



SP Survival Tips: Boston Winters

By **Michael Eilenberg**

You step outside to go to class. A blast of frigid, biting air hits you in the face, the ground is riddled with sheets of ice, and you wish you had prepared better for Boston winter weather. Sound like a situation you'd like to avoid? If you're new to colder climates, or just want to make sure you're ready for anything the Boston winter can throw at you, read on to find out what you can do to keep warm and safe this winter.

Boston is not the coldest of climates, thanks in part to its proximity to the ocean, but the winters here can certainly pack a punch. In January, the average high/low temperatures are 36/22°F (2/-6°C), and wind can make it seem much colder. So, what can you do? Ask any cold-weather survival expert, and they'll tell you the key to staying warm is wearing layers. The air trapped between layers magnifies the insulating power of clothing. Plus, you can always adjust your outfit by taking off or putting on layers as needed. For these reasons, it's generally better to

wear two to four thinner layers rather than one thick one.

You might also want to invest in some protection for your hands and feet. Mittens are considerably warmer than gloves since your fingers are together in one pocket, and good water-resistant boots can be a foot-saver after a snowfall when there is lots of slush left from the plows.

Lastly, don't forget a hat! A huge amount of heat can escape from your head and neck, even if you've got ten thick layers everywhere else. Ski Market on Commonwealth Ave is one of many local stores where you can get these items.

But, when you do get inside, take things off! Otherwise, that same jacket that insulated you from the icy gusts will also insulate you from the warm radiators

Of course, there are ways to avoid the cold altogether (aside from staying in your room). MIT offers many shuttle services around campus. (Schedules on SPTV, the SP website, or MIT's Parking & Transportation website.) The Boston T can also be a great resource if you're off campus.

You can also rent electric space heaters and radiators at the front desk, if you need so. You might also consider purchasing a humidifier - it can keep your skin from drying out and reduce your chances of getting sick, all while making your room feel warmer. Though – make sure you keep your window shut, especially if you leave your room for a while. Otherwise, the room temperature can drop enough to freeze the wall pipes, leading to costly damages.

Aside from the cold, you'll find that often there might be freezing rain, sleet, or snow that melts and freezes overnight. Usually the streets and sidewalks are promptly shoveled and salted, but not always immediately. Road ice is often very hard to see, and can make for some pretty bad falls if you're not careful. Watch your step!

All that said, we have had a number of "mild" winters in the past few years, so it's possible we'll see another one. Nevertheless, luck favors the prepared. Stay warm, be safe, and enjoy the winter!



The Brunch Experience @ SP

By Amy Bilton

As I opened the door the kitchen, I wondered how in the world we would be able to prepare a hot, delicious brunch for 700 people in less than 4.5 hours. This was the biggest brunch of the year, and we had 720 eggs to cook, 16 pounds of bacon to fry, 80 pounds of potatoes to chop, 1000 pancakes to flip and 20 boxes of fruit to slice. With doubts resonating in our minds, Himanshu and I started our preparations. Then, the miracle occurred.

These miracles tend to occur frequently at Sidney Pacific. Familiar and new faces slowly began trickling into the kitchen. They started to work, cracking eggs, flipping pancakes, slicing bread and chopping fruit. Before I knew it, the kitchen was jam packed with SP residents who had come out to lend a hand. My doubts disappeared as we flew through all our tasks. Due to our outstanding volunteers, we finished all preparations with 30 minutes to spare! We were all able to sit and enjoy the fruits of our labor together before the masses converged

on the multi-purpose room.

It's these miracles that make me proud to be Sidney Pacific resident and are the main reason that I became Brunch Chair. Volunteering at brunch is one of the easiest and tastiest ways to get involved in life at Sidney Pacific. New volunteers are always welcome and no experience is required. The next brunch is on Dec. 13, I can't wait to see you all!

Please write to us at sp-brunch-chair@mit.edu if you have any questions about the brunches.



The dedicated team of SP Brunch Volunteers

A Thanksgiving Thank-You

By **Po-Ru Loh**

'Tis the season for giving... but for some in S-P – namely, our hardworking volunteers – that season lasts all year.

What makes S-P more than "just another graduate residence" is our wealth of community activities – cultural, social, and educational programs – and resources. What makes all of these offerings possible is, rather remarkably, the effort of our own residents – none of whom are paid to do the job. And what makes their contributions all the more remarkable is that many of our behind-the-scenes helpers

receive little or no recognition for their work: on the contrary, some only receive complaints when things don't work.

to be respectful and responsible and to be good neighbors – by doing so, you contribute to our community as well.

Thank-you to all who've been getting involved this past semester and helping maintain our tradition of excellence. Thank-you to the master organizers who've been cooking up and running our events, and thank-you equally to the reliable hands and feet who've been doing the actual cooking and running around. Thank-you just as much, if not more, to those who diligently look after the mundane: the folks who keep our printers printing and our computers computing, our fish fed and our greenery growing, and much more. Finally, thank-you to all who simply make it a point

The greatest reward of serving on SPEC has been the chance to work alongside and get to know many of you leaders and helpers. Best wishes for the end of the semester and the holiday season, and when we all return, here's to one more semester of (working) fun!

Sidney Pacific Speaker

Newsletter Chair
Manya Ranjan

The Speaker is published on a monthly basis to serve the needs of the Sidney Pacific Graduate Community. Submissions of articles, photos, events, and other items of interest can be sent to:
sp-newsletter-chair@mit.edu



It is the whole ecosystem at Sidney Pacific that sets it apart from the other graduate dorms. The residents have really made the place their home away from home! The SPEC has been a crucial enabler of this spirit at the dorm.

God & The Strongest Battalions: A Technological Perspective on the American Civil War



Professor Roe Smith

Professor of the History of Technology

**Thursday – December 10th – 6:30pm
Sidney-Pacific Multipurpose Room**

**Lecture open to the MIT Community
& followed by a dinner**

**RSVP for dinner: sp-cosi-chair@mit.edu
sp.mit.edu/cosi**

