or tape, optional paint or drawing supplies



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### 30. Solstice Spiral Walk

Create a large spiral on the ground using evergreen boughs, sticks, stones, or leaves, starting from the outside and winding inward. Share that the Winter Solstice is the longest night of the year, and that after this night, the light slowly begins to return as the days grow longer. At dusk, invite your child to walk the spiral slowly, carrying a lantern or candle, moving inward in quiet reflection and then back out again. This walk helps children feel the rhythm of the season in their bodies and marks the turning point from darkness toward light.

**Materials:** Evergreen boughs, sticks, stones, or leaves; lanterns or candles (battery candles work well for young children)



### 31. Decorate an Outdoor Winter Tree

Choose a small tree or low branch outdoors and invite your child to decorate it using natural materials. Explain that in winter, people have long honored trees as symbols of life and resilience, even when everything feels quiet. Let your child tie pinecones, orange slices, seed heads, or sticks onto the branches however they choose, creating a simple winter offering or bird-friendly decoration. Leave it outside and return on future days to notice what has changed.

**Materials:** Twine or string, pinecones, sticks, dried orange slices, seed heads, evergreen sprigs



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### 32. Winter Picnic

Bundle up and head outside with a blanket and warm food for a winter picnic. Talk about how people have always eaten outdoors, even in cold seasons, by dressing warmly and choosing foods that bring comfort. Sit together, notice the winter air, steam from warm drinks, and the quiet of the season. Keep it simple and short, focusing on presence rather than staying out for a long time.

**Materials:** Blanket, thermos with warm drink, simple snacks or food, weather-appropriate clothing



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### 33. Turn Water Into Ice

Place a pot or shallow pan of water outside on a freezing night and invite your child to predict what might happen by morning. Check it together the next day and explore the ice with your hands, noticing how it looks, feels, and sounds when tapped. Talk about how winter temperatures change water and how freezing protects some plants and animals. This is a simple, powerful way for children to witness seasonal change firsthand.

**Materials:** Pot or shallow pan, water, outdoor space with freezing temperatures



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### 34. Try Maple Tree Tapping

Share with your child that for hundreds of years, people have tapped maple trees in late winter to collect sap and turn it into syrup. If you have access to a maple tree, show them how a small tap collects sap as days warm and nights stay cold. Let them observe the clear

sap dripping slowly and talk about how food comes from trees and patience. Even collecting a small amount becomes a meaningful lesson in seasonal rhythms and respect for nature.

**Materials:** Maple tree (if available), maple tap, small bucket or container, optional tubing



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### 35. Winter Texture Board Painting

Invite your child to glue winter items onto cardboard to create a textured surface. Once dry, offer paint and let them explore how color moves across different textures. Talk about how winter has many textures even when colors feel quieter. This activity blends sensory play with creative expression.

**Materials:** Cardboard, glue, pinecones, bark, sticks, dried herbs, coarse salt, paint, paintbrush

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### 36. Winter Story Stones

Invite your child to paint simple winter symbols onto stones or wood slices. Once dry, use them to tell stories together about winter animals, nighttime, or seasonal adventures. Let your child arrange, sort, and narrate freely. This activity supports imagination and storytelling without structure or pressure.

**Materials:** Smooth stones or wood slices, paint, paintbrush



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### 37. Winter Sensory Bin

Fill a shallow bin with winter-themed materials and invite open-ended exploration. Include textures that feel rough, smooth, soft, and cold, along with small animal figurines for imaginative play. Let your child scoop, pour, bury, and rearrange materials at their own pace. This bin can stay out for several days and evolve naturally.

**Materials:** Bin, pinecones, bark, acorns, cotton balls or shredded paper, small animal figurines, scoops or bowls



## Crafts and Projects

### Make Your Own Snow

Invite your child to help “call in the snow” by mixing baking soda and shaving cream in a bowl or tray indoors. As they mix, talk about how snow is soft, cold, and moldable, and encourage them to squeeze, pack, and shape it just like real snow. Let them build snowballs, tiny animals, or simply explore the texture with their hands. This activity brings the magic of winter inside, even in places where snow does not fall.

**Materials:** Baking soda, shaving cream, bowl or tray, spoon or hands



### Salt Dough Winter Ornaments

Make simple salt dough together and invite your child to shape winter symbols like stars, moons, animals, or trees. Talk about how people have long created decorations by hand during winter as a way to slow down and mark the season. Once dry, these can be hung indoors or used as part of a seasonal display. The focus is on process and meaning, not perfection.

**Materials:** Flour, salt, water, bowl, rolling pin or hands, baking tray (optional)



## Winter Solstice Lantern

Create a lantern to honor the longest night of the year and the return of the light. Invite your child to coat a glass jar with Mod Podge and roll it in Epsom salt or sea salt to create a frosted effect. Add a twine handle and place a candle or LED light inside once dry. Talk about how people across cultures have used light to bring comfort and hope during winter.

