

Boston Weather

Since Boston is bordered by Boston Harbor and the Atlantic Ocean, its coastal climate tends to be more moderate than inland locations – Boston rarely experiences either extreme heat or cold. In the winter, the first freezing temperatures usually occur in early November, but the temperatures are modified considerably by the nearness of the relatively warm ocean. Frigid weather usually fades out by early April, and Boston typically enjoys a spectacular, colorful spring with moderate temperatures. Although it can get quite warm in the summer, the hot afternoons frequently are tempered by the eastern sea breezes, as air flows inland from the cooler surfaces of the ocean.

Temperature

The spring and summer months of April through June and the early fall months of September through mid-November are the most enjoyable, temperate seasons. Bostonians experience their coldest months during January and February (with a mean temperature of about 29 degrees) and their warmest months during July and August (with a mean around 72 degrees). Freezing temperatures are common from late November to late March. By May, the temperatures rise to a moderate 60-70 degrees, then reach even higher numbers (sometimes 90 degrees and over) during July and August.

Average Temperatures

<i>Month</i>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>°F</i>	28.8	29.4	37.1	47.2	57.9	67.2	72.7	71	64.1	54	43.7	32.8
<i>°C</i>	-1.7	-1.4	2.8	8.4	14.4	19.6	22.6	21.6	17.8	12.2	6.5	.5

Precipitation and Snowfall

Boston has no true dry season as it rains intermittently throughout the year. Much of the rainfall during the summer and early fall comes from showers and thunderstorms. At other times during the year, low-pressure systems pass frequently and produce rain, on average, one out of three days. Coastal storms — which Bostonians refer to as "Nor'easters"— produce much of the rain and snow. The main snow season occurs from December through March.

Wind and Relative Humidity

Because of its moderate coastal weather systems, Boston is not known to suffer from particularly windy weather. Although winds of 30 miles per hour or higher may occur anytime during the year, gales happen more frequently and severely during the winter. While relative humidity has fallen as low as 5%, such dryness is quite rare. Boston does experience heavy fog on average two days a month, which occurrence increases at locations nearer to the coast.

Surviving a New England Winter

Surviving a winter is an art, especially if you are a "summer person." New England winters are typically very cold, dark and often quite snowy. You'll want to stay warm and healthy but also learn to enjoy winter. It's a great time for indoor activities and once you get acclimated, you can bundle up and enjoy a brisk winter walk, or other outdoor pursuits — winter style of course. Here are some tips on how to not just survive, but ENJOY your New England winter!

1. **Don't be a slave to fashion when it comes to your outerwear.** Weatherproof and warm are the first things you want to look for when choosing a winter coat. Down-filled and "thinsulate" are two of the warmest linings. The longer in length your coat or jacket is, the warmer you will be. Try to find something that falls comfortably down over your hips or even longer. For maximum warmth, a hood and drawstring or Velcro closings that help keep the wind from rushing up sleeves or bottoms will be much appreciated. Warm, waterproof boots are best for walking on slippery slushy sidewalks.

