

# EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

▶ WINTER STRESS  
REMEDIES

▶ OUR FAVORITE  
CHEESE RECIPES

▶ THE FIRST  
SNOWFLAKE  
PHOTOGRAPHER,  
WILSON BENTLEY

▶ HOW TO  
GROW MINT



JANUARY 2016





## FEATURES

**LIVING NATURALLY**  
**WINTER STRESS**  
**REMEDIES**

**FOOD**  
**CHEESE, PLEASE!**  
*Our favorite cheese recipes*

**GARDENING**  
**HOW TO GROW MINT**

**WEATHER**  
**THE FIRST SNOWFLAKE**  
**PHOTOGRAPHER,**  
**WILSON BENTLEY**



## DEPARTMENTS

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Home, Sweet Home

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How We Make Our Predictions

January U.S. and Canadian  
Weather Forecasts

Weather Update

### WIT

Humor Me

*Grins and groans from the Almanac*

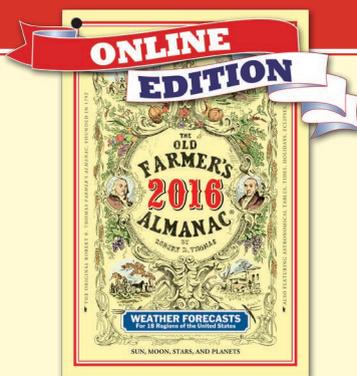
### WHAT'S NEXT

Peek into our February issue!



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# THE MONTH OF JANUARY

## HOLIDAYS, HISTORY, AND FOLKLORE



### MOON VIEW

January's full Moon, the Full Wolf Moon, occurs on the 23rd, at 8:46 P.M. EST.



TAP FOR ADDITIONAL MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT THE FULL WOLF MOON AND OTHER FUN MOON FACTS

### FOLKLORE FUN

*At Twelfth Day [January 6], the days are lengthened a cock's stride.*

### SAY HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

**I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet.**

—Jack London, American writer (b. January 12, 1876; d. November 22, 1916)



### JANUARY'S ZODIAC SIGNS

Capricorn: January 1–19  
Aquarius: January 20–31

### JANUARY'S BIRTH FLOWER:

### Carnation or Snowdrop

The carnation comes in several different colors to convey different meanings, much like roses. A pink carnation means affection, while a red carnation means “I love you.” White carnations mean pure love, striped carnations mean regret that a love is not shared, and yellow means rejection or disappointment.

The snowdrop used to be considered bad luck due to the fact that it always seemed to grow in graveyards. Nowadays, it signifies hope and beauty.



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS

# MONTHLY HAPPENINGS



## 2ND: EARTH IS AT PERIHELION.

Just 91,403,891 miles from the Sun on this day, our planet is at its closest approach of the year to its star.

## 5TH: TWELFTH NIGHT

The evening of January 5 (before Epiphany, January 6), marks the end of the 12 days of Christmas for many Christians and an end to its festivities. On this night in England, it was customary for the assembled company to toast one another from the wassail bowl. In Old English, “wassail” means “Be in good health,” but the term also was applied to the drink itself (which was usually spiced ale).



TAP FOR A  
RECIPE FOR  
WASSAIL



## 27TH: JOHN JAMES AUDUBON DIED IN 1851.

An ornithologist and talented painter, he devoted much of his life to researching and painting birds. His work *Birds of America* was printed as a series between 1827 and 1838. It contains 435 watercolors, which still serve as a standard for wildlife artists today.

# CALENDAR Q&A

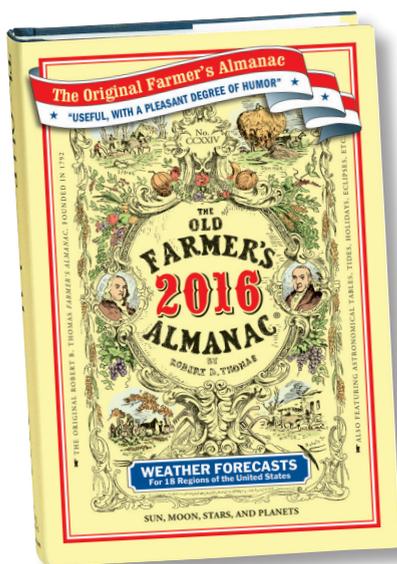


TAP FOR  
MORE ABOUT  
CALENDAR  
TIMEKEEPING  
SYSTEMS

## Q: What determines when a calendar system starts?

**A:** The year-numbering systems (eras) of many calendars correlate to the date of a major event called an epoch, such as the start of a king’s reign, a battle victory, or even the beginning of the world. Others may count the years according to rotating cycles. As an example, the Gregorian calendar, which many of us use, is based on the Christian era (tap “Christian Era” at the side for more details).

Every year, *The Old Farmer’s Almanac* includes a list of 10 calendar eras in its “How to Use the Right-Hand Calendar Pages” section.



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## BEST DAYS

These January dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. —*Celeste Longacre*

### PERSONAL

Begin diet to lose weight: 5, 27  
 Begin diet to gain weight: 13, 18  
 Cut hair to encourage growth: 17, 18  
 Cut hair to discourage growth: 1–3,  
 28, 29  
 Have dental care: 26, 27  
 Quit smoking: 5, 27  
 Wean children: 5, 27

### AROUND THE HOUSE

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut: 4, 5, 31  
 End projects: 9  
 Start projects: 11

### OUTDOORS

Begin logging: 8–10  
 Go camping: 6, 7  
 Go fishing: 9–23  
 Set posts or pour concrete: 8–10

### IN THE GARDEN

Destroy pests and weeds: 15, 16  
 Graft or pollinate: 21–23  
 Prune to encourage growth: 15, 16  
 Prune to discourage growth: 6, 7, 25  
 Plant aboveground crops: 13, 14, 21,  
 22  
 Plant belowground crops: 4, 5, 31  
 Harvest aboveground crops: 17, 18  
 Harvest belowground crops: 8, 26, 27

### ON THE FARM

Breed animals: 4, 5, 31  
 Castrate animals: 11, 12  
 Cut hay: 15, 16  
 Set eggs: 1, 2, 19, 20, 28, 29  
 Slaughter livestock: 4, 5, 31  
 Wean animals: 5, 27



## GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the January dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

**PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT:** Cancer, Scorpio, or Pisces

**HARVEST:** Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

**BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS:** Capricorn

**CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED:** Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

**PRUNE:** Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.

### THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN JANUARY

1 Libra	9 Capricorn	17 Taurus	25 Leo
2 Libra	10 Capricorn	18 Taurus	26 Virgo
3 Libra	11 Aquarius	19 Gemini	27 Virgo
4 Scorpio	12 Aquarius	20 Gemini	28 Libra
5 Scorpio	13 Pisces	21 Cancer	29 Libra
6 Sagittarius	14 Pisces	22 Cancer	30 Libra
7 Sagittarius	15 Aries	23 Cancer	31 Scorpio
8 Capricorn	16 Aries	24 Leo	



