



# YOUR FIRST WINTER IN CAPE BRETON - UNAMA'KI



**WELCOME BIENVENUE  
PJILA'SI WILLKOMMEN  
您好 WELKOM مرحبا  
TULOY PO KAYO 歡迎  
BIENVENIDO FÀILTE**

Welcome to Cape Breton - Unama'ki and welcome to your first white winter!

After a summer spent on the beach and a fall surrounded by beautiful colors, the idea of a long, cold, and snowy winter can feel daunting.

You might have been warned that our winters are full of ice, freezing temperatures and stormy conditions. While all of that is true of winter, it also offers the opportunity to experience an abundance of fun and natural beauty. The key to a successful winter in Cape Breton - Unama'ki is to learn winter safety, take steps to prepare and keep an open mind.

In this resource, you will learn:

- What to expect during the winter season
- Winter layering
- How to winterize your vehicle
- Outdoor winter activities



## WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE WINTER SEASON

**Winter is the longest season of the year, lasting approximately 6 months. It is also the coldest season, with temperatures consistently below zero. But don't let that scare you!**

In comparison to Western Canada, Cape Breton - Unama'ki experiences relatively mild winters. Faced with a constant clash of cold air from the North and warm air from the South, temperatures fluctuate frequently. In the winter it is typical to experience a significant snow storm followed by warm temperatures only a few days later. Cape Breton - Unama'ki is in a constant cycle of the snow falling and melting.

### **What time of year is winter?**

Winter officially starts on the Winter Solstice, December 21st. With that being said, winter conditions are unpredictable and can start as early as November, lasting through until April. Expect the most severe winter weather during the months of January and February.

### **What are winter conditions like?**

*Flurries:* Light snow fall

*Blizzard:* Strong winds and heavy snowfall, resulting in reduced visibility

*Freezing Rain:* Falling rain that freezes on the ground, creating a sheet of ice

*Black Ice:* A nearly transparent layer of ice, typically found on pavement, that creates dangerous driving conditions

### **How cold does winter get?**

Temperatures lingering between  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Wind chill, strong cold wind, can make it feel significantly colder than reported. For example, the meteorologist reports a temperature of  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  but indicates that it "feels like"  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$ . In this scenario, dress for the  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

### **Do things change much in the winter?**

While life typically goes on as usual, keep an open mind when weather conditions get bad. Plan for school cancellations and changes in business hours. On the road, expect slow driving, delays or even detours. During a significant storm there is a chance of loss of internet and power.



## WHAT IS WINTER LAYERING?

Layering is the most effective way to stay warm in the winter. By strategically wearing specific types of clothing, a person is able to keep heat in and protect their body from the elements. Consisting of a base, mid and outer component, layering makes it easy to regulate body temperature, by adding or removing clothing throughout the day.

Dressing in winter layers does not mean you have to buy a brand new winter wardrobe. Use what's already in your closet or consider second hand pieces. Second-hand consignment shops across Cape Breton - Unama'ki sell new or gently used winter clothing at low prices.

Despite best efforts from layering, children can still get wet from playing outside. Wet clothes make the body colder, faster! If you have a child in school or daycare, consider sending them with an extra change of clothes. This proactive step ensures your child will stay warm while having fun throughout the day.



## **BASE LAYER**

### **What does the base layer do?**

A thin layer next to the skin, the base layer keeps heat close to your body while drawing moisture away.

### **What should I look for in a base layer?**

Look for pieces made of moisture wicking material such as wool and polyester. Base options can include long underwear, leggings, a long sleeve shirt and thin socks.



## **MID LAYER**

### **What does the mid layer do?**

Worn on top of the base layer, the mid layer traps warm air to insulate your body. Regulate body temperature throughout the day by adding or removing mid layer pieces.

### **What should I look for in a mid layer?**

Made of fabrics such as wool, fleece or down, the mid layer should include bulkier pieces such as thick socks, a hoodie, sweater, vest, or a light weight jacket.



## **OUTER LAYER**

### **What does the outer layer do?**

The outer layer is your final layer! Designed to keep you dry, the outer layer will protect your body from wind, rain and snow.

### **What should I look for in an outer layer?**

Look for a coat and winter boots labeled "water resistant" or "water repellent". Also, don't forget to cover your head, neck and hands. Add a scarf, toque and mittens for extra warmth and protection.



