

# How To Stay Connected With Nature This Winter

By Cierra Orlyk

It's easy to feel disconnected from nature when you're cooped up indoors during the winter season. If you long to be outside but are discouraged by the cold, windy and dreary weather, we're here to share some simple ways to get back in touch with nature without braving the chill.

## Take a drive.

The easiest and most convenient way to enjoy nature while temperatures are in single degrees is to hop in your warm car and take a drive. Try to avoid monotonous highways, and instead make your way through neighborhoods and little streets you've never been down before. Or, if it's available to you, head to the outskirts of your town where the hustle and bustle is replaced with long roads and stretching fields. As you drive, be attentive to the little details of your surroundings while being safe and keeping your eyes on the road. Allow yourself to feel thankful for the blanketing snow and the clouds in the sky. Try to practice this mindfulness even when routinely driving.

## Opt for window seats at restaurants.

Even though you're inside, choosing to sit near the window can make you feel closer to nature both physically and mentally. Think about how different it feels to sit in the middle of a dimly-lit restaurant versus to enjoy your meal next to the view out the window. Even if all you can see is the parking lot outside the window, it's outside, and that's all that matters. Perhaps you'll catch sight of some falling snow or reminisce about summer meals outdoors.

## Buy a lamp that mimics the sun's light.

Just because you don't go outside as much during the winter doesn't mean you can't get your daily dose of Vitamin Sun. There are countless lamps on the market that deliver the benefits of the sun's rays without the UV harm. According to *Everyday Health*, using one of these lamps can counteract depression and treat insomnia, ADHD and dementia, according to *Everyday Health*. They also can regulate serotonin and melatonin levels to help improve mood and sleep. A popular option available on Amazon and at Target is the HappyLight.



## Bring nature in with crafts.

Using materials from outside to create art can make you feel more in touch with the elements. If pinecones are available near you, collect some to make a wreath, create a potpourri arrangement, make a decorative front door hanging display or fashion them into a centerpiece. If branches are a better bet, collect a bunch to make a candle holder, shape them into a snowflake and glue together, form a cross with a bunch and tie with ribbon if you're religious or place them into faux snow arrangements in your winter décor. If rocks are more your thing, gather some and fasten them to your wall to hang jewelry on, paint them with your kids or place them in a glass bowl or mason jar for a decorative piece.

## Light natural smelling candles.

A fun and delicious way to bring nature in is by lighting natural smelling candles. Opt for scents like pine, crackling fire, cedar, eucalyptus and wood so that when guests enter your home, they feel like they've just walked into a wooded winter wonderland.

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