



WINTER IN CANADA

A Simple and Practical Guide for Newcomers

Prepared by

**Worldbridge Immigration
Services**

*Helping newcomers stay safe,
warm, and confident in their
first Canadian winter.*

www.theworldbridge.ca

Welcome

Winter in Canada can feel new, confusing, and sometimes overwhelming. This guide is here to help you.

Many newcomers worry about:

- Cold weather
- Snow and ice
- Winter clothing
- Transportation
- Work and school during storms

This guide explains winter in **simple language**. You do not need to know everything right away. You are not alone. Support is available.

1. What Is Winter Like in Canada?

Winter usually lasts from **November to March**. Some places are colder than others.

You may experience:

- Cold temperatures
- Snow and ice
- Shorter days
- Long nights

Weather can change quickly. Always check the daily weather forecast.

Important:

Cold weather is taken seriously in Canada. Preparing for winter keeps you safe.

2. How to Dress for Winter (Very Important)

Wearing the right clothing helps prevent illness and injury.

Dress in Layers

Layers trap warm air and keep you dry.

1. Inner layer:

- Light clothing close to your skin
- Keeps sweat away

2. Middle layer:

- Sweater or fleece
- Keeps heat inside

3. Outer layer:

- Winter coat
- Blocks wind, snow, and rain

Essential Winter Items

- Warm winter coat
- Waterproof winter boots
- Hat (covers ears)
- Gloves or mittens
- Scarf or neck warmer

Children and Winter Clothing

Children go outside to play **even in winter**.
Schools expect children to have:

- Snow pants
- Warm boots
- Mittens
- Hat

Saving Money on Winter Clothing

- Buy used clothing (thrift stores)
- Ask settlement agencies about winter programs
- Buy end-of-season sales

Winter Clothing Checklist

- Winter coat
- Winter boots
- Hat
- Gloves or mittens
- Scarf

- Warm socks
- Snow pants (for children)

HOW TO LAYER FOR WINTER TRAVEL

START WITH A BASE LAYER



MERINO WOOL
BASE LAYERS

SYNTHETIC
BASE LAYERS

SILK
BASE LAYERS

- * BASE LAYERS ARE WORN AS THE FIRST LAYER NEXT TO THE SKIN
- * THE MOST COMMON BASE LAYERS ARE MERINO WOOL, SYNTHETIC BLENDS OR SILK
- * THIS LAYER IS NOT VISIBLE YOUR OTHER CLOTHING LAYERS GO ON TOP
- * CHOOSE THE CORRECT "WEIGHT" FOR THE WEATHER AND YOUR ACTIVITIES
- * NEVER CHOOSE A COTTON BASE LAYER



ADD A MID-LAYER



LONG SLEEVE TOP

WOOL FLANNEL
SHIRT

MERINO/CASHMERE
WOOL SWEATER

LIGHTWEIGHT
FLEECE

PACKABLE
PUFFER

- * A MID LAYER HELPS YOU RETAIN HEAT AND IS WORN OVER A BASE LAYER.
- * FOR TRAVEL PURPOSES A MID-LAYER CAN BE ANY LONG SLEEVE LAYER LIKE A TEE, FLANNEL, OR SWEATER. AVOID 100% COTTON.
- * AN INSULATING MID-LAYER CAN ALSO BE WORN IN ADDITION. INSULATING MID-LAYERS ARE LIGHTWEIGHT FLEECE JACKETS AND PACKABLE PUFFER JACKETS



TOP WITH WEATHERPROOF LAYER



WOOL COAT
WITH
THINSULATE
LINING

WATERPROOF AND DOWN
LINED PARKA FOR EXTREMELY
COLD CONDITIONS

LIGHTWEIGHT
COAT WITH
SYNTHETIC
INSULATION

- * A WEATHERPROOF OUTER LAYER PROTECTS YOU FROM WEATHER ELEMENTS & IS THE FINAL BARRIER OF PROTECTION AGAINST THE COLD, RAIN, SNOW & WIND.
- * A CLASSIC WOOL COAT CAN GET YOU THROUGH MOST TRAVEL SITUATIONS
- * SNOWY & RAINY CONDITIONS REQUIRE WATER RESISTANT/REPELLENT FABRICS
- * WEAR BULKY COATS & LAYERS IN TRANSIT



CHOOSE A WEATHERPROOF BOOT



- * WEATHERPROOF FOOTWEAR IS ESSENTIAL TO KEEP YOUR FEET DRY AND WARM. CHOOSE SHOES ACCORDING TO WEATHER CONDITIONS & ACTIVITIES.



