

Snow Much Fun!



Frosty Snowman Ideas



BY THE CITY OF CALGARY RECREATION

Few things can warm up a yard or park like a snowman. The snow conditions must be just right. If you can make a tight snowball with the snow, then you have great snowman making material. Typically a snowman has a carrot nose, button eyes and charcoal mouth, plus a borrowed old hat and scarf. Don't let this be your only choice. Here are some ideas!

- Add six drops of food coloring to a litre of water and put it in a fine mist spray bottle or old ketchup bottle. Use the bottle like a pen and make markings to add color to your snowman creation (try stripes, dots, solid colors, etc.).
- Sticks, rocks, berries, twigs and leaves all make wonderful snowman decorations.
- Use different size containers to mold snow pets for your snowman. How about a green alligator or a pink elephant?
- Line up a lot of snowballs and make a snow caterpillar. Let the kids go for a pretend ride.
- Make an active snowman... surfing, skiing, playing a snow instrument, dancing.
- Decorate your snowman with things that birds would like to eat. Try a berry and nut necklace!
- Have a contest to see who can make the tallest or fattest or funniest, etc. snowman.
- Play toss the hat on the snowman. Take turns with a hat (or Frisbee) to see who can toss the hat onto the head of the snowman.

For more winter fun ideas, head to our website at calgaryschild.com.

Getting fit outdoors doesn't have to cost a fortune

• BY LISA EVANS

Don't let the cold get you down. Get outdoors, have fun and stay fit. Huddled in front of the fire is one way to pass the cold winter days, but Calgary pediatrician Dr. Peter Nieman says keeping active all year round is an important element in combating childhood obesity. "It's important to be active all year round, but especially in the wintertime because that [tends to be when] we consume foods that are high in sugar and carbohydrates," says Dr. Nieman. In addition to sugary treats at Halloween and Christmas, Dr. Nieman sees an increase in carbohydrate consumption in the cold, winter months. Higher consumption of sugar and carbohydrates causes insulin levels to rise, which Dr. Nieman says is a major cause of weight gain.

While skiing, snowshoeing and skating are great winter exercises, getting fit outdoors doesn't have to cost a fortune. Freshly fallen snow provides a host of simple free and fun activities you can do in your own backyard that are sure to cure your cabin fever and keep the whole family physically fit.

Backyard scavenger hunt. Freshly fallen snow provides a perfect opportunity to host a treasure hunt. Bury toys and holiday ornaments for kids to unearth then dig out your summer beach tools and set them loose with their pail and shovel. Give kids 10 minutes to run around and see how many objects they can uncover.

Build a snowman. A long-time favorite winter activity, rolling large balls of snow can burn up to 285 calories per hour. Get everyone to make their own version of themselves in snow form, creating a Frosty family. Make sure you have some carrots on hand for noses and pebbles for eyes. Dress them up using your own clothing, such as dad's old tie, mom's necklace and old kids' clothes.

Snow angels. Spread your wings and decorate your lawn with snow angels. Lie down in the freshly fallen snow and move your legs in and out and arms up and down, creating the silhouette of an angel. This simple activity can burn as many as 214 calories per hour.

Snow golf. Just because your mini golf course is

closed for the winter, doesn't mean you can't still play. Dig out a small hole every few feet and bury tin cans in the holes, marking them with mini flags. Grab your summer putters and have fun.

Go for a hike. An hour of winter walking can burn up to 270 calories. Bundle up and hit one of Calgary's many walking trails. Take a camera and look for animal tracks in the freshly fallen snow. Have fun guessing which animals made them and look them up on the Internet when you get home, or download MyNature Animal Tracks app on your iPhone and identify tracks as you go.

Winter walking games. Turn a neighborhood walk into a fun family activity. Dr. Nieman suggests getting a pedometer and counting how many steps you take, or measuring how fast you can walk a pre-determined distance.

Outdoor safety

To make sure your outdoor activities remain joyful, take these steps to ensure winter safety.

Wear a toque. "Kids lose a lot of heat through their heads," says Nieman. Always cover your head when you go outdoors, even for a short period of time.

Wear proper footwear with a tread to prevent slipping.

Stay hydrated. "Even though it's cool outside, you still need a lot of liquids," says Nieman. Pack a bottle of water or a thermos of apple cider to stay warm and hydrated.

Don't forget the SPF. Even though you aren't out in your bikini, your face is still exposed to the sun's harsh rays.

Lisa is a health and lifestyle freelance writer. Her favorite winter activity as a child was building snowmen using her dad's old work uniform. **CCM**



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