TAP FOR  
MERCURY IN  
RETROGRADE  
DATES



**APP EXTRA!**  
TAP FOR  
JANUARY  
MOON PHASES

## MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion retrograde motion.

Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

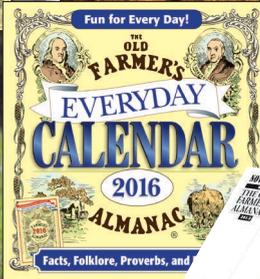
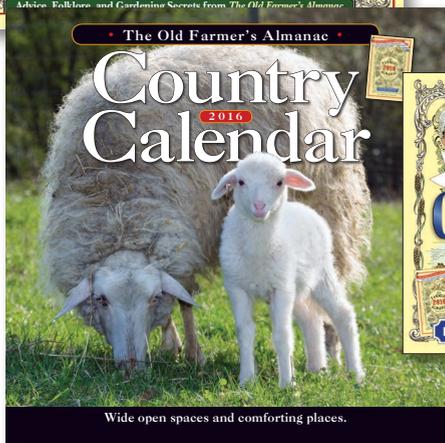
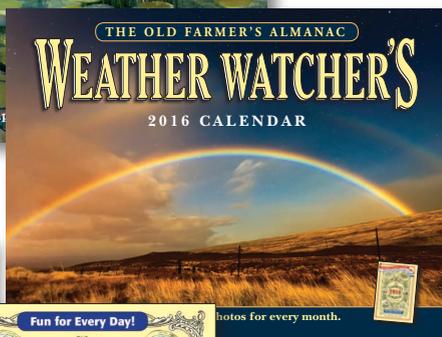
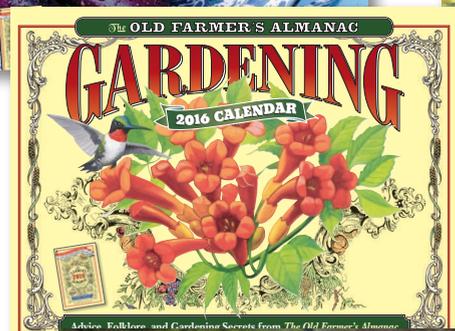
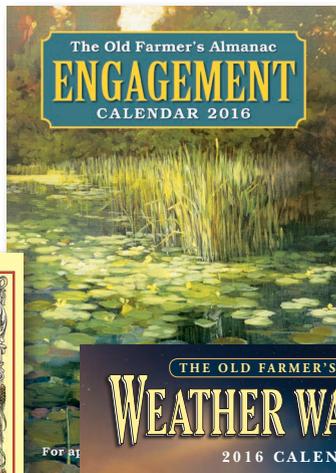
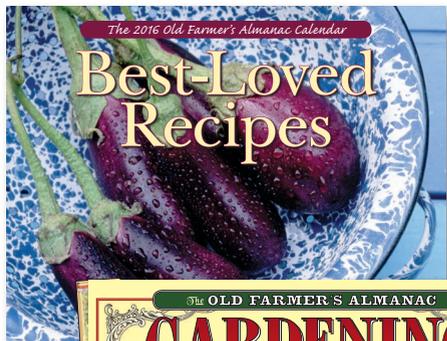
When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions.

**In 2016, Mercury will be retrograde from January 5–25, April 28–May 22, August 30–September 22, and December 19–31.**

*—Celeste Longacre*

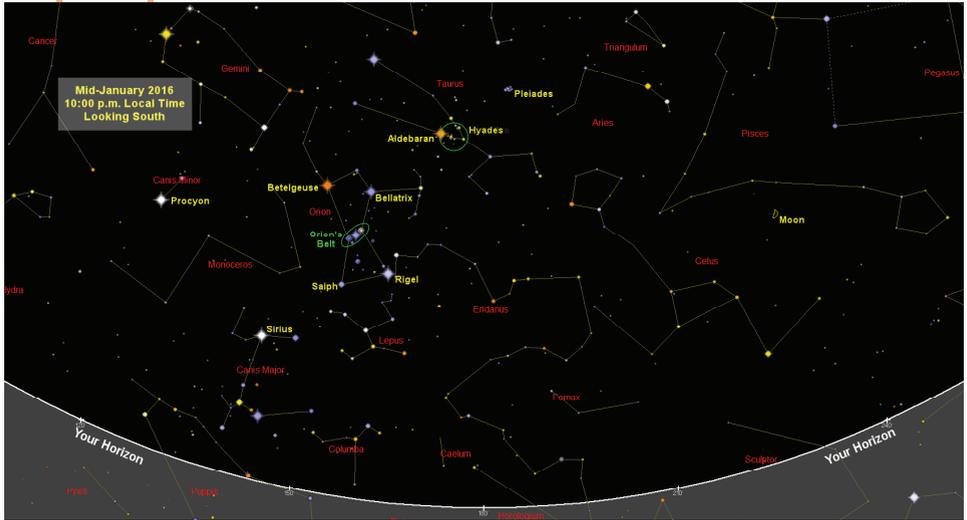
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Mid-January 2016  
10:00 p.m. Local Time  
Looking South

## THE GLITTERING GEMS OF WINTER

If you can deal with the cold weather, midwinter offers up a spectacular sky full of bright stars. So, dress warmly and enjoy the view!

Near the top of this month's Sky Map is the Pleiades star cluster, also known as the Seven Sisters. This tight group of bright stars appears in the historical records of many ancient cultures dating back more than 3,000 years. The Pleiades are mentioned three times in the Bible and were known to peoples as diverse as the Arabs, Japanese, Maori (indigenous people of New Zealand), and Native Americans.

The Pleiades are a good test of your vision. If your eyesight is very sharp, you may be able to discern six or seven of the brightest members of the cluster. Otherwise, you'll see a hazy blob that you can't quite resolve into individual stars. However, the sight in even the smallest binoculars is spectacular, with dozens of stars springing into view.

Below and slightly to the left of the Pleiades is another star cluster, the Hyades. In Greek mythology, the five brightest



**APP EXTRA!**  
TAP TO GET  
A PRINTABLE  
JANUARY  
SKY MAP



**APP EXTRA!**  
TAP TO  
FOLLOW  
OHIOAN JEFF  
DETRAY'S SKY  
ADVENTURES



Hyades are half-sisters of the Pleiades and the daughters of Atlas, who was condemned to forever support the heavens on his broad shoulders. The Hyades form a roughly V-shape arrangement pointing to the right and down. The bright star Aldebaran appears to be part of the cluster but is in fact much closer to us than the stars of the Hyades; Aldebaran is a foreground star that just happens to be in our line of sight. When you look in that direction, you are looking past Aldebaran to the much more distant Hyades.

Down and to the left of Aldebaran and the Hyades stands mighty Orion, the brightest constellation in the whole sky. In mid-December, The Hunter is higher in the sky than at any other time of the year. There is no better time to enjoy Orion!

Orion is loaded with blazing stars. Chief among them are Rigel and Betelgeuse, the 7th and 10th brightest stars in the sky. Compare these two stars carefully, and you may notice a color difference between them. Rigel is an intense white, almost bluish. Betelgeuse is nearly as bright but more yellow-orange in color. At Orion's waist is a close trio of stars comprising his Belt, with the middle one, Alnilam, noticeably brighter than the other two.

At Orion's upper right corner sits Bellatrix, the sky's 27th brightest star and one of many astronomical objects whose names were borrowed by author J. K. Rowling for characters in her Harry Potter books. Below Orion, in the constellation Canis Major, lies Sirius, the brightest star of all and the namesake of a major Harry Potter character. Canis Major is the Greater Dog, and Sirius is also known as the Dog Star.

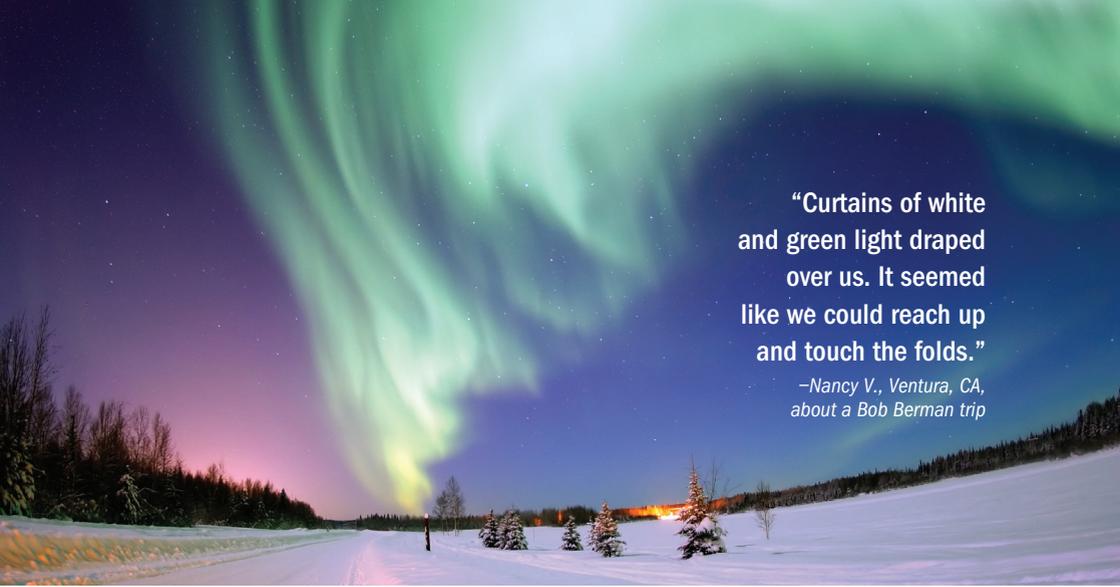
From Sirius, our tour of bright stars concludes with Procyon in the otherwise undistinguished constellation Canis Minor, the Lesser Dog. Procyon's name comes from the ancient Greek for "before the dog." And, indeed, Procyon precedes Sirius (the Dog Star) across the sky.