ADD SOCKS & WINTER ACCESSORIES



KNIT HAT/
BEANIE

SCARF

GLOVES

WOOL SOCKS

- * WOOL SOCKS KEEP YOUR FEET DRY AND WARM
- * WINTER ACCESSORIES LIKE A HAT, SCARVES, GLOVES, BUFFS, ETC ARE YOUR ADDED LAYERS TO HELP LOCK IN WARMTH

travelista.com

3. Your Home in Winter

Homes in Canada are heated during winter.

Heating

Common heating systems:

- Furnace
- Baseboard heaters
- Heat pumps

Heating costs more in winter.

Home Safety Tips

- Do not block heaters
- Never use unsafe space heaters
- Make sure smoke and carbon monoxide alarms work



Snow Removal

- Homeowners must clear snow
- Renters should ask landlords about responsibilities



4. Getting Around Safely in Winter

Snow and ice can be slippery.

Walking Safety

- Walk slowly
- Wear boots with good grip
- Watch for ice

Public Transit

- Buses and trains run in winter
- Delays can happen during storms

Driving in Winter

- Winter tires are safer
- Drive slowly
- Keep distance from other cars

Winter Car Safety Checklist

- Winter tires
- Ice scraper
- Warm blanket

- Flashlight
- Phone charger

5. Health and Wellbeing in Winter

Cold weather can affect your body and mood.

Physical Health

- Dry skin is common
- Colds and flu spread easily
- Stay warm and hydrated

Mental Health

Some people feel:

- Sad
- Tired
- Lonely

This is common in winter.

Helpful tips:

- Stay active indoors
- Get enough sleep
- Talk to someone you trust
- Ask for help if needed

6. Children, School, and Childcare

Schools usually stay open in winter.

Snow Days

Sometimes schools close due to storms.
This is called a **snow day**.

Outdoor Play

Children play outside daily unless weather is extreme.
Warm clothing is required.

Childcare Tips

- Check messages from school or daycare
- Plan extra travel time

7. Work and Your Rights in Winter

Bad weather can make travel unsafe.

If you cannot go to work:

- Contact your employer
- Ask about workplace policies

Your safety matters.

Workers have rights in Canada.

8. Emergencies and Extreme Cold

Some days are extremely cold.

Extreme Cold Warnings

These are announced by the government.

Be Prepared

- Stay indoors if possible
- Dress warmly
- Know where warming centres are

Emergency Numbers

- **911** – Emergency
- **311** – City services (many areas)



Winter Emergency Kit Checklist

- Warm clothes
- Food and water
- Flashlight
- Phone charger
- Emergency contacts

9. Community, Connection, and Belonging

Winter can feel lonely for newcomers.

Staying connected helps.

Visit:

- Community centres
- Libraries
- Settlement agencies

Many offer:

- Free programs
- Workshops
- Family activities

10. Managing Money in Winter

Winter costs more.

Common winter expenses:

- Heating
- Clothing
- Transportation

Help may be available.

Ask settlement agencies about:

- Energy support programs
- Food programs
- Community assistance

11. Enjoying Winter in Canada

Winter can be enjoyable.

Try:

- Walking
- Skating
- Winter festivals

Start slowly.

There is no pressure to “love” winter right away.

12. Where to Get Help

Worldbridge Immigration Services

supports newcomers with:

- Immigration guidance

- Settlement referrals
- Trusted information

You can also get help from:

- Local settlement agencies
- Community centres
- Libraries

Ask questions.

Help is available.

Appendices

First Winter Mistakes to Avoid

- Wearing fashion shoes in snow
- Skipping a hat or gloves
- Underestimating cold weather
- Not checking the weather forecast

Newcomer Winter Quick Checklist

- Winter clothing ready
- Home heating checked
- Emergency contacts saved
- Transit routes planned
- Community supports identified

13. Canada-Wide & Provincial Resources for Newcomers (Winter Support)

This section helps you find **trusted help**, no matter where you live in Canada. Many services are **free** for newcomers.

