

How to survive winter

A guide to the holidays and beyond

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December has arrived at Hope College, but we have been lacking a staple of Michigan winters: snow. Students and staff may be stuck in the fall mindset because of the lingering warm weather, but winter is upon us. The warm is out; the cold is in. What should we expect this winter? A lot of Holland's snow depends on La Niña. La Niña is the cooling of the sea surface temperatures of the Pacific Ocean, which leads to a change in weather patterns in other areas inland. Last year we experienced El Niño, which had the opposite effect, causing warmer than normal weather and considerably less precipitation. If La Niña is present this year, it will have a greater effect on the second half of winter. This means that January, February and March will have colder-than-average temperatures as well as increased snowfall, which means we should bundle up. Just because the snow has been sparse does not mean we won't experience the chill and winter conditions once we return from break. In the meantime, here are some ideas to prepare for the winter weather and get into the Christmas spirit.

Downtown Holland Kerstmarkt

The traditional Downtown Holland Farmer's Market turns into a European-styled market during the winter season. Various vendors open their booths, which are full of handmade crafts and holiday goodies. Sled dogs will be available during specific times. Stop by the market in the front of the Civic Center and get into the holiday spirit!

Friday, Dec. 9, 3-8 p.m.
(sled dogs between 4 and 5 p.m.)
Saturday, Dec. 10, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
(sled dogs 11 a.m. and 12 p.m.)

Hiking

Are you a snow lover? Check out Holland's many trails as they become covered in snow! Mt. Pisgah, Riley Trails, Sanctuary Woods and Mt. Baldhead are just several of the many places to explore this winter season. Bundle up and get a view of the snow-covered Holland scenery!

Downtown Holland Shopping Jam

Many downtown businesses are participating in this event, which advertises discounts on merchandise. Head downtown from 8-9 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 10, and receive 30 percent off of at least one item. The discount reduces to 25 percent after 9 a.m., but continues until 10 a.m.

The Apothecary Gift Shop, Frances Jaye, Gazelle Sports, Glik's (men and women) and Reader's World are a few of the almost 40 participating stores.

Holland Area Arts Council

The Council is located on 150 E. 8th St. in downtown Holland. They are currently holding pieces from RePrize, Holland's spin-off of Grand Rapids' Art Prize. The exhibition is full of art from the hands of local artists. Head on down and check it out for yourselves!

Coffee

There is no better way to warm up than with a hot beverage. Head over to JP's on 8th street or Lemonjello's on the corner of 9th and College for inviting atmospheres and hot chocolate, coffee or tea. If you really want to get into the holiday spirit, try one of LJ's winter drinks, the Fireside Latte or the Eggnog Chai.

Lake Michigan

Once the weather is below freezing, make the trek to Holland State Park to walk on the frozen waves. Prepare yourself for the lakeshore weather and wind, which tends to be a few degrees cooler than campus. Have fun exploring on the frozen water and beach, but be sure to be cautious while walking on the ice.