**Materials:** Glass jar, Mod Podge, Epsom salt or sea salt, twine, paintbrush, candle or LED light



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## Solstice Centerpiece

Invite your child to help create a simple winter centerpiece using natural materials. Arrange evergreen boughs, pinecones, stones, and a candle together and talk about how winter is a time for gathering and reflection. Use the centerpiece during meals or quiet moments to mark the season. This becomes a visual anchor for your winter rhythm.

**Materials:** Evergreen branches, pinecones, stones, candle, tray or plate

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## Clay Impressions of Winter

Offer clay or play dough along with winter nature items and show your child how to press them into the surface. Encourage them to notice the patterns left behind by bark, pine needles, leaves, or stones. This activity invites close observation and sensory exploration. Let your child experiment freely without a goal in mind.

**Materials:** Clay or play dough, pinecones, bark, leaves, needles, stones



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### **Salt Dough Hedgehogs**

Invite your child to create a small hedgehog friend using salt dough, shaping the body with their hands and pressing in seeds, pine needles, or toothpicks for spines. As they work, talk about hedgehogs as hibernating animals who need safe, warm places to rest through winter. Once dry, take the hedgehog on a short walk to find it a cozy “den” under leaves, roots, or logs. This project blends imagination, animal awareness, and seasonal storytelling.

**Materials:** Salt dough, seeds or pine needles, toothpicks (optional), baking tray (optional)



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### **Winter Pomanders**

Invite your child to transform a simple orange into a winter decoration by pressing whole cloves into the peel. Begin by letting them smell, touch, and explore the orange and spices before deciding how they want to arrange the cloves. Talk about how people have used

scent and natural materials for centuries to bring warmth and comfort into winter homes. Display the pomander on a table or hang it to gently scent your space.

**Materials:** Oranges or lemons, whole cloves, toothpick or skewer (optional), twine or ribbon (optional)



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## Winter Story Stones

Invite your child to paint simple winter symbols onto stones or small wood slices. Once dry, use the stones to tell stories about winter animals, nighttime journeys, or seasonal changes. Encourage your child to move the stones, reorder them, and narrate freely. This project supports storytelling without a fixed outcome.

**Materials:** Smooth stones or wood slices, paint, paintbrush



## Winter Nature Mobile

Invite your child to gather a few winter nature treasures such as pinecones, twigs, seed pods, or evergreen sprigs. Help them tie each piece onto string or twine and hang them from a stick or branch, adjusting lengths until the mobile feels balanced. Hang it near a window or outdoors where it can move with the air, and talk about how winter still holds quiet movement even when things feel still. Let the mobile change over time as pieces weather or fall away.

**Materials:** Stick or small branch, twine or string, pinecones, twigs, seed pods, evergreen sprigs, scissors



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## Winter Snow Globe

Create a simple winter snow globe together by filling a clear jar with water, adding a small winter figure or natural item, and sprinkling in glitter or crushed eggshells for “snow.” As you seal the jar, talk about how winter often invites us to look inward and notice small, peaceful scenes. Shake the globe slowly and watch the snow settle, encouraging your child to sit quietly and observe. This becomes a calming winter ritual rather than a toy.

**Materials:** Clear jar with lid, water, small winter figurine or stone, glitter or crushed eggshells, waterproof glue



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### **Nature Garland**

Invite your child to create a winter garland using found natural items and twine. Collect pinecones, dried leaves, orange slices, cinnamon sticks, or seed pods, and help them thread or tie each piece onto the string. As you work, talk about how people have long used natural materials to mark seasons and celebrate winter. Hang the garland indoors or outside where it can slowly change with time.

**Materials:** Twine or string, pinecones, dried leaves, orange slices, cinnamon sticks, needle or hole punch (optional)



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### **Simple Bird Feeders**

Invite your child to help care for winter birds by creating a simple feeder. Spread peanut butter or a seed mixture onto pinecones or cardboard shapes, then roll them in birdseed. Hang the feeders outside and return over the week to notice what changes and who visits. This activity builds connection to animals and responsibility through quiet observation.

**Materials:** Pinecones or cardboard shapes, peanut butter or suet, birdseed, twine



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### Ice Nature Ornaments

Invite your child to arrange small natural items like berries, evergreen needles, or leaves in a shallow container filled with water. Add a loop of string and place it outside or in the freezer to freeze. Once solid, hang the ice ornament outdoors and watch how light moves through it and how it slowly melts away. This teaches impermanence and seasonal change in a gentle, visual way.

**Materials:** Shallow container or muffin tin, water, small natural items, string or twine



# Winter Rituals & Traditions

## 1. Countdown to the Solstice Candle Holder

A quiet way to honor the darkening days and the slow return of the light.

