

# DAISY'S MARKET

Enjoy the Slow Days

January 2026



*Written by Mema Keco*





# ENJOY THE SLOW DAYS

2025 was a long year filled with plenty of changes, realizations, and stressful moments. Because of that, I want to embrace the slow during the next two or so months when the weather outside is frightful and below zero. It's okay to "hibernate" during the colder months because we all deserve to give ourselves a chance to appreciate each day as it comes and conserve our energy before spring arrives. Within this volume, I want to show how taking care of your body, soul, home, and others will allow you to rest and be grateful for each day.



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# CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP RECIPE

Chicken noodle soup does feed the soul, especially on cold winter days or when you start to feel a little sick-like. I've made this soup a few times in the past two months already and I'm planning on making it over and over again for the rest of the winter season. It's nourishing, delicious, and stores well in the fridge or freezer as leftovers.



# CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP RECIPE

Makes ~4 Servings | Time: ~1 Hour

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 Small Yellow Onions
- 3 Large Carrots
- 4 Stalks of Celery
- 3-4 Cloves of Garlic
- 2 Tablespoons of Butter
- 10 Cups of Chicken Stock or Broth
- 1 Teaspoon of Thyme
- 1 Teaspoon of Oregano
- ½ Teaspoon of Cayenne
- 8 Oz of Egg Noodles

## FOR CHICKEN:

- 1.5-2 Pounds of Chicken Breasts or Thighs
- ½ Teaspoon of Salt
- ½ Teaspoon of Black Pepper
- 1 Teaspoon of Garlic Powder
- 1 Teaspoon of Onion Powder
- Olive Oil

## TOOLS:

- Large Pot
- Large Bowl
- Oven-Safe Sheet Pan
- Knife
- Tongs
- Stirring Utensil
- Thermometer
- Forks or KitchenAid Stand Mixer Mixer (for shredding chicken)
- Oven Mitt & Pot Holder

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees and place the large pot on medium-high heat.
2. Coat both sides of the chicken breasts or thighs with olive oil and the seasoning mix (*salt, black pepper, garlic powder, onion powder*).
3. Sear the chicken breasts in the large pot for about 2 minutes on each side or until the chicken starts to darken in color.
4. Place the chicken breasts onto a sheet pan (greased or silicone baking mat), and put in the oven until they are fully cooked. Use a cooking thermometer to ensure they are cooked to an inner temperature of 165 degrees. Mine typically cook in about 20-30 minutes depending on the thickness.
5. Dice up the carrots, celery, yellow onions, and garlic cloves into small pieces and toss into a large bowl.



I use a large bowl to collect the carrots, celery, onions, and garlic for easier handling and clean-up.



My hands hurt while shredding chicken, so I opt to use my KitchenAid Stand Mixer. It's more clean-up, but easier on the hands.

6. Add the butter to the same large pot you seared the chicken in and toss all the ingredients from the bowl into the large pot. Stir for a few minutes before adding in the thyme, oregano, and cayenne.
7. Cook until the onions turn translucent.
8. Add in the chicken stock or broth and simmer for about 15 minutes until the carrots are soft.



I use Better Than Bouillon to save money (and space) on chicken stock/broth.

9. Once the chicken is cooked, either use two forks to shred into smaller pieces or place them into a KitchenAid Stand Mixer with the paddle attachment for an "easier on your hands" option.
10. Toss in the shredded chicken to the large pot.
11. Toss in the egg noodles. I use premade egg noodles, but you could totally make your own if you have more time.
12. Cook on the stove for about 5 minutes.
13. Serve with fresh bread, oyster crackers or even saltines.

