

# Huge List of Fun Things to Do in the Winter! Information correct as of 1-11-19

**Dundas Dome:** Bouncy houses and bouncy balls! Open most weekdays 2:00 PM-5:00 PM. Cost is \$5. 2033-2198 Cannon Rd, Northfield, MN 55057

**Spam Museum:** The SPAM® Museum is stuffed with interactive exhibits that bring the iconic history of the SPAM® Brand to life like you've never seen it before! Go behind the scenes and behind the can for an experience adults and kids will savor. FREE! Special events on the first Thursday of the month. December-March Tuesday-Saturday 10:00-5:00, Sunday 11:00-4:00. SPAM® Museum, 101 3rd Ave NE, Austin, MN 55912

**Ice skating:** The Jefferson facility has two hockey rinks and one leisure rink where no hockey is allowed. Hours at the Jefferson rink are Monday - Friday 4-9 PM. and on Saturday and Sunday from 1-9 PM. A new ice rink near the viaduct will open mid-January and is available during daytime hours. The Faribault Community Center is offering Open Skate at the Faribault Ice Arena. The cost is \$5 per person or \$18 per family. They also offer a punch card which has 14 punches for \$45. Skate rentals are available at the Arena for just \$3. Open most Saturdays 12:30-3:30, Sundays 6:00-8:30, and No School days 12:30-3:30.

**Community center pool/swimming lessons:** Open swims are offered every Saturday and Sunday from 1:00-4:00 PM during the school year. Our trained lifeguards make sure everyone stays safe while going off the diving board, climbing the rock wall, or just splashing around in the pool. Fees: \$3.00 per swimmer, or \$12 per family (5 member max). Punch cards are available as well for \$40 (15 punches.) Swimming lessons for infants and toddlers with parents, or for 3-4 year olds with parents, are available for \$34 for an 8-class session.

**Target/WalMart:** Go for a browse, check out the toy section (or vacuums? Bikes? Tools? Whatever your child finds fun to see at the store!) Maybe stop for a snack on your way out.

**Malls with Play Areas:** Not only are there fun places to play, but there is lots of room for an indoor walk and places for snacks along the way! Here is a list of malls that have free play areas specially designed for little ones:

Burnsville Center

Maplewood Mall (also has a carousel that you can ride for \$2!)

Eden Prairie Center

Southdale Mall in Edina

River Hills Mall in Mankato (also has a carousel that you can ride for \$2!)

**Mall of America/Nickelodeon Universe:** Toddler Tuesdays is a program that provides events, free entertainment and discounts especially for toddlers. Events include special character appearances, arts and crafts, story time and much more! Events are every Tuesday from 10 a.m. until Noon and are free and open to the public. Nickelodeon Universe offers Five hour toddler wristband for \$12.99 + tax on Tuesdays only. Many restaurants offer free meals for children under 4 with the purchase of an adult meal on Tuesdays. Kids under 3 always enjoy free Admission to [Sea Life Minnesota Aquarium](#) as well as the [Crayola Experience](#).

**Gymnastics/Open Gym:** Owatonna Gymnastics Club offers open gym for preschoolers. Days and times vary by session. Parents are allowed out on the floor with their gymnasts. Call the gym at 451-4163 for information. Located on the Steele County Fair Grounds, in the building directly North of the Four Seasons Center. Faribault Gymnastics located at 1073 Willow St, Faribault, MN, offers classes for a variety of ages and levels. More information at <http://faribgyassoc.qwestoffice.net> or (507) 334-2588.

**Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota—Mankato:** Hands-on, fun, educational exhibits made just for young children! Business Hours: Monday: Closed. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday: 9 am - 4 pm. Thursday: 9 am - 7:30 pm. Daily Admission \$8 per person, 1 year and older. 224 Lamm Street, Mankato, MN 56001

**Minnesota Children's Museum:** Recently updated with brand new exhibits! Appealing to children under the age of 10. Under age 1 is free, everyone else is \$12.95. Free for all on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month (but it is busy!) Open Tuesday-Thursday 9-4, Friday and Saturday 9-8, Sunday 9-5. Closed Mondays. 10 W. 7<sup>th</sup> St, St. Paul. For a different (and less expensive) experience, visit the Rochester location. Admission is free for babies under 1, \$5.50 for all others. 1643 N. Broadway St., Suite A River Center Plaza, Rochester.

**River Bend Nature Center:** Miles of trails for days that are not too cold, or stop inside the Interpretive Center to see hand-on exhibits, taxidermy, and live animals. Cross country skis and snowshoes are available for rent. Interpretive Center is open Monday-Friday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM, Saturday: 9 AM - 4 PM.

**Movie Theaters:** **Northwood Cinema 10**, 300 Allan Ave. in Owatonna, MN, offers \$5 movies all day on Tuesdays, as well as a free 44 oz. popcorn with any drink purchase.

**Cannon Valley Cinema North in Dundas** (old K-Mart building) also offers \$5 movies on Tuesdays, and seating is in "VIP Luxury Recliners." They also offer free popcorn on Mondays with any ticket purchase.

**Minnesota Zoo:** Fun to explore no matter what the weather is like! Several indoor and outdoor exhibits. Children under 2 are free, ages 3-12 \$12, 13-65 \$18, 65+ \$12. *Free admission is possible through several programs.* Check <http://mnzoo.org/us/freetoexplore/> for more information on free admission possibilities.