A. Canada-Wide (Available Everywhere in Canada)

Immigration & Settlement

- **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)**
Immigration programs, newcomer information
Website: canada.ca/immigration

- **Find Free Newcomer Services**
Language classes, settlement help, employment support
Website: ircc.canada.ca/english/newcomers/services

Weather & Emergency Information

- **Environment and Climate Change Canada**
Weather forecasts, Extreme Cold Warnings
Website: weather.gc.ca
- **Emergency Number: 911**
Call only for emergencies (fire, medical, police)
- **Health Advice Line**
Many provinces offer free nurse advice by phone (see provincial list below)

Mental Health (Canada-Wide)

- **Talk Suicide Canada**
Call or text **988** (24/7)
Free, confidential support
- **Wellness Together Canada**
Mental health resources and counselling
Website: wellness-together.ca

B. Provincial & Territorial Resources

Ontario

Health

- **Health Connect Ontario – Call 811**
Free nurse advice

Settlement & Community

- **Settlement.Org**
Newcomer information (housing, health, work)
Website: settlement.org
- **211 Ontario – Call 211**
Community services, food programs, winter supports

Winter & Emergency

- **Ontario 511**
Winter road conditions
Website: ontario.ca/511

Alberta

Health

- **Health Link Alberta – Call 811**
Free nurse advice

Settlement & Community

- **Alberta Supports**
Income, housing, emergency help
Website: alberta.ca/alberta-supports
- **211 Alberta – Call 211**

Winter & Emergency

- **Alberta Emergency Alert**
Extreme weather warnings
Website: emergencyalert.alberta.ca

British Columbia

Health

- **HealthLink BC – Call 811**

Settlement & Community

- **WelcomeBC**
Settlement, language, employment services
Website: welcomebc.ca
- **211 BC – Call 211**

Winter & Emergency

- **DriveBC**
Road and winter conditions
Website: drivebc.ca

Manitoba

Health

- **Health Links Manitoba** – Call **811**

Settlement & Community

- **Manitoba Start**
Newcomer employment and settlement
Website: manitobastart.com
- **211 Manitoba** – Call **211**

Saskatchewan

Health

- **HealthLine** – Call **811**

Settlement & Community

- **Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee & Settlement Services**
Website: saskatchewan.ca
- **211 Saskatchewan** – Call **211**

Quebec

Health

- **Info-Santé** – Call **811**

Settlement & Community

- **Québec Immigration & Integration Services**
Website: quebec.ca/immigration
- **211 Québec** – Call **211**

Note: Many services in Québec are offered in French.

Nova Scotia

Health

- **811 Nova Scotia**

Settlement & Community

- **Nova Scotia Office of Immigration**
Website: novascotiainmigration.com
- **211 Nova Scotia**

New Brunswick

Health

- **Tele-Care – Call 811**

Settlement & Community

- **New Brunswick Immigration**
Website: welcomenb.ca
- **211 New Brunswick**

Newfoundland and Labrador

Health

- **HealthLine – Call 811**

Settlement & Community

- **Newfoundland and Labrador Immigration**
Website: gov.nl.ca/immigration
- **211 Newfoundland & Labrador**

Prince Edward Island

Health

- **Health PEI – Call 811**

Settlement & Community

- **PEI Office of Immigration**
Website: princeedwardisland.ca
- **211 PEI**

Yukon

- **Yukon HealthLine – Call 811**

- **Yukon Immigration & Settlement Services**
Website: yukon.ca

Northwest Territories

- **NWT Health Advice Line – Call 811**
- **NWT Immigration**
Website: immigrationnwt.ca

Nunavut

- **Nunavut Health Services**
- Community health centres provide support
- Local hamlet offices assist with emergency information

C. How Worldbridge Immigration Services Can Help

Worldbridge Immigration Services provides:

- Trusted immigration advice
- Referrals to settlement and community services
- Plain-language guidance for newcomers

We help newcomers understand systems, plan confidently, and settle successfully in Canada.

Save These Numbers

- 911 – Emergency
- 811 – Health advice
- 211 – Community supports
- Local settlement agency contact

Tip for Newcomers

If you are unsure who to call, start with **211**.
They can guide you to the right service.