Although January marks the middle of winter in the Northern Hemisphere, it's worth noting that Earth is closer to the Sun this month than at any other time of year.

You might think that being closer to the Sun would make January one of our warmer months, but our distance from the Sun is only one factor in what determines our temperature. Far more important is the tilt of the Earth on its axis.

Throughout the winter, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted away from the Sun, resulting in fewer hours of sunlight and colder temperatures. This tilt more than compensates for our being a measly couple of million miles closer to the Sun.

*-Jeff DeTray*



“Curtains of white and green light draped over us. It seemed like we could reach up and touch the folds.”

—Nancy V., Ventura, CA,  
about a Bob Berman trip

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LIVING NATURALLY

# WINTER STRESS REMEDIES

PHOTO: THINKSTOCK



**L**ight deprivation, snow and ice storms, dangerous driving conditions, power outages, frozen pipes, the frenzy of winter holidays, overindulgence, weight gain: Winter delivers a load of extra stress to those of us in the colder, darker regions.

While we're powerless to control most of these stress-inducing circumstances, we do

have an abundance of choices for responding to stress and lessening its negative effects on our health and well-being.

My favorite stress-busters don't cost anything, require any special equipment, or take much time. They're safe, always available, and (at least for me) reliable. Each in its own way helps to interrupt the downward spiral of anger, frustration, fear, and anxiety.

## LAUGH

Googling "laughter therapy" brings up 179,000 links. Laughter clubs and laughter events have spread throughout the world, and many people even celebrate Global Belly Laugh Day. With good reason: Laughter measurably reduces stress hormones, boosts the immunity function, and tunes the cardiovascular systems.

Researchers say that laughter is contagious and works its magic best

## LIVING NATURALLY

in company with others. But laughing alone works, too. Fake laughter works. Even anticipating a laugh confers health benefits.

Ho, ho, ho!

### GROAN

People instinctively groan in pain, in pleasure, and in the grip of strong emotion. We groan with effort and we groan when we've finished a piece of hard work.

But what about

intentional groaning, just for relieving stress? It works wonders for me. I do most of my groan therapy in my car (alone), where I don't feel self-conscious. I experiment with the depth, length, and volumes of my groans. I find it fun and exhilarating.

It doesn't interfere with my driving; encourages deeper, more complete breathing; and sometimes lapses into hilarious laughter.

### TAKE A DEEP BREATH

Because we breathe until we stop for good, breathing is the most available and least publicly observable stress-relieving technique that we have.

Most of us breathe shallowly, using only the upper portion of our lungs. Since every cell in the body requires oxygen, breathing better will improve health in many ways.

A minute of  
mindful breathing  
helps to restore  
a balanced perspective.



For pure pleasure  
and stress reduction,  
nothing beats a hot bath.

TAP TO READ  
MORE OF  
MARGARET  
BOYLES'S POSTS  
IN HER LIVING  
NATURALLY  
BLOG

I find that a minute of mindful breathing (if I can remember to do it) helps to restore a balanced perspective when I sense a surge of negative emotion, fear, or anxiety starting to take hold.

### WALK

I'm not talking about frenzied exercise, but a slow, mindful walk of 5 to 10 minutes (around the driveway or parking lot if necessary). Focus simply on putting one

foot in front of the other, following the swing of your arms or the breath going in and out of your nose.

I find a short, slow walk especially useful for breaking the grip of writer's block or tamping down a rush of frustration when things aren't going my way.

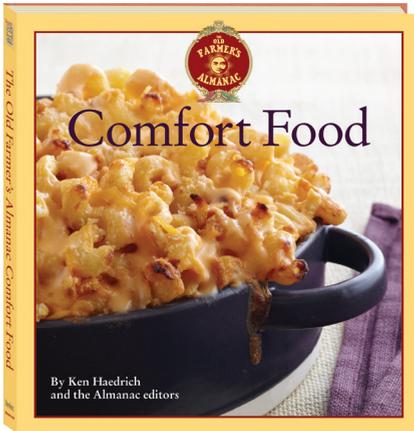
### TAKE A HOT BATH

When it comes to cleanliness, a shower is faster and more convenient. But for

pure pleasure and stress reduction, nothing beats a hot bath. For moisturizing benefits, toss in a tablespoon of olive oil or mix half a cup of uncooked rolled oats with half a cup of honey in an old sock and let it soak along with you.

Caution: If you're pregnant or might be, please consult your midwife or doctor about the possible effects of hot baths on your developing baby. —Margaret Boyles

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FOOD



# CHEESE, PLEASE!

**OUR FAVORITE  
CHEESE RECIPES**

**C**heese can be used in countless ways. A pot of macaroni becomes a satisfying supper when covered with a rich cheese sauce. Pasta tossed with goat cheese and fresh tomatoes or, if the pasta is hot, butter and then Parmesan is an almost-instant and indulgent meal. Adding feta cheese to a common salad can greatly enhance your lunch break. And a quiche is not just a quiche when it's made with a cheese that's new to you: Try Gruyère or Colby, for example.

The United States is the largest manufacturer and importer of cheese in the world, and the choices at specialty shops and even at local supermarkets are dizzying. Don't stick to the same old selections. Try different kinds, especially the farm-made domestic and imported cheeses. We've made it easy for you by collecting a few of our favorite recipes using a variety of cheeses to help get you started.



TAP FOR  
GUIDELINES FOR  
PURCHASING CHEESE  
BY WEIGHT

### HOW MUCH?

When a recipe calls for shredded, crumbled, or grated cheese, use these guidelines for purchasing cheese by weight:

4 ounces cheddar cheese = 1 cup shredded

4 ounces blue or feta cheese = 1 cup crumbled

3 ounces hard-grating cheese = 1 cup grated

FOOD



TAP FOR  
RECIPE

# CAULIFLOWER AND BRIE SOUP

## CAULIFLOWER AND BRIE SOUP

*Serve this rich soup with bread and a salad to make a complete meal. This dish is a good example of how a soft cheese such as Brie can enhance the flavor of soup or stew.*

<b>1</b> tablespoon butter	<b>1</b> cup milk
<b>1</b> tablespoon olive oil	<b>1/8</b> teaspoon cayenne pepper
<b>2</b> cloves garlic, minced	<b>1/2</b> teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
<b>3</b> cups coarsely chopped onion	<b>3</b> tablespoons chopped chives, divided
<b>6</b> cups cauliflower florets	<b>3</b> ounces Brie cheese
<b>4</b> cups chicken stock	salt and white pepper, to taste
<b>3</b> tablespoons uncooked white rice	Parmesan cheese, for garnish
<b>1</b> tablespoon fresh lemon juice	

- 1.** In a saucepan, heat butter and oil. Add garlic and onion and cook until soft. Add cauliflower, chicken stock, and rice. Heat to boiling, reduce heat, and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes, or until cauliflower is very tender. Remove from heat and add lemon juice.
- 2.** Purée mixture in a food processor or blender, then return to saucepan. Heat slowly and stir in milk, cayenne, nutmeg, and 2 tablespoons chives. Cook until soup is hot.
- 3.** Cut off outside of Brie, if it is crusty and hard. Cut cheese into small chunks and add to soup, stirring until slightly melted. Add salt and white pepper.
- 4.** Sprinkle individual servings with remaining chopped chives and Parmesan.