In the days leading up to the Winter Solstice, light one candle each evening to mark the passing days. As each candle is lit, pause together and notice how the darkness arrives earlier and stays longer. This ritual helps children understand the natural rhythm of the year and builds anticipation for the turning point of the season.

### Materials

Candles or a simple candle holder, matches or lighter

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## 2. Winter Solstice Light Ceremony

A once-a-year ritual to mark the longest night and welcome the returning sun.

On the evening of the Winter Solstice, gather at dusk and light a single candle or lantern together. Speak simply about how this is the darkest night of the year, and that tomorrow the light begins its slow return. This ritual teaches children that darkness is part of the cycle, not something to fear.

### Materials

Candle or lantern

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## 3. Campfire or Flame Gathering

A weekly ritual rooted in warmth, safety, and togetherness.

Once a week, gather around a campfire, fire pit, candle, or lantern. Sit quietly, tell stories, sing softly, or simply watch the flames together. Fire naturally slows the body and creates a sense of belonging that humans have shared for thousands of winters.

### Materials

Fire pit, campfire, candle, or lantern

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#### **4. Hot Drink Ritual**

A comforting transition from cold to warmth.

Choose one afternoon each week to share a warm drink together after being outside. Wrap up in blankets, notice the steam rising, and feel the warmth in your hands. This ritual reinforces the contrast winter offers and creates a moment of calm connection.

##### **Materials**

Hot chocolate, tea, mugs, blanket

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#### **5. Candlelit Story Night**

A weekly evening of shared imagination and quiet connection.

Once a week, dim the lights and read or tell stories by candlelight. Choose seasonal or nature-based stories, or tell family stories from memory. Candlelight naturally softens the nervous system and invites deeper listening and imagination.

##### **Materials**

Candle or lantern, book or story

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#### **6. Winter Sit Spot & Nature Journaling**

A practice of noticing, returning, and remembering.

Choose a single outdoor spot to return to throughout the winter. Sit quietly together for a few minutes and notice what changes and what stays the same. Older children may enjoy drawing or dictating observations, while younger children simply sit, look, and listen. This ritual builds patience, attention, and a relationship with place.

##### **Materials**

Outdoor sit spot, journal or paper, pencil or crayons (optional)

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## **7. Winter Morning Greeting**

A daily or weekly ritual to begin the day rooted in the season.

Step outside together for five minutes after waking. Notice what changed since yesterday. Feel the cool air on your face and watch the early light. Listen for birds, look for frost, dew, puddles, or shadows. Say a simple phrase together such as, “Good morning, winter.” This ritual gently anchors children in time, place, and presence.

### **Materials**

None

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## **8. Winter Gratitude Pebbles**

A simple, tactile way to practice noticing and appreciation.

Keep a small bowl or jar of smooth stones by the door or window. Each day or week, invite your child to choose a pebble and name one thing from the day or season they feel thankful for. Place the pebble into the bowl as a quiet offering. Over time, the growing collection becomes a visible reminder of the small gifts winter brings.

### **Materials**

Smooth stones or pebbles, small bowl or jar

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## **9. End-of-Year Reflection Ritual**

A gentle closing of the year through memory and conversation.

Near the end of the calendar year, gather together with candles or a lantern and reflect on the months that have passed. Invite your child to share favorite moments, places they loved, or things they learned. This ritual helps children practice reflection and honors the idea that seasons—and years—have endings.

### **Materials**

Candle or lantern

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## **10. First Day of the Year Hike**

A quiet beginning to the new year rooted in movement and presence.

On the first day of the new year, take a slow walk together outdoors. Walk without an agenda, noticing the winter landscape and how it feels to step into a new year. You may choose to share hopes, intentions, or simply let the walk be silent. This ritual sets a tone of grounding and connection for the year ahead.

### **Materials**

Warm clothing, outdoor space

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## **11. Winter Treasure Jar**

A place to collect the season as it unfolds.

Place an empty jar in a central spot in your home. Throughout winter, invite your child to add small notes, drawings, or found nature treasures that represent moments they want to remember. At the end of the season, open the jar together and revisit the memories, closing winter with intention and gratitude.

### **Materials**

Jar, small papers or drawings, found nature items

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## Traditional Winter Recipes



### Campfire Bread on a Stick

**Season connection:** Flatbreads cooked on hot stones, in ashes, or on iron pans predate ovens and were common winter staples across Europe, the Middle East, and Indigenous cultures. In winter, baking large loaves was fuel-intensive, so simple breads made with flour, water, and fat were more efficient.

Campfire bread connects directly to seasonal living: people cooked where the heat already existed, often near communal fires used for warmth.