*Enjoy!*

# DRY JANUARY MOCKTAILS

## BLACKBERRY & GINGER SMASH

Makes ~2 Servings | Time: ~40 Minutes

### INGREDIENTS:

- ½ Cup (4 Shot Glasses) of Blackberry & Ginger Syrup
- ½ Cup (2 Shot Glasses) of Lime Juice
- Fresh Mint Leaves for Garnish
- Pinch of Salt
- Ginger Soda or Beer
- Ice
- Sugar Rim (Optional)

### FOR BLACKBERRY & GINGER SYRUP:

- 1 Cup of Blackberries
- 2 Thumbs of Ginger Root
- 1/2 Cup of Sugar
- 1 Cup of Water
- Pinch of Salt
- Drizzle of Honey (Optional)

### TOOLS:

- Saucepan
- Stirring Utensil
- Measuring Cups
- Strainer
- Jar (storing leftover syrup)
- Shot Glass
- Juicer (if using fresh limes)
- Whiskey Glasses/Lowball
- Knife



### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Place the saucepan on the stove at medium heat.
2. Peel and slice up the ginger thumbs into smaller chunks, then toss into saucepan with blackberries, sugar, water, a pinch of salt, and if you want it sweeter, add a drizzle of honey.
3. Simmer for about 20 minutes until the water has mostly evaporated and the mixture has thickened.
4. Let the syrup cool for about 10 minutes.
5. Add ice to the lowball/whiskey glasses.
6. Pour in one (1) shot glass worth of lime juice in each glass.
7. Pour in two (2) shot glasses worth of your blackberry & ginger syrup in each glass.
8. Top with ginger beer and garnish with mint leaves and lime slices (optional).



Enjoy!

For the sugar rim, feel free to use granulated sugar, or check out your local spice shop as they may carry fun flavored sugar like this blueberry one I bought locally.

I like to use these large cube ice molds for my whiskey/lowball glasses for keeping the drink colder longer and aesthetic purposes.

If you haven't heard of Dry January, it's a challenge for people who don't want to drink alcohol for the entirety of January. I've done this challenge a few times and my last year's new years resolution was to slim down on drinking alcohol altogether. With that, I ended up making dozens of mocktails, which are crafted non-alcoholic drinks, throughout 2025 and found them to be fun, tasty, and the mornings after, a lot more enjoyable.

## CRAN-ORANGE "MOCK"INI

Makes ~2 Servings | Time: ~15 Minutes

### INGREDIENTS:

- Orange-Cinnamon Sugar
- 1 Cup of Orange Juice
- ½ Cup of Cranberry Juice
- 1.5 Tablespoons (*1 Shot Glass*) of Lemon Juice
- Sparkling Water
- Ice
- Cranberries & Orange Slices for Garnish

### FOR SUGAR RIM:

- 1 Tablespoon of Sparkling Sugar (*granulated sugar works too*)
- Zest of 1 Orange
- Dash of Cinnamon

### TOOLS:

- Cocktail Shaker
- 1 Small Plate
- Shot Glass and/or Tablespoon
- Juicer (*if using fresh lemons*)
- Martini Glasses
- Cocktail Picks or Toothpicks (*for garnishes*)
- Knife

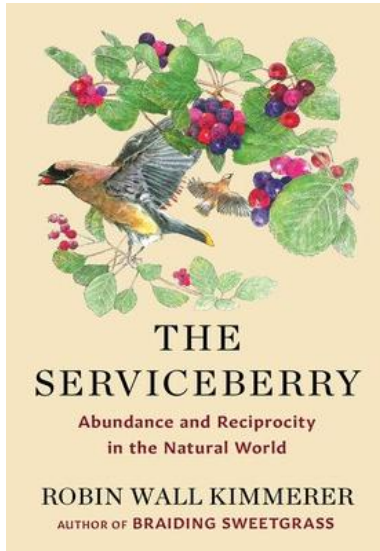
### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pour the sparkling sugar (or granulated sugar) onto a plate and zest one orange on top. Add a dash of cinnamon as well.
2. Cut 2 orange slices for garnish and 1 for rimming the glasses.
3. Rim the martini glasses with an orange slice, then swirl in the sugar rim.
4. Pour ice into your martini glasses and a splash of water to "chill" them before use.
5. In your cocktail shaker, add in the orange juice, cranberry juice, lemon juice, and ice. Shake well.
6. Dump out the ice and water from your martini glasses.
7. Strain the cocktail shaker mixture into the martini glasses. Top with sparkling water.
8. Garnish with cranberries and/or orange slices (*optional*).