**Makes 6 to 8 servings.**



SHARE  
THIS  
RECIPE

FOOD



TAP FOR  
RECIPE

# PERFECT MACARONI AND CHEESE

## PERFECT MACARONI AND CHEESE

*A cheddar such as Grafton or Tillamook gives this dish legendary flavor.*

**1 pound macaroni**

### TOPPING:

**1 tablespoon butter**

**1/2 cup soft bread crumbs**

### SAUCE:

**3 tablespoons butter**

**3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**

**2-1/2 cups milk**

**salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste**

**4 cups shredded cheddar cheese**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 3-quart casserole.
2. In boiling, salted water, cook pasta al dente. Drain and set aside.
3. *For topping:* Melt butter in a skillet and add bread crumbs. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, or until slightly browned. Set aside.
4. *For sauce:* In a saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Whisk in flour and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, whisking occasionally. Separately, heat milk to almost boiling. Add to butter mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens. Add salt and pepper.
5. Put one-third of macaroni into the bottom of prepared casserole. Sprinkle with one-third of cheese. Cover with one-third of sauce. Repeat, making two more layers. Spoon bread crumbs on top.
6. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until browned and bubbly.

**Makes 6 to 8 servings.**

*—Mary Claire Mallows*

SHARE  
THIS  
RECIPE

FOOD



TAP FOR  
RECIPE

# EGGPLANT PARMESAN ROLL-UPS

## EGGPLANT PARMESAN ROLL-UPS

*This recipe from The Old Farmer's Almanac Comfort Food cookbook contains three different cheeses and is sure to convert anyone who claims not to like eggplant.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>2 large eggplants</b>                                  | <b>2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided</b>                        |
| <b>salt, to taste</b>                                     | <b>3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided</b>                           |
| <b>2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided</b>              | <b>2 tablespoons pesto</b>   |
| <b>2 cups tomato sauce</b>                                | <b>1 cup finely diced cooked Italian sausage or meatballs (optional)</b> |
| <b>2 eggs, divided</b>                                    | <b>freshly ground black pepper, to taste</b>                             |
| <b>1-1/2 cups Italian-style panko or dry bread crumbs</b> |  |
| <b>1 container (15 ounces) ricotta cheese</b>             |  |

- From each eggplant, lengthwise, cut six 1/4-inch-thick slices. (Reserve unused portions for another use.)
  - Salt both sides of each slice. Stand each slice upright in a colander placed inside a bowl. Set aside for 30 minutes, then blot slices with paper towels.
  - Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease two rimmed baking sheets.
  - Lay eggplant slices on prepared pans and brush lightly with oil. Bake for 8 minutes, turn over, and bake for 8 minutes more, or until soft.
  - Grease a large, shallow casserole. Spread tomato sauce in it.
  - Beat 1 egg and set aside.
  - Spread bread crumbs on a plate.
  - Combine ricotta and remaining egg and mix. Add 1 cup mozzarella, 1/2 cup Parmesan, pesto, sausage, if using, and pepper. Mix to blend.
  - Working with one slice of eggplant at a time, smear a spoonful of cheese filling on one side. Beginning at the narrow end, roll eggplant into a neat bundle. Brush with beaten egg, roll in bread crumbs, and place in prepared casserole, seam side down. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Do not crowd in casserole. Sprinkle with remaining cheeses and drizzle with olive oil.
  - Bake uncovered, for 35 to 40 minutes, or until bubbly.
- Makes 6 servings.**



SHARE  
THIS  
RECIPE

“Everything you need to plan your vegetable garden”



## Plan Your Garden the Easy Way

Draw your ideal garden layout

Access detailed growing advice for each plant

View your personalized planting calendar  
& receive planting reminders by email



GARDENING

# How to Grow Mint

*“If any man can name . . . all the varieties of mint, he must know how many fish swim in the Indian Ocean.”*

—Walafrid Strabo, German theologian (c. 808–849)



TAP TO GROW  
MINT IN  
CONTAINED  
AREAS

**T**here are many varieties of mint—all fragrant, whether shiny or fuzzy, smooth or crinkled, bright green or variegated. However, you can always tell a member of the mint family by its square stem. Rolling it between your fingers, you'll notice a pungent scent and think of candy, sweet teas, or maybe even mint juleps. As well as kitchen companions, mints are used as garden accents, ground covers, air fresheners, and herbal medicines. They're as beautiful as they are functional, and they're foolproof to grow, thriving in sun and shade all over North America.

### *Growing Mints*

Mints are vigorous perennials that thrive in light soil with good drainage. Ideally, they prefer a moist but well-drained site, something like their native habitat along stream banks. Most will tolerate some shade, and the variegated types may require some protection from direct sun.

For best growth in confined areas such as containers, topdress plants with a thin layer of compost or organic fertilizer every few months. Aboveground pots will need winter protection in cold climates.

At first, mints develop into well-behaved-looking bushy, upright clumps, but they soon set out to

## HOW TO GROW MINT IN CONTAINED AREAS

Mint can be grown in pots or containers, in tin tubs or wooden boxes, or within terra-cotta drain tiles set vertically in the ground.

One of the best ways to keep mint from spreading is to plant it in a large plastic bucket (the kind in which drywall compound comes) from which the bottom has been cut out. Sink the container into the soil right up to the rim so that it's completely hidden.

## GARDENING

conquer new territory with horizontal runners and underground rhizomes. Unless you block the advance, a pert peppermint plant can turn into a sprawling 4-foot giant in just 1 year. It's not the stuff of horror movies, however. Mints benefit from picking and pruning. They are shallow-rooted and easy to pull out, so there's no reason to worry, as long as you provide physical barriers such as walls, walkways, or containers.

### *Harvesting Mint*

Frequent harvesting is the key to keeping mint plants at their best. Young leaves have more flavor than old ones, and mint can be harvested as soon as it comes up in spring. Although fresh is best and sprigs keep for a few days in water, mint leaves can be frozen or air-dried in bunches.

### *Multiplying Mint*

The best way to propagate mints is by taking cuttings from those that you like best. It's easy—take 6-inch cuttings of rooted stems and plant them horizontally in the soil. Mint stems will also root in a glass of water. Start with a small cutting from an established plant. Any



TAP TO USE  
DRIED MINT

### **HOW TO USE DRIED MINT**

Dried mint is dark green, fragrant, and flavorful—it makes an excellent tea, hot or cold.

Unlike many perennials, which resent being cut back as they go dormant, mints should be cut back to the ground in late fall. This removes hiding places for overwintering pests but may increase the need for mulch where winters are severe or unpredictable.

## GARDENING

gardening friend will give you a cutting of a favorite mint.



### *Cooking With Mint*

Serious cooks generally prefer spearmint for savory dishes and peppermint for desserts. For a delicate mint taste in fruit salads, yogurt, or tea, try apple or orange mint.

Mint lurks in the background in Middle Eastern salads, such as tabouli, and does well with lamb. It also goes with peas, zucchini, fresh beans, marinades for summer vegetables, cold soups, fruit salads, and cheese.