### Ingredients

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp sugar (optional)
- 2 tbsp oil or melted butter
- 3/4 cup water (add slowly)

### Materials

- Fire pit or grill with coals
- Mixing bowl + spoon
- Clean roasting sticks or skewers

- Tongs/heat gloves

## Steps

1. **Make coals:** Start your fire early. You want a steady bed of coals, not tall flames.
2. **Mix dry:** In a bowl, stir flour, baking powder, salt (and sugar if using).
3. **Add wet:** Add oil/butter. Pour in water a little at a time, mixing until a soft dough forms. If sticky, add 1-2 tbsp flour.
4. **Rest 5 minutes:** This helps it hold together.
5. **Shape:** Pinch off a piece about the size of a small egg. Roll into a rope.
6. **Wrap:** Spiral-wrap dough around the end of the stick or skewer (start 1 inch from the tip). Press gently so it sticks.
7. **Cook:** Hold over coals and rotate slowly. Do not put in direct flame. Cook 6-10 minutes until golden and firm.
8. **Check doneness:** Tap it. It should sound hollow-ish and feel set.
9. **Serve:** Slide off the stick. Eat plain, or add honey/jam/butter.

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## Campfire Hot Chocolate in a Kettle



**Season connection:** While modern hot chocolate uses cocoa powder, warm milk drinks over fire are ancient. The Kelly Kettle reflects traditional outdoor water-heating methods used in Ireland and Northern Europe, where quick-boiling kettles provided hot drinks in cold, wet climates. Warm chocolate drinks became winter staples once cocoa was introduced to Europe in the 17th century.

This ritual combines fire, warmth, and communal gathering.

### Ingredients

- 4 cups milk (or half milk/half water)
- 1/3 cup cocoa powder
- 1/3 cup sugar (adjust)
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tsp vanilla (optional)
- Cinnamon stick (optional)

### Materials

- Kettle or pot
- Whisk or fork
- Mugs

### Steps

1. **Heat milk:** Pour milk into kettle/pot. Warm over low heat on coals.
2. **Mix cocoa slurry:** In a small cup, mix cocoa + sugar + pinch of salt with a splash of warm milk to make a smooth paste.
3. **Combine:** Pour paste into the kettle and whisk well.
4. **Simmer gently:** Heat until steaming (not boiling), whisking occasionally.
5. **Finish:** Add vanilla (and cinnamon stick if using).
6. **Serve:** Pour into mugs. Let kids add marshmallows or whipped cream if you want.

---

### Campfire Cinnamon Apples in Foil



**Season connection:** Apples and pears store exceptionally well in cool conditions and were one of the few fruits available through winter in Europe and North America. Baking them softened stored fruit, revived flavor, and required minimal added sugar.

Warm fruit desserts were common winter treats because they used what was already available and could be cooked near the hearth.

### Ingredients

- 4 apples
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2-4 tbsp brown sugar or honey
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- Pinch salt
- Optional: raisins, chopped nuts

### Materials

- Heavy foil
- Knife + spoon
- Coals

### Steps

1. **Prep apples:** Core each apple (leave bottom intact). You can slice in half or keep whole.
2. **Fill:** Put butter, sugar/honey, cinnamon, salt (and raisins/nuts) into the core.
3. **Wrap:** Wrap each apple tightly in foil (double wrap).
4. **Cook:** Nestle into coals. Cook 15-25 minutes, turning once halfway.
5. **Check:** Carefully open one. It should be soft all the way through.
6. **Serve:** Eat as-is or with granola.

---

## Campfire "Stone Soup" Vegetable Stew



**Season connection:** Root vegetables (carrots, turnips, parsnips, onions, potatoes) were among the few foods that could be reliably **stored through winter** in root cellars across Europe, North America, and parts of Asia. Stews allowed families to combine small amounts of stored vegetables with bones or scraps, stretch nutrition, and cook slowly over hearth fires, which conserved fuel and provided warmth.

Stews were practical winter food: they used preserved ingredients, required minimal tending, and delivered dense calories and minerals when fresh greens were unavailable.

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped (optional)
- 2 potatoes, cubed
- 4 cups broth or water + bouillon
- 1 tsp salt (start smaller, adjust)
- 1 tsp dried thyme or Italian seasoning
- 1 bay leaf (optional)
- Optional add-ins: beans, kale, leftover meat

### Materials

- Large pot (Dutch oven ideal)
- Spoon/ladle
- Fire-safe surface/coals

### Steps

1. **Heat pot:** Set pot over coals, add oil.
  2. **Soften onion:** Add onion, stir 3–5 minutes until translucent.
  3. **Add hard veggies:** Add carrots/celery/potatoes. Stir 2 minutes.
  4. **Add liquid:** Pour in broth/water. Add seasoning + bay leaf.
  5. **Simmer:** Bring to a gentle simmer. Cook 20–30 minutes until potatoes are tender.
  6. **Finish:** Add beans/kale at the end (5 minutes).
  7. **Serve:** Taste and adjust salt. Serve with bread.
- 

## 5) Roasted Chestnuts (Hearth and Fire Tradition)



Season connection: Chestnuts were a staple winter food in southern Europe, particularly Italy, France, and Spain, where they were known as “the bread of the poor.” They could be dried, stored, and roasted throughout winter. Roasting chestnuts over open fires was practical and social, often done outdoors or near hearths where families gathered for warmth.