*Enjoy!*

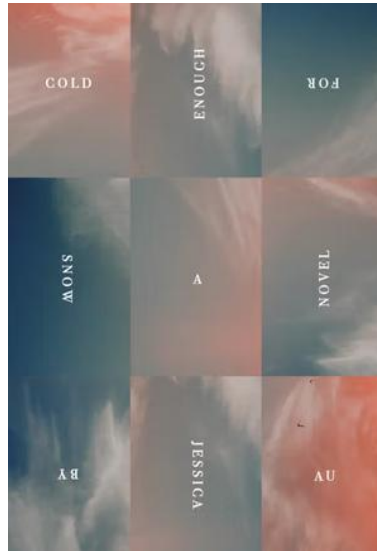






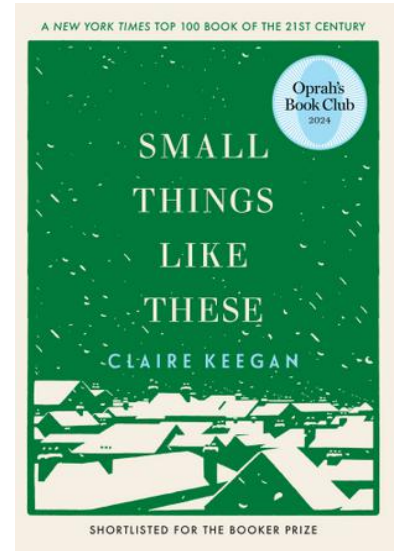
**THE SERVICEBERRY:  
ABUNDANCE AND RECIPROCITY  
IN THE NATURAL WORLD**

*By: Robin Wall Kimmerer*



**COLD ENOUGH FOR SNOW**

*By: Jessica Au*



**SMALL THINGS LIKE THESE**

*By: Claire Keegan*

*There is a movie of the same title starring  
Cillian Murphy that is beautiful as well.*



**ICE PRINCESS**

*Directed by: Tim Fywell*



**LITTLE WOMEN  
(1994 OR 2019)**

*Directed by: Gillian Armstrong  
(1994)*

*Directed by: Greta Gerwig  
(2019)*



**THE HOLDOVERS**

*Directed by: Alexander Payne*



# SHORT READS & COZY SCENES

## **JUMP-START YOUR 2026 READING GOAL**

I love reading, but sometimes it can be hard to find an interesting book to jump-start your 2026 reading goal. One piece of advice I've used is to start with a short book (novella) that's about 100 pages that you can finish in a few days. I've used this "trick" during times of the year where I have finished an intense or long book, need a palette cleanser, or just need to read something to stop doom scrolling on my phone.

I chose three books that I have read somewhat recently that are both short and interesting.

## **FEEL-GOOD MOVIES**

One of my favorite parts about winter is snuggling with my dogs on the couch with a heated blanket to watch a feel-good movie with plenty of snacks around. Honestly, I do this year-round, but it feels extra cozy when it's snowing outside.

I have picked three movies that I have recently watched or end up rewatching year after year that are cozy, feel-good vibes.



# MOISTURIZE YOUR SKIN & BODY

Dry January can definitely have more than one meaning especially when it comes to your skin. I naturally already have dry skin, so once winter hits, my skin is craving more moisture. I have listed a few tips, tricks, and products that have helped my skin previously during colder months.

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## 1. USE A HUMIDIFIER

During the winter, there is less moisture in the air, which is why the air feels dry. To fix this, I have used a humidifier in my home because it puts moisture back into the air. This has helped keep my skin from drying out too much.

*There are plenty of humidifiers available online and in-store in a range of prices.*

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## 2. DRINK LOTS OF LIQUID

This sounds basic and boring, but it's true. Drink plenty of liquids during the winter season such as water and juices. Soups, smoothies, & fruit are also a great way to absorb more liquids to prevent the skin from drying out.

*If you struggle to drink plain water like I do, add some lemon or cucumber slices into your water for flavoring.*







## 3. USE A GENTLE CLEANSER

I would opt in for a gentle cleanser during the winter season to help prevent extreme exfoliating. When I have used a deeper cleanser, it has stripped the natural oils of my skin, making my skin drier.