2. **Layers—Layers—Layers!!!** Start with a t-shirt and then pull on a sweater and then a fleece vest and then your winter coat over all for example. This way you can peel off layers to cool off or put on layers to warm up. It's sometimes hard to know just how cold it will be that day, and if you plan to be out for a long time, the temperature will drop considerably at night. Always carry with you or wear a knitted cap, scarf and warm gloves or mittens.
3. **Watch the weather forecast.** The good news is that you may not need to bundle up every day as if you were planning for a blizzard. Some winter days can be quite pleasant and some years offer up very mild conditions overall, so get to know your weatherman. Don't be deceived by a clear blue sunny day; even the brightest of days can be frightfully cold.
4. **Dark glasses aren't only for looking cool in winter.** On snowy days, the lights can be very reflective and you'll want to have a pair of sunglasses that block at least 90% of the ultraviolet light.
5. **Watch out for sunburn and windburn.** Chap stick, sunscreen and moisturizers for your hands and face are a must. If you don't apply them frequently, and even if you do, you might be surprised to find your lips to be so chapped that they crack and bleed, or that you have sunburn after a day of ice skating. A bright, snowy day reflects light everywhere, so you don't want to forget your sunscreen.
6. **Moisturize as often as possible.** The winter is very dry and hard on your skin, especially if you already have dry skin. It also dries out your sinuses, which can be very uncomfortable. For your skin, you'll want to have a good moisturizer to put on your body and your face after a shower or bath, and a humidifier for your bedroom. You'll be especially glad that you do when you have a cold or flu in the winter and your sinuses are crying to be soothed. Make sure you clean your humidifier regularly (at least once per week) according to the manufacturer's directions, so that it doesn't get moldy or clogged with minerals from the water. It also helps to drink plenty of water throughout the day.
7. **Practice cold and flu prevention.** Prevention is easier than cure of course. Two of the most important things you do are to wash your hands often and eat and sleep regularly and healthfully. More tips are available from Student Health Services.
8. **Drink hot soups and fluid and get plenty of rest, if you do get a cold or flu.** Do see a doctor if you have a high fever (100 degrees F or higher), if you develop persistent cough, or have any severe symptoms that you are concerned about. Besides tea or coffee, some other warm beverages options include mulled cider, hot chocolate or chai. You can also try steamed milk with a few drops of vanilla flavoring (called white angel at coffee shops). For recipes of hot beverages, go to <http://beverages.allrecipes.com/directory/3241.asp>
9. **Exercise faithfully — indoors and even outdoors.** Going to the gym is ideal, but winter walks can be spectacular — especially on one of those bright days when everything stands out in the sharp relief against the blue eye-splitting winter sky. Other ideas for outdoor activities are ice skating, skiing, and a favorite of many, sledding. Find a snowy hill and you can even slide down with nothing more than a garbage bag tied across your behind. Saucers or other kinds of plastic sleds can also be inexpensively purchased at Wal-Mart or Target.
10. **Play in the snow.** Ideas include making a snow person or a snow angel or simply throwing snowballs (gently and playfully, of course). To make a snow angel, lie down on your back in the new-fallen snow and sweep your arms up and down and your legs open and closed across the snow. Then stand up carefully to observe your creation.
11. **Get plenty of natural light to help combat the "winter blues."** As the days shorten and you begin to suffer from sunlight withdrawal, some believe that natural light, such as sunlight, can lift low spirits. In the middle of winter, most people go to work when it's still dark and come home when it's dark. Take your lunchtime out, and at least go for a walk. Install full spectrum light bulbs (available at every grocery stores, hardware stores or Wal-Mart or Target) in the lamps where you spend the most time — at work, where you study, or the rooms where you can relax in the evenings. Does it really help? Hard to know for sure, but at the very least, you can grow lovely indoor plants, and that of course is very cheerful.
12. **Occasionally give in to the impulse to hibernate.** Human beings really weren't designed to go around as if winter didn't exist and the sun weren't setting at 4:15 in the afternoon. Every now and then, spend the day snuggled up in your favorite warm flannel pajamas, napping, snacking and relaxing with your favorite indoor activity.
13. **Have a winter project other than your studies or work.** This would be a good opportunity to start reading (or maybe writing) that big fat novel you've been putting off. You might want to try

knitting a long woolly scarf. If you feel the urge to get creative, go to a local arts & crafts store to see what the possibilities are.

14. **Go to your favorite video store and rent videos the night BEFORE the blizzard hits.** Forget about going out if it's already snowing and you want a top film. The place will be packed with people who have the same idea. Don't forget that you can borrow DVDs and VHS tapes for FREE from the Wellesley Public Library.

15. **Snow needs to be shoveled and managed.** If you live in off-campus housing, make sure you have a bag of salt or sand for your sidewalks to make them less slippery and more snow and ice free. You will also want to have a STURDY snow shovel on hand. Talk to your landlord about both — well before the snow hits. Car owners will need to have a heavy-duty ice-scraper, preferably with a brush. When parking in your neighborhood, take note of street signs that warn about no parking because of snow removal (you don't want to get ticketed or towed).

16. **After winter comes spring.** Remember that it will get warmer and lighter and greener again, so refer back to this list as often as necessary and make the most of winter while you can.

Suggested Winter Shopping List

Outer Clothing

- ☐ Warm socks (natural fibers like wool or cotton are good choices)
- ☐ Gloves (mittens or gloves; should be waterproof if meant for throwing snowballs; look for cashmere or thinsulate lining)
- ☐ Scarf (very fashionable and functional)
- ☐ Warm Hat
- ☐ Ear Muffs
- ☐ Warm Coat/Waterproof Warm Jackets (down-filled and thinsulate are two of the warmest linings; a longer coat is warmer)
- ☐ Warm Boots/Waterproof Boots (look for a good grip soles)

Inner Clothing

- ☐ Turtlenecks or Long-Sleeve Shirts
- ☐ Sweaters
- ☐ Fleece Shirts
- ☐ Fleece Lined Pants
- ☐ Thermal/ Long Underwear/Tights (to wear underneath jeans; silk thermal wear is lighter and less bulky than cotton ones)
- ☐ Fleece/Flannel Pajamas

Essential Items

- ☐ Chap stick (also called lip balm; voted #1 essential item)
- ☐ Hand/Body Lotion (try Curel, Euricen, or Nivea brands)

For your Entertainment

- ☐ Snowboard/Skis (just make sure you take lessons if you have never done it before!!)