They provided carbohydrates, fat, and warmth during months when grains were scarce.

### Ingredients

- Fresh chestnuts
- Water

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C) or prepare hot coals in a fire.

2. Using a sharp knife, score an "X" into the flat side of each chestnut to prevent bursting.
3. Soak chestnuts in water for 10–15 minutes (optional, helps steam inside).
4. Place chestnuts on a baking sheet or cast-iron pan.
5. Roast for 20–25 minutes, shaking pan halfway through.
6. Remove, wrap in a towel, and let steam for 5 minutes. Peel while warm.

---

## Baked Oatmeal (The "Winter Breakfast Tray")



**Season connection:** In colder, wetter climates like Scotland, Ireland, and Northern Europe, oats thrived where wheat struggled. Porridge became a daily winter food because oats stored well, cooked quickly, and provided long-lasting energy.

Warm porridge was eaten in winter mornings to fuel physical labor and help the body maintain heat in cold homes.

### Ingredients

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- Pinch salt
- 2 eggs (or flax eggs)
- 2 cups milk
- 1/4 cup maple syrup or brown sugar

- 2 tbsp melted butter
- Optional: apples, raisins, nuts

## Steps

1. **Preheat:** 375°F.
  2. **Mix dry:** Oats, baking powder, cinnamon, salt.
  3. **Mix wet:** Eggs, milk, maple syrup, melted butter.
  4. **Combine:** Stir wet into dry. Fold in fruit/nuts.
  5. **Bake:** Pour into greased 9x9 pan. Bake 30–40 minutes until set.
  6. **Serve:** Cut into squares. Add yogurt or warm milk.
- 

## “Preservation” Quick Pickles (Kid-Friendly)



**Season connection:** Pickling is one of humanity’s oldest winter survival strategies. Across Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, China, Korea, and Indigenous cultures, vegetables were fermented or pickled in late fall to preserve vitamins through winter.

Pickled foods were essential because they prevented nutrient deficiencies when fresh produce disappeared and supported digestion during heavy winter diets.

## Ingredients

- 1 cucumber (or carrots, radish, cabbage)
- 1/2 cup vinegar (white or apple cider)
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp salt

- Optional: dill, garlic, peppercorns

### Materials

- Jar with lid

### Steps

1. **Slice veg:** Thin slices or sticks.
2. **Make brine:** In a cup, stir vinegar, water, sugar, salt until dissolved.
3. **Pack jar:** Add vegetables (and dill/garlic if using).
4. **Pour brine:** Cover fully.
5. **Chill:** Refrigerate at least 2 hours. Best next day.
6. **Eat:** Use on sandwiches or as a crunchy side.

---

## Traditional Winter Honey Spice Bread (Old-Fashioned Honey Loaf)



**Season connection:** Before refined sugar was widespread, honey was a primary sweetener. Spices like ginger, cinnamon, and cloves were valued for their warming properties and long shelf life. Honey-spiced baked goods became winter foods tied to festivals, solstice celebrations, and long storage.

These baked goods lasted longer and symbolized abundance during the darkest months.

### Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves or nutmeg
- ½ cup honey
- ½ cup milk
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons melted butter or oil

### Materials

- Mixing bowl
- Whisk or spoon
- Loaf pan
- Oven

### Steps

1. **Preheat the oven:** Set oven to 350°F and lightly grease a loaf pan.
2. **Mix dry ingredients:** In a bowl, combine flour, baking soda, salt, and all spices. Stir to distribute evenly.
3. **Mix wet ingredients:** In a separate bowl, whisk honey, milk, egg, and melted butter until smooth.
4. **Combine:** Pour wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir gently until just combined. Do not overmix.
5. **Bake:** Pour batter into the loaf pan and bake for 35–45 minutes, until the top is golden and a toothpick comes out clean.
6. **Cool and serve:** Let cool slightly before slicing. Serve warm with butter or alongside a mug of tea or spiced milk.

This bread fills the house with a deep, comforting scent and invites children into the process of mixing, pouring, and waiting. It pairs beautifully with candlelight, storytelling, or a quiet winter afternoon indoors.