*I have dry skin for most of the year, so I end up using the Tatcha The Rice Wash Skin-Softening Cleanser, because it's gentle on sensitive skin, but still cleanses well.*

## 4. APPLY A THICK MOISTURIZER

After cleansing my face, I will use my serum, then I will apply a thicker moisturizer during the drier season. This helps ensure that my skin gains back some moisture and stays on there.

*My daily moisturizer is the Summer Fridays Cloud Dew Gel Cream Moisturizer, but during nighttime or the drier seasons, I will use my Tatcha The Dewy Skin Cream Plumping & Hydrating Moisturizer as it's thick and creamy.*



## 5. PUT ON BODY BUTTER & LOTION

After taking a shower, I moisturize the rest of my body with a body butter, cream, or lotion because there's skin all over! I definitely notice on days when I don't apply some sort of cream, that my elbows, knees, feet, and especially on my hands, feel drier than normal.

*There are plenty of body butters and creams on the market today, so use what you have most available.*







# TAKE SMALL STEPS IN DECLUTTERING

Spring may seem like a ways away, but it will eventually come. With that, the urge to spring clean in March and April can be overwhelming. Especially when you want to throw everything out, but you don't have time with everything else going on in your life.

What I've done in the past is to start small when decluttering, and it doesn't have to be in the spring time. During the winters here in Iowa, there will be blizzards, below zero temperatures, and icy roads which means, not leaving your home unless required to. I find this the perfect time to start decluttering or organizing little bits and pieces of my home.

# 10 SPOTS IN 10 WEEKS

THERE ARE ABOUT 10 WEEKS BETWEEN JANUARY 1, 2026 AND THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING, MARCH 20, 2026.

In the check list below, I included 10 small spots in your home that you can declutter or organize every week until spring arrives to hopefully, lessen the overwhelming feelings.



## LINEN CLOSET

Towels, Bed Sheets, Pillowcases



## MAKEUP PRODUCTS

Expired or Don't Use Anymore



## WINTER GEAR

Coats, Hats, Boots, Gloves/Mittens



## UTENSILS & SILVERWARE

Mismatched or Don't Use Anymore



## PANTRY

Expired, Dried Out, Won't Use



## ELECTRONIC CABLES

Unused or Don't Have Anymore



## SHOES

Haven't Worn or Uncomfortable



## CAR INTERIOR

Take out Trash & Vacuum



## MEDICINE CABINET

Expired or Don't Need Anymore



## UNDERWEAR & SOCKS

Mismatched Socks or Holes



Start small by cleaning out your first aid kit.



Don't buy new containers, repurpose packaging.

A drawer a week adds up!



*As you start to declutter, consider donating your items to your family, friends, local shelter, school, or church as you may not find use for it anymore, but someone else may really need it.*



# TRASH INTO ART: JUNK JOURNAL

I spent 2025 junk journaling and I fell in love with it! It provided me a safe space to not create a “perfect” layout and just to enjoy the process. It also allowed me to appreciate each moment more especially picking up those random bits and pieces from my travels. I’ve looked back on my junk journal spreads and am incredibly grateful to have experienced so much in 2025.

## HOW TO START:

### 1. GRAB A NOTEBOOK

Any notebook will do for a junk journal. Whether it’s lined, dotted, blank, small, large, whatever. It’s your journal, use what you currently have or prefer.

*For 2026, I bought the Composition (B5) Softcover Plain Notebook from Leuchtturm1917 in Lilac. For 2025, I used an A5 notebook and it worked great!*



### 2. SCISSORS & ADHESIVE

You don’t need too many supplies for junk journaling, but I would recommend having scissors, tape, and glue sticks on hand.

*I love using glue tape rollers because they are cleaner and easier to travel with.*



### 3. START COLLECTING JUNK

What do I collect? I have saved receipts, maps, tags, labels, stamps, ribbon, boarding passes, stickers, and even packaging to use in my junk journal.

