

# Christmas Countdown Checklist

Save time and money through organization this holiday season!



"One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas Day. Don't clean it up too quickly." -Andy Rooney

## 3-4 Weeks Before Christmas

- decide on plans for hosting and/or traveling
- make travel arrangements including air, hotel, car rental, etc.
- make arrangements for pet boarding, house sitting, plant watering, etc.
- create a gift-recipient list including family, friends, coworkers, teachers, and service providers
- add gift ideas or wish-lists to your gift-recipient list
- set a realistic budget for gifts, décor, and entertaining
- create a spreadsheet or list of gifts purchased, money spent, and location of gift (if they are hidden until Christmas)
- take family photos
- buy or create holiday cards
- purchase stamps
- update address list
- take advantage of Black Friday and Cyber Monday deals
- organize and clean out pantry, refrigerator, and freezer
- purchase gift wrap and gift bags
- go through clothing and toys to donate and make room for new gifts
- enlist the family to help decorate inside and outside
- shop in stores and online
- address holiday cards
- begin traditions like Advent Calendar or Elf on the Shelf
- purchase hostess gifts to keep on hand for events attended
- begin holiday baking and freezing foods like cookies, breads, casseroles, etc.
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## Christmas Countdown Checklist

### 2 Weeks Before

- plan menus and get recipes for holiday treats and gatherings
- make shopping lists for food, beverages, and to-go containers for guests
- shop for holiday food ingredients
- make food that can be stored/frozen ahead of time
- mail holiday cards
- continue to shop for gifts
- update spreadsheet/list with gifts purchased
- stay on track with budget
- give gifts to teachers and service providers
- put in a request to hold mail if traveling
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### 1 Week Before

- finish shopping
- finish wrapping
- ship gifts to out of town recipients
- pack for travel
- prepare for guests
- keep cooking
- plan a family activity like decorating a gingerbread house, looking at lights, ice skating
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### Tips for Success

- suggest drawing names, doing charitable works together, or organizing fun experiences to shift the focus off of material goods and to reduce stress
- try to use one pattern of wrapping paper per person to make it easy to identify the recipient
- wrap gifts when they are purchased
- keep track of money spent and gifts purchased to stay on budget
- take family photos outside with another family, and be each other's photographer to save money and make it more fun
- take photos of décor to replicate next year
- delegate to others to share the load
- enjoy the gift of family and friends, and make some wonderful memories