—Cynthia Van Hazinga

#### A FEW OF OUR FAVORITES

Apple/Pineapple Mint  
*Mentha suaveolens*

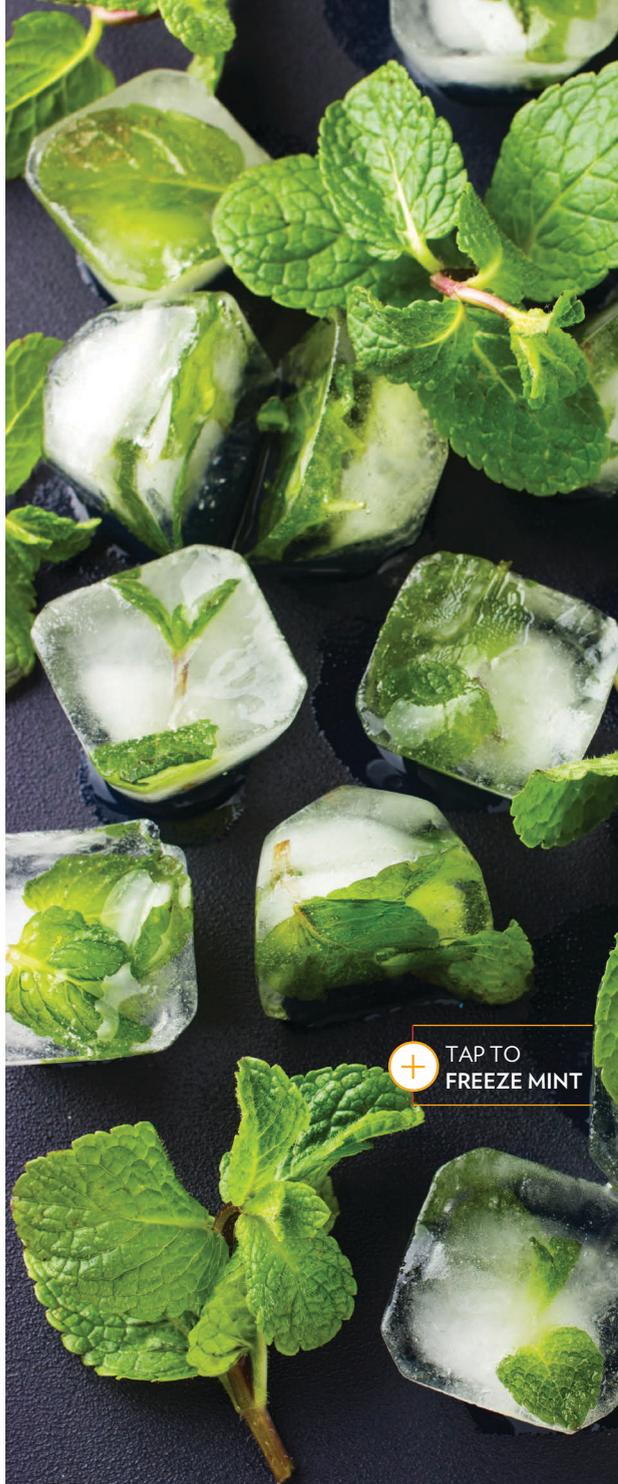
Corsican Mint  
*Mentha requienii*

Pennyroyal  
*Mentha pulegium*

Peppermint  
*Mentha x piperita*

Citrus Mint  
*Mentha x piperita* var. *citrata*

Spearmint  
*Mentha spicata*

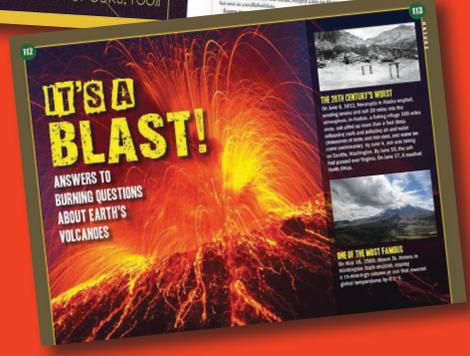
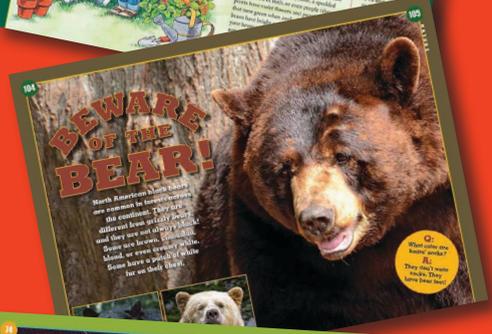
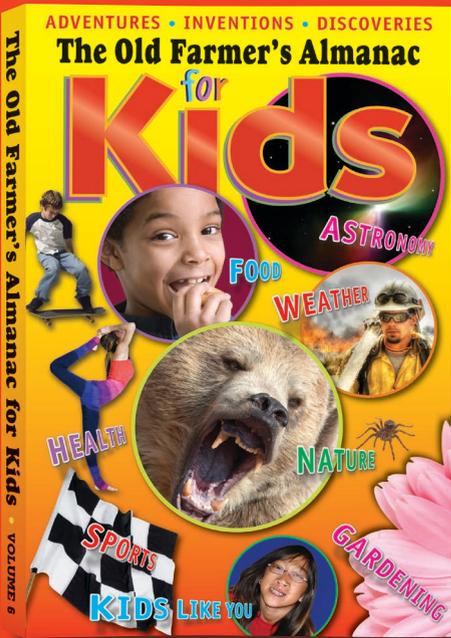


 TAP TO  
FREEZE MINT

### **HOW TO FREEZE MINT**

To freeze, chop mint, fill ice-cube trays about halfway up, add water, and make mint ice cubes. Store them in a bag and defrost when needed.

To keep your mint looking good, renew it every 3 years or so by dividing the roots and resetting strong young clumps, either in spring or fall.



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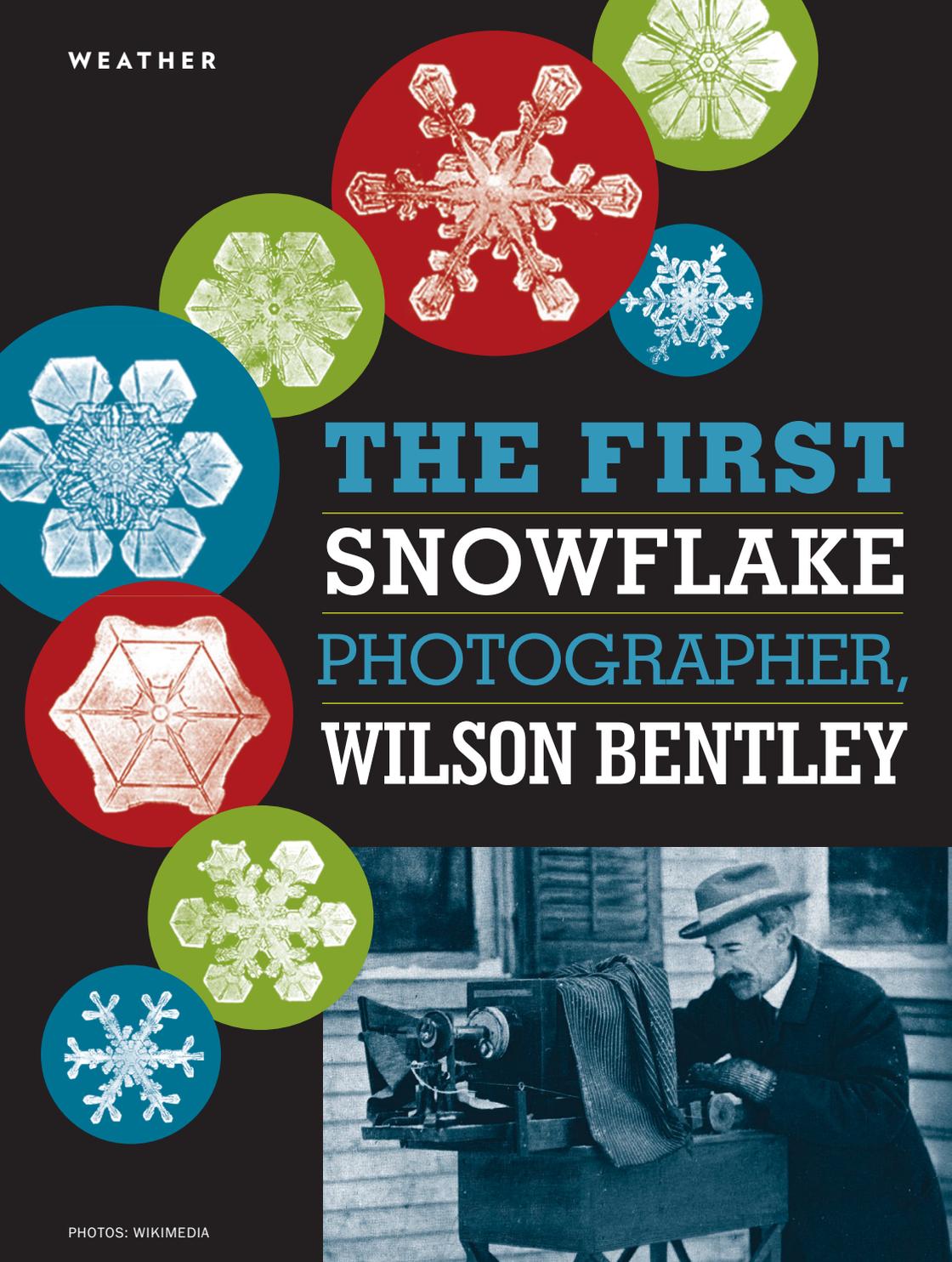
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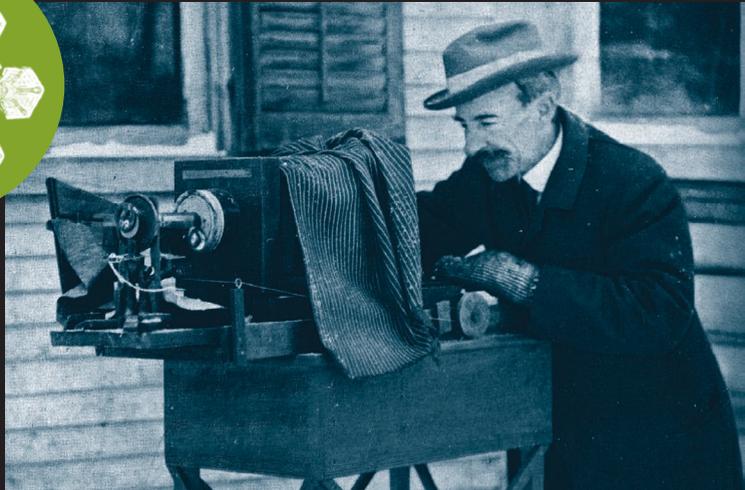
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WEATHER