# HOW TO WINTERIZE YOUR VEHICLE

## DON'T WAIT FOR THE SNOW

Avoid the last minute rush by winterizing your vehicle in early November

In Cape Breton - Unama'ki the weather changes frequently so that means driving conditions change too. When winter driving expect snow, slush, rain and black ice on the road. You may also experience changes in visibility due to heavy rain or snowfall. To ensure safe winter driving, make a few key winter modifications to your vehicle. By winterizing your vehicle, the chances of a winter driving accident is dramatically reduced, giving you greater confidence to safely travel from point A to point B.

### Change from summer to winter...



#### Tires

Designed to grip snow and ice, in order to provide greater control



#### Wiper Blades

Greater strength to move snow and less prone to ice build up



#### Washer Fluid

Avoid ice build up with fluid labeled ice resistant up to -30°C

# WINTER ESSENTIALS FOR YOUR VEHICLE

An appointment has been booked to winterize your vehicle. Great work, but you are not done yet! To guarantee safety for all winter driving scenarios, there are a few essentials to add to your trunk.

## WINTER DRIVING CAN GET MESSY

Be prepared for the unexpected



### Snow Brush

Driving with snow or ice on your vehicle is dangerous and can result in an accident or even a fine. Always carry a snow brush to easily clean debris off your vehicle throughout the day.

Look for a snow brush with big bristles to wipe away fluffy snow and a scraper to chip away difficult ice.

### Kitty Litter

Sometimes your vehicle can wind into a slippery situation, unable to get enough traction to move.

In the winter carry a bag of sand or kitty litter for such occasions. Pour the kitty litter around all four tires to provide enough grit to pull yourself out.

### Vehicle Emergency Kit

Despite best efforts, accidents happen and you may get stuck. Prepare a vehicle emergency kit with enough supplies to comfortably wait for help arrives.

Items to include in a vehicle emergency kit:

- First aid kit
- Blanket
- Whistle
- Hat, gloves and socks
- Flashlight
- Phone charger
- Extra cash
- Bottled water
- Dry food
- Booster pack
- Extra diapering supplies for small children
- Extra toy to entertain small children

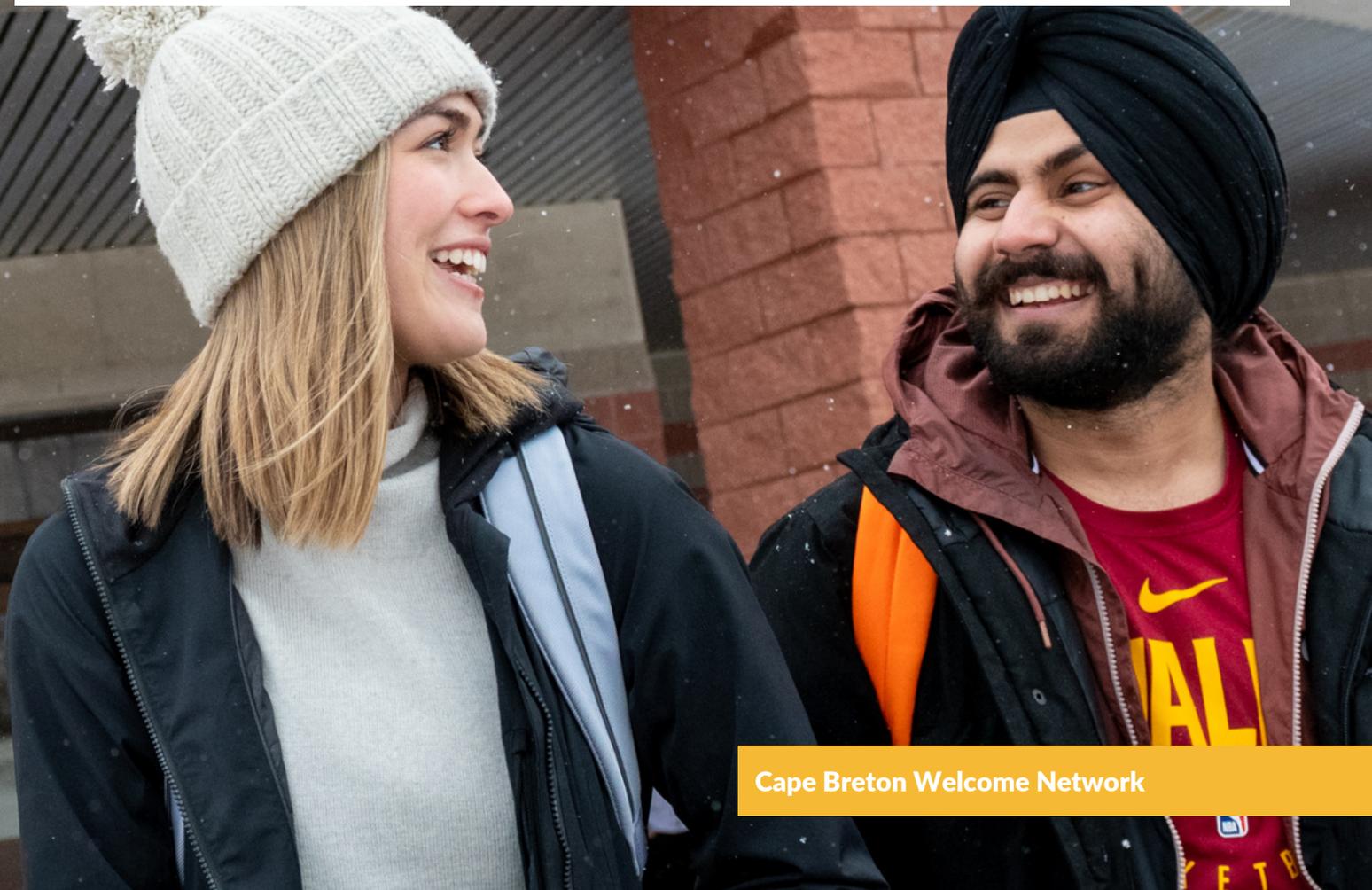
## WINTER ACTIVITIES IN CAPE BRETON - UNAMA'KI