*I like to use clear pouches and plastic baggies to store my “junk” while I’m traveling.*





## FIRST DAY IN AMSTERDAM

Boarding Pass

Clothing Tag

Map from Hotel

Notepad Paper from Hotel

Beer Label

Card from Restaurant

## SWIMMING WITH SHARKS IN BELIZE

Beer Label

Ferry Tickets

Wristbands

Receipts from Restaurants

Printed Photos

## THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Map of Museum

Bag Packaging

Receipt

Printed Photos

Tag from Baseball Cap



# SEWING PROJECT: CUP COOZIE



I am that person that will still drink an iced latte in the middle of a blizzard during below zero temperatures, so I always have cold hands when walking into work with my latte. To prevent that, I wanted to sew a coozie to keep my drink nice and cozy. This is a great beginner sewing project that is also easily customizable and helpful in using up fabric scraps.

## CUP COOZIE

Level: Beginner | Time: 30 Minutes

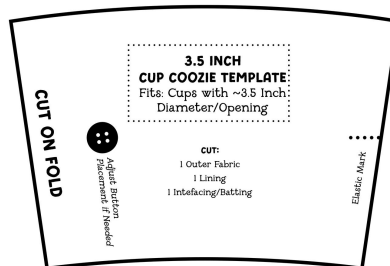
### TOOLS & MATERIALS

- Template - On Page 19
- Measuring Tape
- Scissors
- Chalk or Pencil
- Pins or Clips
- Fabric (*Outer & Lining*)
- Interfacing or Batting
- Thread
- Button(s)
- Elastic (1/8 Inch)
- Walking Foot & Guide Bar
- Button Foot (*optional*)
- Iron & Ironing Board
- Hera Marker
- Ruler

### INSTRUCTIONS:



1. Gather all materials and print out the template on page 19.
  - a. Printing instructions are also on page 19.
2. Cut out the template(s).



### THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO ADJUST THE LENGTH TO FIT OTHER CUPS:

- The first is by adding another button to tighten or loosen the coozie.
- The other is to measure the circumference of your preferred coffee cup at its widest, with your measuring tape.
  - Then, adjust the length as needed leaving an inch for seam allowance.







3. Place your template on your folded outer fabric and cut one (1) piece.
4. Repeat with the interfacing/batting and the lining fabric.

5. Place your outer fabric (with good size up) on top of your interfacing/batting.
6. Iron your fabric.

7. Using a hera marker, chalk, or pencil, mark your quilting lines with a ruler.  
*a. I did one (1) inch width lines as shown, but have also down diagonal lines too.*



8. Using the walking foot attachment on your sewing machine, stitch on the lines to sew your outer fabric and interfacing/batting together.  
*a. I like to extend my stitch length when quilting.*
9. Trim away any excess fabric & iron again.

10. Place the lining fabric on top of your outer fabric, good side to good side.
11. Using clips or pins, put them on the two (2) long sides, and one (1) short side.  
*a. Leave one (1) short side open to flip inside out.*

12. Stitch around the three (3) sides with a quarter inch seam allowance.  
*a. I used my default stitch length.*





13. Flip the coozie inside out and iron flat.
14. Fold in some of the fabric from the open short side and iron to hold in place.
15. Cut a three (3) inch piece of elastic that will fit over your button.
16. Fold the elastic in half and place the cut ends inside the short end opening. Attach using clips or pins.



17. Top stitch along all four (4) sides, enclosing the elastic and creating a nice trim.
18. Feel free to backstitch a few times to ensure the elastic is secure.



19. Mark your button location.
  - a. *Either use the button placement from the template or wrap the coozie around your preferred cup to adjust the placement.*
20. Using a button foot or hand stitch, sew a button on the mark you made.
  - a. *Feel free to add another button for more cup options.*