# THE FIRST SNOWFLAKE PHOTOGRAPHER, WILSON BENTLEY



## WEATHER

**I**s there any truth to the old saw, “No two snowflakes are alike”? Of course, the question could be laid to rest if someone succeeded in observing two identical flakes. The person who had the best opportunity to do so was Wilson A. Bentley, a farmer and amateur meteorologist who for 50 years dedicated himself to observing flakes of snow.

Bentley was born in 1865 and raised on a farm near Jericho, Vt., where his mother, a former teacher, home-schooled him and his brother when they weren't doing farm chores.

On his 15th birthday, Bentley's mother gave him the use of an old microscope. It was snowing that day, and the boy succeeded in getting a glimpse of a six-sided snowflake with the instrument; this was the beginning of a fascination that lasted the rest of his life.

### FUSSING WITH SNOWFLAKES

**W**hen he was 17, Bentley asked his parents to buy him a new, better microscope and a camera. His father argued that “fussing with snowflakes” was a waste of time. Finally, he gave in.

Bentley built a wooden frame to hold the new equipment and then spent 2

years figuring out how to take a picture of a snowflake under a microscope. On January 15, 1885, he did it, creating the world's first photomicrograph (photograph of a microscope image).

Every winter for the rest of his life, Bentley photographed and studied snowflakes in an unheated room in the back of the house.

The process was difficult and cold. Outdoors, he collected snowflakes on a wooden tray that was painted black. Once inside, while still wearing big mittens to keep his hands warm, he used a straw plucked from a broom to pick up the snowflake and place it on a microscope slide. Sometimes he nudged the snowflake into place with a feather.

Then, being careful not to breathe on the flake, he quickly examined and photographed it.

### “LOOK AND MARVEL”

**W**henever it snowed, Bentley caught and captured flakes, sometimes working all night. He found that most snowflakes



## WEATHER

had six sides, but others looked like triangles, spools of thread, or columns—but no two were alike.

Taking photomicrographs was only half of a long process. In those days, glass plates were used to take photographs. Bentley developed the plates in a darkroom under some stairs and then carried the plates to a nearby stream to wash them. Sometimes he did this at night, in the dark.

In warm months, Bentley presented outdoor slide shows about snowflakes to family and friends. He shined a kerosene lamp through a projector that held his glass plates. The lamplight cast the snowflake images onto a bedsheet hung up to serve as a screen.

“The mysteries of the universe are about to reveal themselves,” he would say. “Look and marvel.”

### “SOME WONDERFUL PRIZE”

**B**entley shared his snowflakes with anyone who was interested. He sold prints of his photomicrographs for 5 cents each. He wrote articles for scientists and for magazines such as *National Geographic*.

Occasionally, he felt discouraged that few people seemed to care about his work. Still, he never stopped.

At age 65, he photographed his 5,000th snowflake.

Slowly, people became interested. Reporters sometimes appeared at his door. People began to call him “the Snowflake Man” and “Professor Bentley.” Jewelry makers copied the snowflake designs.

In 1920, Bentley was elected as one of the first members of the American Meteorological Society, which later awarded him its first research grant in 1924.

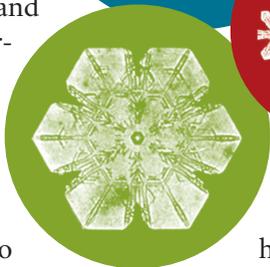
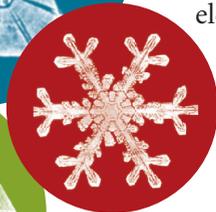
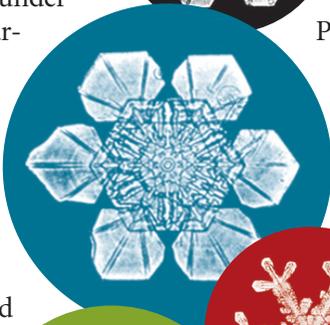
Bentley’s proudest moment came in 1931 upon publication of his book *Snow Crystals*, which contained 2,453 of his photographs.

A few weeks later, on December 7, he wrote in his weather notebook: “Cold north wind afternoon. Snow flying.” This was to be his last entry. He became sick and died of pneumonia on December 23.

—Alice Cary and Chet Raymo

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*This article is excerpted from The Best of The Old Farmer’s Almanac (Random House, 1991) and The Old Farmer’s Almanac for Kids, Volume 3 (2009).*





THE FIRST 3 DAYS OF JANUARY RULE  
THE COMING 3 MONTHS.



## HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Most-recent tabulations span the period 1981 through 2010.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

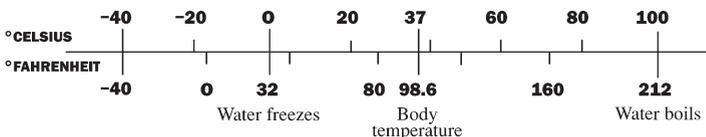


TAP TO GET  
THE **WEATHER**  
HISTORY OF  
THE DAY



LOVE ALL  
THINGS  
WEATHER?  
TAP FOR THE  
**WEATHER**  
FOLKLORE  
OF THE DAY

### CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE





# WEATHER FORECASTS

## MAP OF U.S. WEATHER REGIONS



## MAP OF CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS





## WEATHER FORECASTS

THE FIRST 3 DAYS OF JANUARY RULE  
THE COMING 3 MONTHS.

### U.S. FORECASTS JANUARY

#### REGION 1: NORTHEAST

---

Temp. 19° (4° below avg.); precip. 2" (1" below avg.). 1–6 Snow showers, cold. 7–14 Snow, then flurries, very cold. 15–20 Periods of rain and snow, mild. 21–28 Snow showers, turning very cold. 29–31 Snow, then rain, mild.

#### REGION 2: ATLANTIC CORRIDOR

---

Temp. 32° (3° below avg.); precip. 2.5" (1" below avg.). 1–5 Snow showers, cold. 6–14 Snow, then flurries, very cold. 15–19 Periods of rain and snow north, rain south; mild. 20–28 Snow showers, cold. 29–31 Heavy rain and snow.

#### REGION 3: APPALACHIANS

---

Temp. 27° (3° below avg.); precip. 2.5" (0.5" below avg.). 1–5 Sunny; cold, then mild. 6–13 Snow showers, then flurries, very cold. 14–17 Periods of rain and snow. 18–26 Snow showers, very cold. 27–31 Rain and snow showers, turning quite mild.