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### “Winter Sun” Citrus + Cinnamon Tea



**Season connection:** Herbal infusions were used throughout winter in cultures without access to imported tea leaves. Dried herbs gathered in summer and fall were steeped gently to extract flavor and medicinal properties. While “sun tea” is often associated with summer, **slow infusions near a winter window or hearth** were common ways to make herbal drinks without boiling fuel.

This practice emphasizes patience, observation, and seasonally available plants.

### Ingredients

- 1 orange (sliced)
- 1 lemon (optional)
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 tsp whole cloves (optional)
- Honey (optional)
- 6 cups water

### Steps

1. **Add to pot:** Water, citrus slices, cinnamon, cloves.
  2. **Simmer:** Bring to a low simmer 15–30 minutes.
  3. **Serve:** Ladle into mugs. Add honey if desired.
  4. **Bonus:** Keep it on low heat to scent the house.
- 

## Gingerbread “Soft Cake” (Simple Loaf)



**Season connection:** Warm milk with spices appears across cultures: turmeric milk in South Asia, honeyed milk in Europe, and spiced dairy drinks in the Middle East. In winter, milk was often warmed to improve digestion and provide fat and calories.

Spices were added both for flavor and perceived medicinal benefits, making this a common evening winter drink.

### Ingredients

- 1 3/4 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ginger
- Pinch cloves
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 3/4 cup warm water

### Steps

1. **Preheat:** 350°F. Grease loaf pan.
2. **Mix dry:** Flour, baking soda, spices, salt.
3. **Mix wet:** Butter, molasses, sugar, egg, warm water.
4. **Combine:** Stir wet into dry until just mixed.

5. **Bake:** 40–55 minutes. Toothpick should come out clean.
  6. **Serve:** Warm with butter.
- 

### Roasted Winter Vegetables (Sheet Pan)



**Season connection:** Roasting is winter cooking: slow heat, deep flavor, hearty food.

#### Ingredients

- Carrots, potatoes, onions, squash (any mix)
- 2–3 tbsp olive oil
- Salt + pepper
- Optional: rosemary or thyme

#### Steps

1. **Preheat:** 425°F.
  2. **Chop evenly:** Similar sizes so they cook together.
  3. **Season:** Toss with oil, salt, pepper, herbs.
  4. **Roast:** Spread on sheet pan. Roast 25–40 minutes, flipping halfway.
  5. **Finish:** Taste, add a final pinch of salt.
- 

### Traditional Winter Spiced Milk (Warm Night Milk)



**Season connection:** Warm milk infused with spices has been used across cultures as a winter evening drink to calm the body, support rest, and mark the close of the day. In winter, when darkness comes early, this kind of drink signals slowing down and settling in.

### Ingredients

- 2 cups milk (dairy or unsweetened oat/almond milk)
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2-3 whole cloves
- 1-2 thin slices fresh ginger (optional but traditional)
- 1-2 tsp honey or maple syrup (to taste)
- Optional additions: pinch of nutmeg, cardamom pod, or vanilla

### Materials

- Small pot or kettle
- Spoon
- Strainer (optional)
- Mugs

### Steps

1. **Combine ingredients:** Pour milk into a small pot. Add cinnamon stick, cloves, and ginger slices if using.
2. **Heat gently:** Warm over low heat. Do not boil. Stir occasionally and watch for steam to rise. Let it heat slowly for 5-10 minutes so the spices infuse the milk.

3. **Steep:** Once hot, turn off the heat and let the spices sit in the milk for another 3–5 minutes to deepen the flavor.
4. **Sweeten:** Remove spices (or strain) and stir in honey or maple syrup to taste.
5. **Serve:** Pour into mugs and drink slowly, ideally in the evening by candlelight, after outdoor time, or before bedtime.

This recipe works beautifully as part of a **nightly winter ritual**, paired with a candlelit story, quiet conversation, or reflection on the day. Children often love helping drop spices into the pot and smelling how the milk changes as it warms.

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## Book List

1. **The Snowy Nap** – Jan Brett
2. **The Mitten** – Jan Brett
3. **The Hat** – Jan Brett
4. **The Tomten** – Astrid Lindgren
5. **Winter Story (Brambly Hedge)** – Jill Barklem
6. **The Story of the Snow Children** – Sibylle von Olfers
7. **Owl Moon** – Jane Yolen
8. **Bear Snores On** – Karma Wilson
9. **A Loud Winter's Nap** – Katy Hudson
10. **Too Many Mittens** – Florence Slobodkinse
11. **The Snowy Day** – Ezra Jack Keats
12. **Katy and the Big Snow** – Virginia Lee Burton
13. **Big Snow** – Jonathan Bean
14. **Brave Irene** – William Steig
15. **Winter Days in the Big Woods** – Laura Ingalls Wilder
16. **The Sweetest Season** – Elissa Kerr
17. **Sugar Snow** – Laura Ingalls Wilder (Little House picture book)
18. **Barn in Winter: Safe and Warm on the Farm** – Chambræe Griffith
19. **Over and Under the Snow** – Kate Messner
20. **Animals in Winter** – Henrietta Bancroft
21. **Whose Tracks in the Snow?** – Alexandra Milton
22. **Snowflake Bentley** – Jacqueline Briggs Martin
23. **The Story of Snow** – Mark Cassino
24. **Snow Is Falling** – Franklyn Branley