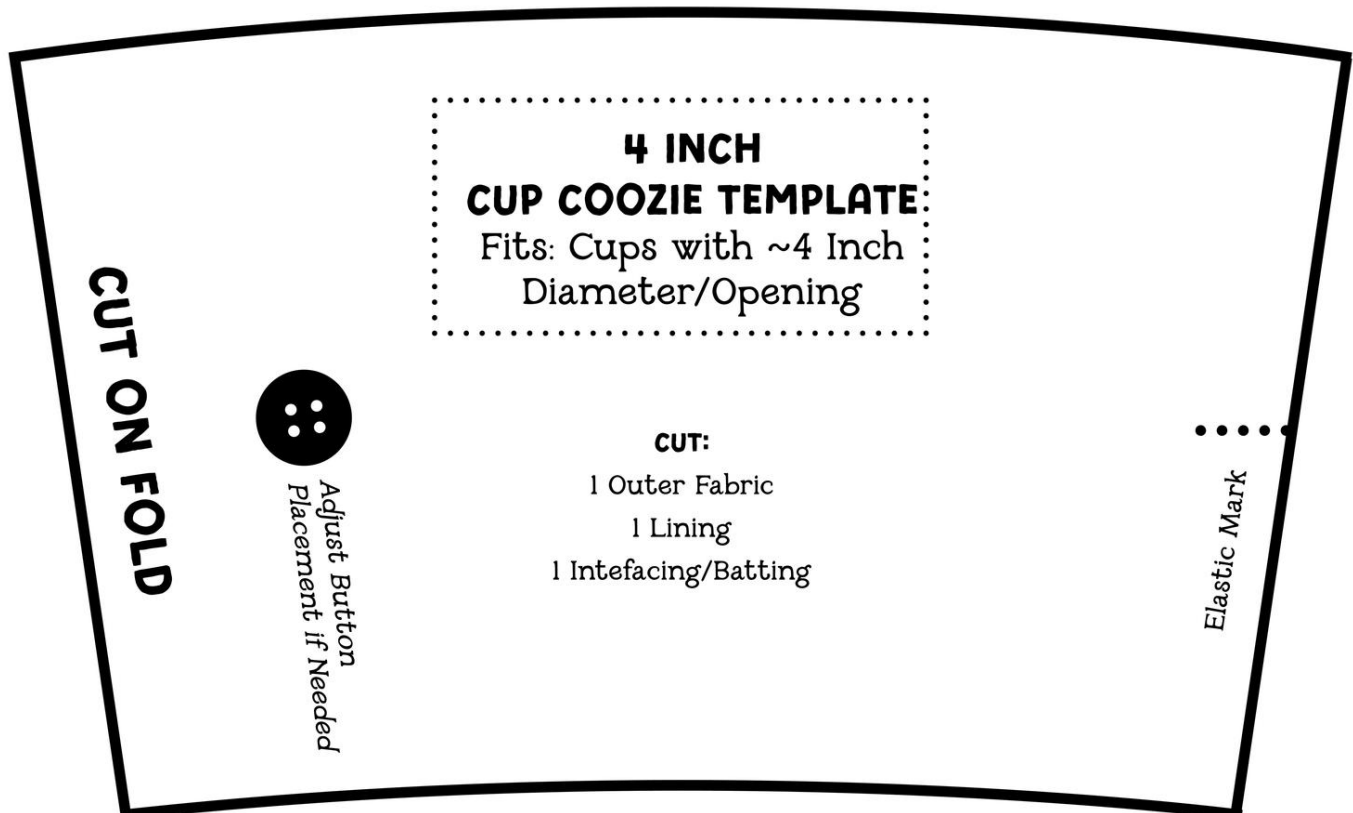
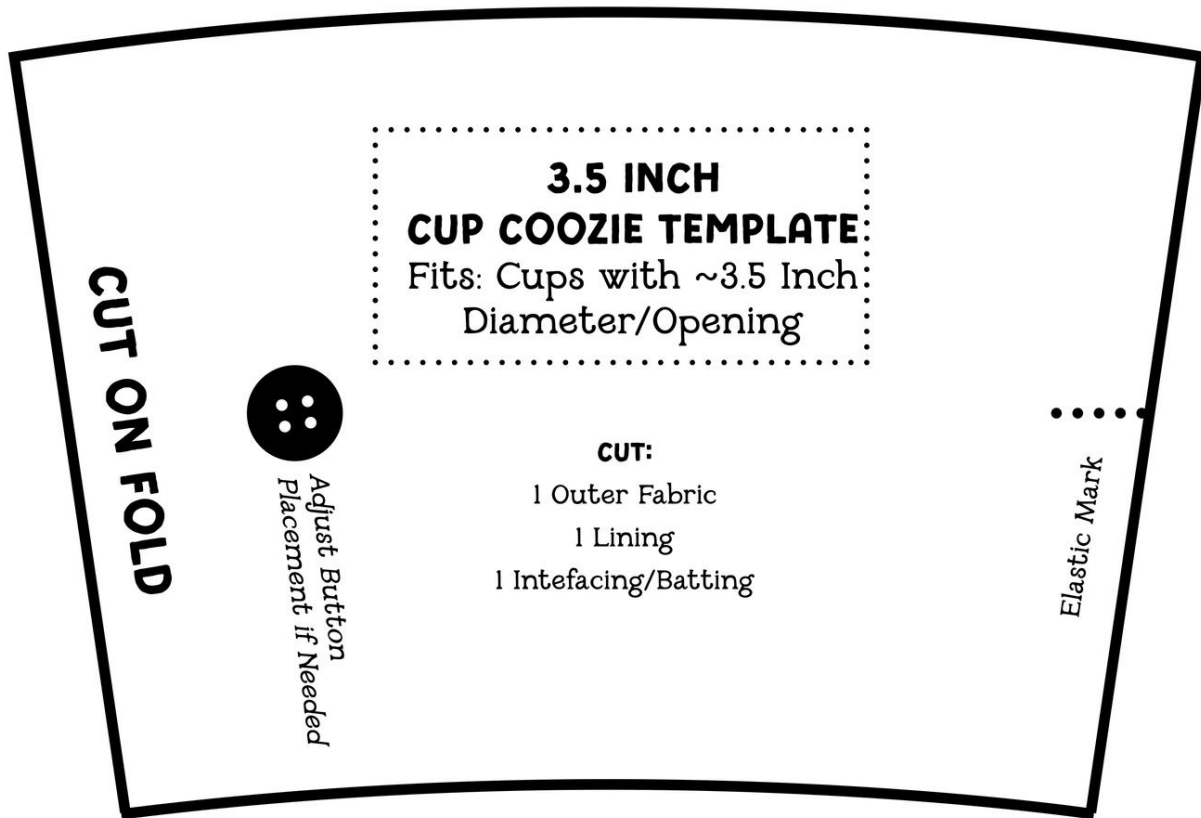