#### REGION 4: SOUTHEAST

---

Temp. 41.5° (3° below avg. north, avg. south); precip. 5" (0.5" above avg.). 1–6 Ice north, rain south, then sunny, mild. 7–14 Rain, then sunny, very cold. 15–22 Rain, then sunny, cold. 23–26 Rain, then sunny, very cold. 27–31 Ice to rain north, rainy periods south.

#### REGION 5: FLORIDA

---

Temp. 62° (2° above avg.); precip. 1.5" (1" below avg.). 1–8 A few showers, cool north; sunny, warm south. 9–11 Sunny, cool. 12–14 T-storms, then sunny, cold. 15–19 Sunny, warm. 20–23 T-storms, then sunny, cool. 24–31 Scattered t-storms, mild.



## WEATHER FORECASTS

### REGION 6: LOWER LAKES

---

Temp. 24° (3° below avg.); precip. 2" (0.5" below avg.). 1–7 Lake snows, cold east; sunny, mild west. 8–13 Lake snows, bitter cold. 14–18 Rain and snow showers, mild. 19–26 Lake snows, very cold. 27–31 Rain, then snow showers.

### REGION 7: OHIO VALLEY

---

Temp. 31° (2° below avg.); precip. 2.5" (0.5" below avg.). 1–5 Sunny, turning mild. 6–14 Rain, then snow showers, cold. 15–18 Showers, mild. 19–26 Snow showers, turning bitterly cold. 27–31 Rainy periods, turning mild.

### REGION 8: DEEP SOUTH

---

Temp. 46.5° (1° below avg. north, 4° above south); precip. 4" (1" below avg.). 1–5 Rain and snow, then sunny, mild. 6–13 Rain, then sunny, cold. 14–18 Rain, then sunny, mild. 19–23 Sunny; cold, then mild. 24–27 Snow north, rain south, then sunny, cold. 28–31 Rainy periods, cool.

### REGION 9: UPPER MIDWEST

---

Temp. 8° (5° below avg.); precip. 2" (1" above avg.). 1–10 Snowy periods, cold. 11–16 Lake snows east, flurries west; turning milder. 17–26 Snowy periods, very cold. 27–31 Snowstorm, then sunny, frigid.

### REGION 10: HEARTLAND

---

Temp. 28° (1° below avg.); precip. 0.5" (0.5" below avg.). 1–4 Sunny, cold. 5–18 A few snow showers; cold, then mild. 19–26 Flurries, cold. 27–25 Sunny, turning quite mild. 26–31 Rain to snow, then sunny, very cold.

### REGION 11: TEXAS-OKLAHOMA

---

Temp. 53° (2° above avg. north, 6° above south); precip. 0.5" (1.5" below avg.). 1–4 Showers, turning warm. 5–11 Flurries, cold north; sunny, warm south. 12–19 Sunny; cool, then warm. 20–29 A few showers, turning cooler. 30–31 Snow showers north, sunny south; cold.



## WEATHER FORECASTS

### REGION 12: HIGH PLAINS

---

Temp. 28° (5° below avg. north, 5° above south); precip. 1" (0.5" above avg.). 1–8 Snowy periods, very cold north; sunny, mild south. 9–16 Rain and snow showers, mild north; sunny, warm south. 17–22 Snow, then sunny, turning quite mild. 23–31 Snowy periods, turning very cold.

### REGION 13: INTERMOUNTAIN

---

Temp. 38° (6° above avg.); precip. 1" (0.5" below avg.). 1–4 Rain and snow showers north; sunny, cold south. 5–6 Snowstorm north and central, sunny south. 7–13 Rainy periods north, sunny south; quite mild. 14–25 A few rain and snow showers north, sunny south; mild. 26–31 Snow showers, turning cold.

### REGION 14: DESERT SOUTHWEST

---

Temp. 50° (2° above avg.); precip. 0.2" (0.3" below avg.). 1–4 Sunny, cold. 5–16 Sunny, mild. 17–26 Showers, then sunny, mild. 27–31 Showers, then sunny, cold.

### REGION 15: PACIFIC NORTHWEST

---

Temp. 45° (2° above avg.); precip. 8" (2" above avg.). 1–3 Rainy, mild. 4–12 Snowstorm, then rain, heavy at times, turning mild. 13–19 Occasional rain; cool, then mild. 20–25 Sprinkles, mild. 26–31 Rain and wet snow, then sunny, cold.

### REGION 16: PACIFIC SOUTHWEST

---

Temp. 53° (1° below avg.); precip. 1" (2" below avg.). 1–2 Sunny, cool. 3–7 Rainy periods, cool. 8–12 Showers north, sunny south; turning warm. 13–19 Showers, then sunny, cool. 20–23 Sunny; cool north, warm south. 24–31 Sunny, cool.



## WEATHER FORECASTS

### REGION 17: ALASKA

---

Temp.  $-16^{\circ}$  N,  $25^{\circ}$  S ( $4^{\circ}$  below avg.); precip. 0.2" N, 5" S (avg.). 1–9 Flurries, turning mild N+WC; snow, then clear, bitter cold EC; clear, very cold S. 10–23 Flurries, very cold N+C; snowy periods, some heavy, cold S. 24–28 Snow showers, cold. 29–31 Flurries, cold N; snow, mild C; rain and snow, quite mild S.

**KEY:** Panhandle (P), Aleutians (A), north (N), central (C), south (S), west-central (WC), east-central (EC), south-central (SC), elsewhere (EW)

### REGION 18: HAWAII

---

Temp.  $73^{\circ}$  (avg.); precip. 5.5" (3" above avg.). 1–4 Rainy periods, heavy E; cool. 5–9 Rain and heavy t-storms C+W, sunny E; turning warm. 10–14 Scattered showers C, a few t-storms E+W; cool. 15–18 Scattered showers, turning warm. 19–28 A few t-storms, cool. 29–31 Sunny, warm.

**KEY:** east (E), central (C), west (W)

**IF BIRDS BEGIN TO WHISTLE IN JANUARY,  
FROSTS TO COME.**

## CANADIAN FORECASTS JANUARY

### REGION 1: ATLANTIC CANADA

---

Temp.  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $1^{\circ}\text{C}$  below avg.); precip. 80mm (20mm below avg.). 1–9 Snow showers, turning frigid. 10–13 Snowstorm north, flurries south; cold. 14–19 Snowstorm, then flurries, mild. 20–23 Snowstorm, then flurries, cold. 24–29 Snowstorm, then sunny, very cold. 30–31 Snow to rain, turning mild.

### REGION 2: SOUTHERN QUEBEC

---

Temp.  $-12.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  below avg.); precip. 35mm (40mm below avg.). 1–7 Snow showers, turning very cold. 8–12 Snow, then flurries, very cold. 13–18 Snow, then flurries, turning mild. 19–23 Snowstorm, then sunny, very cold. 24–29 Snowstorm, then flurries, very cold. 30–31 Snowstorm, milder.



## CANADIAN WEATHER FORECASTS

### RÉGION 2: QUÉBEC DU SUD

---

Temp.  $-12,5^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  en-dessous de la moy.); précip. 35mm (40mm en-dessous de la moy.). 1–7 Chutes de neige, avec fort refroidissement. 8–12 Neige, puis rafales, très froid. 13–18 Neige, puis rafales, avec radoucissement. 19–23 Tempête de neige, puis ensoleillé, très froid. 24–29 Tempête de neige, puis rafales, très froid. 30–31 Tempête de neige, plus doux.

### REGION 3: SOUTHERN ONTARIO

---

Temp.  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $3^{\circ}\text{C}$  below avg.); precip. 20mm (20mm below avg.). 1–3 Flurries, cold east; snowy, mild west. 4–14 Snow showers, cold. 15–20 Flurries, mild east; snowy periods, mild central; flurries, cold west. 21–27 Flurries, very cold. 28–31 Snow to rain east, snowstorm west; turning mild.