25. **Curious About Snow** – Gina Shaw
  26. **Winter Is Here** – Kevin Henkes
  27. **Snow** – Cynthia Rylant
  28. **The Snowman** – Raymond Briggs (wordless, powerful)
  29. **Winter: A Solstice Story** – Fiona Waters
  30. **Secrets of Winter** – Nicola Davies
-

# Additional Extras



# The Wild Year: Winter Rhythm Memory Book

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Print this book and keep it close during the winter season. As you follow the weekly rhythm, use these pages to capture what stands out to you. You might write, draw, tape, or simply notice. This book is here to hold the memories, not to create more work.

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## Winter at a Glance

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Winter Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Where We Are This Winter: \_\_\_\_\_

A Few Words About This Season:

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## Weekly Winter Pages

Week of \_\_\_\_\_

What We Noticed Outdoors

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Something My Child Said or Wondered

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A Moment I Want to Remember

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What Felt Cozy, Calm, or Meaningful This Week

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Space for Drawing, Photos, or Keepsakes



## Nature Walk Reflections

Where We Walked: \_\_\_\_\_

Weather / Time of Day: \_\_\_\_\_

What We Saw, Heard, or Felt

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Something That Surprised Us

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## My Overall Favorite Winter Experiences

What Do You Want To Remember The Most?

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## Keepsake Pages

Use these pages however you like: photos, drawings, etc.



## End of Winter Reflection

As the light returns and the season shifts, take a moment to look back.

Something My Child Loved About Winter

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Something I Want to Remember About This Season

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A Few Words to My Child, Someday

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# Winter Solstice Celebration Guide

## When to use this:

Use this guide on the evening of the Winter Solstice... the longest night of the year... to pause, reconnect to the rhythm of the season, and welcome winter together. The Winter Solstice is a turning point in nature. It is the night when darkness reaches its peak, and from the following day forward, the light slowly begins to return. For generations, families have marked this moment quietly... with lanterns, fire, story, and togetherness.

This guide offers a simple, meaningful way to honor that ancient rhythm at home.

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## How to Use This Guide

The Winter solstice celebration guide was created to help give you a calm evening ritual meant to be experienced slowly. You do not need to do everything perfectly. You can keep it very simple. The order below is a gentle flow, not a requirement. Allow the evening to unfold naturally.

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### 1. Begin with Lantern Making

Start the evening by making a lantern together.

Using a simple glass jar, glue, and Epsom salt, create a soft, glowing lantern that represents light in the darkness. As you work, keep the atmosphere quiet and cozy. Soft music is optional.

You might say something simple as you work:

“Tonight is the longest night of the year.  
After tonight, the light slowly begins to return.”

When the lantern is finished, place a candle or battery light inside and set it aside for later.

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### 2. Gather for Story

When the lantern is complete, dim the lights and gather together.

This is the heart of the evening.

Hold the lantern or place it nearby and read a Winter Solstice story aloud.

We recommend ***The Shortest Day*** by Susan Cooper, or another seasonal story that speaks to the turning of the year, light, and winter.

Read slowly.

Pause when needed.

Let the images and rhythm of the story do the work.

Children don't need explanations. They need beauty, warmth, and presence.

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### **3. The Solstice Spiral Walk**

If possible, step outside at dusk.

Create a simple spiral on the ground using evergreen branches, pinecones, stones, or sticks. At the center, place a candle, stone, or small symbol of the sun.

Turn on the lantern.

Walk the spiral slowly and quietly together. When you reach the center, pause. This is a moment for a wish, a hope for the coming year, or simply a breath taken together.

Then walk back out, placing your lantern along the path so it lights the way.

This spiral represents the journey through darkness and the gentle return toward light.

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### **4. Close with Warmth**

End the evening by gathering around warmth.

