



## How to...

### SUNNY DAY

The summer solstice is the longest day of the year, meaning it has the most sunlight. The date in 2026 will be June 21.



# Enjoy the winter solstice

**Adopt new family traditions on December 21, the shortest day of the year.**

Winter will officially begin on December 21, which is the winter solstice. That is the shortest day—and longest night—of the year for people living in the northern hemisphere (the half of Earth above the equator). But the winter solstice also means that the days will start to have more sunlight after that, which is a great reason to celebrate. Here are some activities to try.

### Learn some history

Ancient civilizations likely celebrated the winter solstice to mark the return of longer days and more sunlight. Some monuments related to the solstice that were built thousands of years ago are still standing today. These include Stonehenge in England (a ring of giant stones that align with the Sun's rays on the winter solstice), Newgrange in Ireland, and Maeshowe in Scotland. You can find books about them at your library or ask an adult to help you search for information and photos online.

### Watch the Sun

December 21 is an ideal day to watch the sunrise or sunset, since you won't have to get up too early or stay up late. The time will be different depending on what

part of the country you live in. You can look up the times for your city or town at [tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Solstice](https://tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Solstice). Then decide with your family where you'll watch. Make it festive with blankets and warm drinks.

### Decorate a yule tree

Decorating a tree outside with food for birds is a popular winter solstice ritual. Try making garlands out of dried or fresh orange slices to hang on the tree, or create mini bird feeders by covering pine cones with peanut butter and rolling them in bird seed before hanging them.

### Have a candlelit feast

Many traditional solstice celebrations use candles as a tribute to the lighter days to come. Ask an adult to bring out some candles and light them with you. Then gather around the table and have a candlelit dinner.

### Set goals

Some people use the winter solstice as a time to reflect on the past year and create goals for next year. Your candlelit feast is a good time to discuss what each family member hopes to accomplish next year. Or you can write down your thoughts and hopes in a journal.



**Make a dried fruit garland for wild birds.**

## Cozy comforts



Hygge is a Danish tradition centered on creating coziness and contentment in winter. Here are a few ways to practice it.

**Get comfortable** Part of hygge is indulging in simple pleasures that achieve a warm, relaxing environment. Put on fuzzy socks, enjoy a cup of cocoa, and cuddle with family on the sofa.

**Think about light** A significant part of practicing hygge is using soft light at home on long winter evenings. Switch on table lamps instead of bright overhead lights.

**Do a puzzle** Completing jigsaw puzzles can reduce stress and boost problem-solving skills. Set one up on a desk or table and try to complete a few pieces each day with family members.