### REGION 4: THE PRAIRIES

---

Temp.  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $5^{\circ}\text{C}$  below avg.); precip. 10mm (10mm below avg.). 1–9 Snowy periods, bitter cold. 10–20 Snow showers; mild, then bitter cold. 21–25 Snowy periods; mild, then very cold. 26–31 Snow showers; mild, then very cold.

### REGION 5: SOUTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

---

Temp.  $1^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $1^{\circ}\text{C}$  below avg.); precip. 160mm (10mm above avg.). 1–4 Rainy coast, snow showers inland. 5–9 Blizzard coast, snow showers inland; very cold. 10–14 Rainy coast, flurries inland; mild. 15–16 Snowstorm. 17–20 Rainy coast, snow showers inland; mild. 21–22 Sunny, mild. 23–24 Heavy snow northwest, heavy rain southwest, sunny east; mild. 25–31 Rain and snow showers, then sunny, cold.

### REGION 6: YUKON

---

Temp.  $-32^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $6^{\circ}\text{C}$  below avg.); precip. 20mm (5mm below avg.). 1–11 Flurries, bitter cold. 12–25 Snow showers, very cold. 26–31 Flurries, cold.

### REGION 7: NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

---

Temp.  $-31^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  below avg.); precip. 7mm (5mm below avg.). 1–11 Flurries, very cold. 12–22 Flurries; mild, then frigid. 23–25 Clear; mild north, frigid south. 26–31 Flurries, frigid.



## MIDWINTER WEATHER FOLKLORE

**J**ANUARY IS THE SUBJECT OF many weather maxims. As we bundle up for these sometimes dreary days, it's fun to consider how much of this month's timeless wisdom will hold true.

### THE FIRST 3 DAYS OF JANUARY RULE THE COMING 3 MONTHS.

While the day-to-day weather can change very quickly as individual weather systems move across the country, the overall weather pattern tends to stay the same for 90 to 120 days, anchored by teleconnections such as El Niño and the North

Atlantic Oscillation, which remain relatively stable. Thus, in most cases, however much the weather has departed from normal in recent days is likely to be the overall direction of departure in the coming months.

### IF BIRDS BEGIN TO WHISTLE IN JANUARY, FROSTS TO COME.

Birds are usually around and active in the northern states during the heart of winter only when temperatures are unusually mild, which means that the steering winds high aloft have a large north-south component. The southerly component is what brought



the warm weather, but, as those steering winds move, they will become northerly, bringing along very cold air.

### **ALWAYS EXPECT A THAW IN JANUARY.**

The “January thaw” is a name given to a mild spell in January in places where temperatures are below freezing most days. While it does not occur every year, given the normal variations in temperature and weather patterns, most Januaries have at least a few days when this happens.

### **AS THE DAY LENGTHENS, THE COLD STRENGTHENS.**

The winter solstice occurs right around December 21 in the Northern

Hemisphere. This is the day when the Sun is farthest south and the duration of daylight is least. With the Sun at its weakest, you might expect that this would be the coldest day, on average—but it is not.

Think about what happens when you put a tray of water in the freezer. It does not become ice instantly, because it first has to give off its stored heat. The same thing happens with Earth, so the coldest period occurs, on average, about a month after the winter solstice, even though there is more sunlight then. Hence the coldest temperatures typically occur as days are getting longer.

—*Michael Steinberg*, Old Farmer’s Almanac meteorologist



# HUMOR ME

## GRINS AND GROANS FROM THE ALMANAC



### About the People Who Drink Themselves into Bolivia

WE HAVE FUN COLLECTING MALAPROPISMS, THE MISUSE OF A WORD THAT SOUNDS SIMILAR TO THE CORRECT WORD THAT THE PERSON HAD IN MIND (SUCH AS “OBLIVION”).

A friend of ours once noted that she preferred “**decapitated coffee.**”

Hospital “sightings” have included “**old timer’s disease,**” “**prostrate cancer,**” “**chickenpops,**” “**smiling mighty Jesus**” (for spinal meningitis), and “**65 roses**” (for cystic fibrosis).

A longtime Navy man was once reported to have died from “**sea roaches of the liver.**”

One woman told us that she was going through “**mental pause,**” before adding that her husband had quit

smoking, “**cold duck.**” (Did she mean that he had quit drinking Cold Duck?)

Another was said to have told a counselor that she couldn’t have a sexually transmitted disease because, despite a recent “**falling down,**” both she and her husband were unfailingly “**monotonous.**”

And then there was the gastrointestinal patient who apparently got confused on the word “spectrum” and said of a beautiful sunset, “**It had all the colors of the rectum.**”



## HOOKED

A sailor meets a pirate in a bar. The pirate has a peg leg, a hook, and an eye patch.

“How’d you end up with a peg leg?” asks the sailor. “I was swept overboard in a storm,” says the pirate. “A shark bit off me whole leg.”

“Wow!” said the sailor. “What about the hook?”

“We were boarding an enemy ship, battling the other seamen with swords. One of them cut me hand clean off.”

“And the eye patch?”

“A seagull dropping fell in me eye,” replied the pirate.

“You lost your eye to a seagull dropping?” the sailor asked incredulously.

“It was me first day with the hook.”



## THE FBI ORDERS PIZZA

It seems that FBI agents conducted a raid on a psychiatric hospital that was under investigation for some sort of medical fraud. After hours of reviewing thousands of medical records, the dozens of agents involved had worked up quite an appetite, so the agent in charge of the investigation called a nearby pizza parlor to order a quick dinner delivered for his colleagues.

Because they were taping all conversations at the hospital at the time, the following conversation was recorded.

**Agent:** Hello. I would like to order 19 large pizzas and 67 cans of soda.

**Pizza Man:** *And where would you like them delivered?*

**Agent:** We’re over at the psychiatric hospital.

**Pizza Man:** *The psychiatric hospital?*

**Agent:** That’s right. I’m an FBI agent.

**Pizza Man:** *You’re an FBI agent?*

**Agent:** That’s correct. Just about everybody here is.

**Pizza Man:** *And you’re at the psychiatric hospital?*

**Agent:** That’s correct. And make sure you don’t go through the front doors. We have them locked. You will have to go around to the back to the service entrance to deliver the pizzas.

**Pizza Man:** *And you say that you’re all FBI agents?*

**Agent:** That’s right. We’ve been here all day and we’re starving.

**Pizza Man:** *How are you going to pay for all of this?*

**Agent:** I have my checkbook right here.

**Pizza Man:** *And you’re all FBI agents?*

**Agent:** That’s right. Everyone here is an FBI agent. Can you remember to bring the pizzas and sodas to the service entrance in the rear? We have the front doors locked.

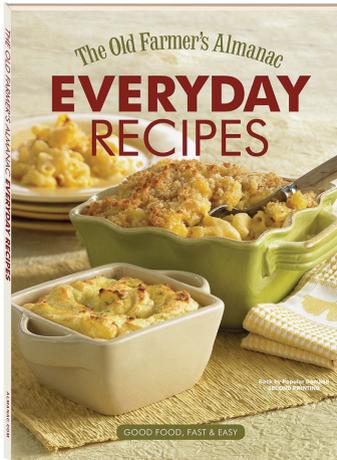
**Pizza Man:** *I don’t think so.*

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Strata



Stuffed Red Peppers



Peachy Almond Cake



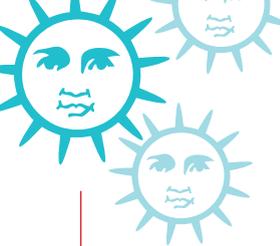
Perfect Macaroni and Cheese



Mild and Meaty Lasagna



Clam-Stuffed Mushrooms



# WHAT'S NEXT



## LIVING NATURALLY

All About Aloe Vera



## CALENDAR

Full Snow Moon, Leap Day, Folklore Fun, Chinese New Year and Calendar



## FOOD

Maple Syrup Recipes



## ASTRONOMY

Explore with our Sky Map



## GARDENING

Starting Seeds



## NATURE

Invasive Species Run Wild

**PLUS:** Weather Update • U.S. and Canadian Weather Forecasts  
• Best Days to Do Things • Gardening by the Moon's Sign • Humor • and much more in the February *EXTRA!*