

Winter Activities for the Whole Family

Have the winter doldrums hit your family? Cabin fever got you down?

A little family togetherness can cure the toughest boredom bug.

Try these fun, simple activities and see how quickly winter goes by!

- ❖ Go sledding. Warm up with homemade hot chocolate: mix 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa and 1 cup sugar in a sealable container; gently warm milk in a saucepan (do not boil); add cocoa mix to taste; add vanilla flavoring, if desired; top with whipped cream, marshmallows, or fluff. Enjoy!
- ❖ Build a snow dog or snow cat.
- ❖ Paint the snow! Mix food coloring with water in spray bottles and spray on the snow to create designs, letters, and names. Or, spray paint your snow sculptures.
- ❖ Take homemade cookies to an elderly neighbor.
- ❖ Have a snowball fight INSIDE, using rolled up socks.
- ❖ Put on your favorite music and dance!
- ❖ Visit Author/Illustrator Jan Brett's website for fun reproducible activities: www.janbrett.com.
- ❖ Get a large box from your local store; let children decorate it with paint, crayons, or paper; pretend it is a house, spaceship, puppet theater, or boat.
- ❖ Build a tent with blankets. Tell stories by flashlight and sleep in sleeping bags.
- ❖ Look through your child's baby book. Tell stories about when he/she was little.
- ❖ Snuggle into comfy jammies, curl up on the couch, and look at family photo albums together.
- ❖ Bake a cake together; invite a friend and a teddy bear over for cake and tea.



- ❖ Pretend you are a snowflake in a blizzard!
- ❖ Feed the birds! Make a birdfeeder: cut an orange in half and scoop the insides out (don't forget to eat the fruit); spread peanut butter on the inside; add a handful of birdseed; set it outside for the birds to enjoy. Option: hang with string from a tree branch.
- ❖ Have an indoor picnic: lay a blanket on the floor, pack a lunch, sit and enjoy. Talk about summer!
- ❖ Take a tour of your local fire station. Practice STOP, DROP, & ROLL. Then create an escape plan for your family. FMI, visit www.usfa.fema.gov/safety/ or call the State Fire Marshall, 624-8964.
- ❖ Set up an obstacle course inside: climb over pillows, crawl under the table, step inside a box, tiptoe across the floor, creep around a chair, etc.
- ❖ On a snowy day, bring a sheet of dark paper or cloth outside. Catch snowflakes on the paper and look closely at the shapes and designs of each one. Then go in and draw snowflakes with chalk or white crayons.
- ❖ Make bath paint: combine 1/2 c. liquid hand soap (clear or white) and 1 tsp. cornstarch in a small bowl. Divide the mixture into separate containers; add food coloring one drop at a time. Apply to tub and body with fingers or paintbrushes. Caution: test the paints on a small area of your tub or wall first to make sure they won't leave a stain; darker hues may be more difficult to wash off. Keep leftover paints in airtight containers in the refrigerator for up to three days.
Variation: Give baby dolls and washable toys a bath in the tub.
- ❖ Visit your local library. Look for these and other winter books: The Snowy Day, Winter Waits, Snow Day, Snowmen at Night, A Prize in the Snow, The Mitten.
- ❖ Recite and act out this finger rhyme:

FIVE LITTLE SNOWMEN

(Start in standing position)

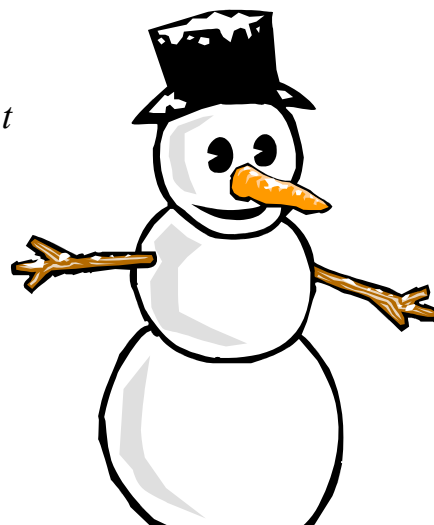
Five little snowmen fat, *(hands out to show fat tummy)*

Each with a funny hat *(point to head)*

Out came the sun *(hands in circle above head)*

And melted one. *(hold up one finger)*

What a sad thing was that! *(frown)*



DOWN, DOWN, DOWN! (*exaggeratedly slow, while melting to the floor*)

Repeat this 4 more times, counting down to 0

No little snowmen fat, (*look sad*)

No more funny hats (*shake head*)

Down came the snow (*wiggle fingers like snow falling*)

Out we did go (*walk feet*)

And we built more snowmen fat! (*hands out for tummy*)

Hurray!! (*smile and clap*)

- ❖ Have a “Crazy, Mixed Up Day” – wear your pajamas all day, read a book from back to front, enjoy popcorn and a movie in the morning, and eat breakfast for supper.