In Cape Breton - Unama'ki, a little snow doesn't keep people from having fun! While it's tempting to spend the next six months inside with a warm drink, the arrival of winter brings it's own unique set of outdoor activities.

Sculpting a snow man, building a snow fort, or making snow angels are just a few inexpensive winter activities that are fun for the whole family.

For the adventurers at heart, explore a local hiking trail or beach, completely transformed by a blanket of white. Use new winter methods of travel like snowshoes or skis.

The [list of winter activities available](#) in Cape Breton - Unama'ki is long. So layer up and get out to see what your new home has to offer!





## 5 MUST TRY OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

### Sledding

A winter classic, sledding (also known as tobogganing or coasting) is when a person sits or lays on a sled and rides it down a snow covered hill. Sleds can be inexpensive, ranging in different shapes and sizes depending on personal preference.



### Skiing & Snowboarding

Make a day of it and try down hill skiing or snowboarding. Cape Breton has two ski resorts that offer gear rental and lessons. This activity is great for all ages and skill levels.

### Snowshoeing

Designed with a wide surface area to distribute weight, snowshoes make it easier to walk on top of snow. One of the easiest and least expensive winter activities, snowshoeing is basically anywhere you would walk in the summer. Trek around a local park, hiking trail or backyard. Municipalities and Libraries across the island offer rentals at very affordable prices.



### Cross Country Skiing

Much like snowshoes, cross country skis are great for traveling on top of snow. With the ability to glide, cross country skis allow you to move at a faster pace, making the ideal for trekking long distances.

### Skating

Another winter classic, skating is when you glide across ice using a pair of skates. Skates come in two styles. Hockey skates are durable, designed for speed while figure skates have a toe pick and are designed for agility/tricks.

# YOUR FIRST WINTER IN CAPE BRETON - UNAMA'KI

## Winter in Cape Breton - Unama'ki requires life to slow down

Although we can't avoid winter, we can try to make the most of it! By winterizing your vehicle and layering up, you'll be all set to get out and experience the many outdoor winter activities Cape Breton Unama'ki has to offer.

If the outdoors is not your thing, that's fine! Take this time to reconnect with your loved ones. Explore new interests like baking, reading or crafting. A gameboard, puzzle or deck of cards can create hours of laughter for the whole family.

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