



2016 winter solstice will happen at 5:44 A.M. on December 21. Set your alarm! But don't expect to see much sun—this is the shortest day of the year.

The *summer solstice* is the opposite: the moment when the North Pole points most directly toward the sun, in the Northern Hemisphere. In 2017 it will happen on June 21 at 12:24 A.M. on the East Coast (just after midnight). Wear sunscreen, because this is also the longest day of the year.

The Southern Hemisphere has its summer solstice at the same time that the Northern Hemisphere has its winter solstice, and vice versa. Unfortunately, standing on your head during the winter solstice will not turn it into summer. ☀

JUST LIKE YOU lugging a heavy backpack, the earth travels at a tilt. While the top part of the planet (the Northern Hemisphere) leans away from the sun, it's winter there. While it's tilted closer to those toasty rays, it's summer.

In the Northern Hemisphere, the *winter solstice* is the moment each year when the North Pole points most directly away from the sun. If you live on the East Coast of the United States, for example, the

SUMMER SOLSTICE (U.S.)
JUNE 21



WINTER SOLSTICE (U.S.)
DECEMBER 21