21. Iron again if needed and enjoy!

### PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Print the page on 8.5 x 11 inches paper.
  - a. *Double check the 2 inch line is accurate.*
2. Cut out either size or both.

# CUP COOZIE TEMPLATES





# DONATE YOUR WINTER GEAR



As you start to declutter your home, collect your worn winter gear to donate to your local shelters, schools, churches, or even host a winter warmth drive in your community.

Again, winter in Iowa and many parts of the midwest tend to be in freezing temperatures during the season, and get worse in January and February. This is an easy and simple opportunity for you, and others, to help your community out by providing winter coats, hats, mittens, boots, snow pants, and other winter essentials that you don't have use for anymore.

## WINTER ESSENTIALS TO DONATE

Pictured are a few winter essentials that you may have lying around your home collecting dust or might have outgrown.

If you have the means and resources, I would also recommend calling your local shelter or school to see what other items they may need. I know that many of them always need toiletry items such as toothpaste and toothbrushes, and feminine products such as pads and tampons.

- Winter Coats
- Sweaters & Sweatshirts
- Snow Pants & Sweatpants
- Hats & Scarves
- Gloves & Mittens →
- Thermal Shirts & Pants
- Boots
- Blankets







Thank you for taking the time to read Daisy's Market: Enjoy the Slow Days. I had a wonderful time writing and creating this magazine, and I hope you take the time to rest and enjoy these slower days ahead.

Thank you,  
*Mema Keco*





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Enjoy the Slow Days

January 2026

Any inquiries, please contact Mema Keco at  
[memakeco.business@gmail.com](mailto:memakeco.business@gmail.com)