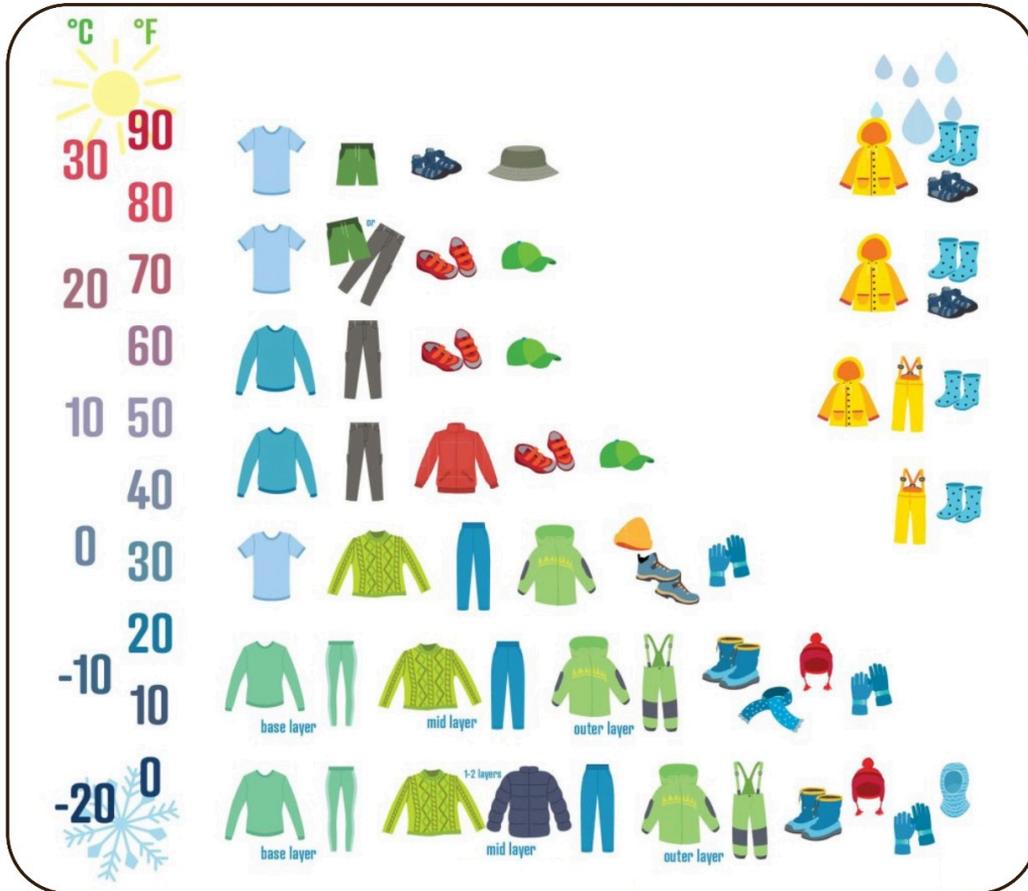
This might be a campfire, a fireplace, or a single candle indoors. Share a warm drink. Sit close. Wrap in blankets. Let conversation arise naturally—or let silence be enough.

Fire has always been part of winter. It is how people stayed warm, shared stories, and remembered that light returns.

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# OUTDOOR CLOTHING GUIDE

Follow this chart to help your child stay comfortable outdoors.



## GENERAL TIPS FOR DRESSING CHILDREN FOR OUTDOOR PLAY

### Think in Layers

Layers help children stay comfortable as temperatures change.

### Choose the Right Fabrics

Wool or synthetic fabrics are best for base layers. In cold weather, cotton should never be touching skin.

### Footwear Matters

Closed-toe shoes or boots are best for all temperatures. Avoid sandals unless it's very hot and dry.

### Wind and "Feels Like" Temperature

Wind can make it feel colder than the actual temperature. If the "feels like" temperature is lower, dress according to that number.

### Rainy Weather

A waterproof jacket and pants keep kids dry and warm. Rain boots are ideal so children can move freely and explore.

### Gloves, Hats, and Accessories

Once temps dip below 50°F, pack a warm hat. Add gloves below 45°F. For very cold days, mittens keep hands warmer than gloves.

# A Closing Note

As winter slowly begins to loosen its grip, we hope this guide has helped you move through the season with more presence, warmth, and intention.

These weeks were never meant to be filled perfectly. They were meant to be lived. In muddy boots, quiet mornings, candlelit evenings, and the small, fleeting moments that often slip by unnoticed.

Thank you for choosing to slow down.  
For stepping outside when it felt easier to stay in.  
For gathering light when the days were dark.  
For making space for rhythm, connection, and wonder.

This winter will pass, as all seasons do. But the memories you gathered, the rituals you began, and the way your child experienced this time will linger far longer.

And when the earth begins to soften.  
When buds appear where branches once stood bare.  
When the days stretch longer and the world stirs awake again.

We will be there, welcoming the return of growth, movement, and renewal.

The **Wild Year: Spring Rhythm** will guide families into the season of awakening. Through mud, rain, seeds, baby animals, longer days, and the quiet magic of becoming.

Until then, hold the light you have gathered.  
Winter is still here for a moment longer.

Warmly,

Lindsay Gkolomeev

Founder, The Wild School