**Out to eat:** Many restaurants offer free kids' meals with purchase of adult meals. Here are a few:

The Depot Bar and Grill on Monday nights

Northfield location of Gran Plaza offers 2 free kids' meals per family on Sunday nights

Hy-Vee Market Café on Thursday nights (get your groceries after you eat!)

**RADZoo:** The Reptile and Amphibian Discovery Zoo is one of the world's largest reptile displays, and an opportunity for a fun family adventure. Open Saturday – 9am to 6pm, Sunday – 11am to 5pm, Mon-Fri 10am to 5pm. Children under 2 are free, Kids (age 3-12): \$7.50, Teens & Adults (age 13-64): \$9.50, Seniors (age 65+): \$7.50, Military and family (with ID): \$4.75.

**Como Zoo and Conservatory in St. Paul:** Winter hours are 10:00-4:00. Admission is free, but there is a suggested donation of \$3 for adults and \$2 for children. Visit the animals, see the plants and flowers in the conservatory, and check the daily programs and events. Lil' Explorer Thursdays is a FREE program from 10:00AM-noon each Thursday from September through April in the Visitor Center. Perfect for the 1-3 year old to meet animal and plant visitors, see story time, play games and many other fun activities. Different theme each week!

**Choo-Choo Bob's Train Store:** Offers an interactive play area that's open daily to the public, operating train layouts, a weekly story hour, and a wide selection of toys and gifts. 2050 Marshall Ave. in St. Paul. Monday –Thursday 9-6, Friday 9-8, Saturday 8:30-8, Sunday 9:30-6.

**Libraries:** **Buckham Memorial Library** offers story time Tuesdays at 6:30 PM and Wednesdays and Thursdays at 10:30 AM, plus a great selection of books to check out and a great play area.

**Northfield Public Library** offers story time for babies Tuesdays at 10, and family story times Wednesdays and Thursdays at 10.

**Owatonna Public Library** offers many fun events for children and families. Check <http://ci.owatonna.mn.us/library/events/> for specific information.

**Cabela's:** Huge collection of taxidermy from around the world, plus large tanks of fish native to Minnesota.

**Science Museum of Minnesota:** Huge exhibits to explore, some permanent and some rotating. Prices vary depending on age (0-3 is free) and whether you want to see the museum, the omnitheater, or both. Check <https://www.smm.org/visit/hours-admission> and click on “Discounts” to see if you qualify for reduced admission. Hours are 9:30-5 Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 9:30-9 Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Closed Mondays.

**Parks and Playgrounds:** Outside for nice days, inside when it’s cold and yucky.

**Good Times Park Egan**—Inside playground. \$8 per child per day (ages 1-17), open 7:30 AM to 9 PM daily. 3265 Northwood Circle, Suite 100, Egan.

**Edinborough park—Edina** includes Adventure Peak (a 44-by-44-by-37 foot high climbing, low crawling, slip sliding Northwoods adventure), an amphitheater complete with a stage is built right in to Edinborough Park. The Great Hall (a 60-by-90 foot multipurpose space, Little Peak is the toddler area, for children ages 4 and under, and the Party Plateau features six colorful sites overlooking the play area including Adventure Peak. *There is also a pool!*

**Interactive park—Minnetonka** is an indoor play area for ages 1-17. Open 7:30-9 every day. Admission is \$9 per person.

**Oxbow Park and Zollman Zoo**—Offers unique outdoor play areas and hiking trails. The zoo is the home of many Minnesota native animals. Park is open 5 AM to 10PM, zoo is open 10 AM to 4 PM year round. No admission fee, but donations are welcome. 5731 County Rd 105 NW, Byron, MN.

Try visiting one of your favorite outdoor parks even in the winter—it may be a whole new experience! Suggestions include Sibley Park—Mankato (great sledding hill), Jefferson Par (baby and me swing), and Alexander Park (see the river and dam in the winter).

**Gymboree/Open Gym at McKinley:** Use our gym Fridays 1:00-1:45 or designated Saturdays January-April.

**Bouncetown—Medford:** Opening in January! Admission is \$7.50 per bouncer. Hours are 12-6 Sundays, 10-6 Mondays, Wednesday-Saturday. Closed Tuesdays.

**Paradise Center for the Arts:** Offers acting camps and art classes for children as young as , as well as occasional performances geared toward small children. Check <http://www.paradisecenterforthearts.org> for more information about specific events.

**Bowling:** J&J Bowling Center in Faribault has open bowling daily starting at 11 AM. Games are \$3.75 each and shoe rental is \$2.25. Bumpers and ramps are available to make sure your child has an advantage! Pizza and pop are available from the restaurant as well.

**Northfield YMCA:** A variety of membership options allow you to choose what works for you. Fitness programs, group classes, pool, swimming lessons, and child care are some of the features. Check <http://northfieldymca.org> for more information.

**Archery club:** Free kids program each Saturday 9-11 AM. Located in the Commercial Exhibits Building at the Rice County Fairgrounds.

**Ice fishing:** If you have some gear, head out on any of the local lakes and give it a try!

**Upper East Side:** This downtown Faribault business offers art and craft activities for children and adults. Call for more information: (507) 339-1770