

A Parent's Guide to
A Conscious Christmas



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Christmas 2020 *

If there was ever an opportunity to reflect on how we approach Christmas within our families, 2020 is it! We're a little unsure of what Christmas will look like this year and how we will spend it. Social restrictions mean the usual gatherings and experiences won't look the same, or may not even happen! You might even be feeling a little lack lustre about the festive season, due to the uncertainty.

But actually, we can reframe this situation. 2020 has given us a great chance to assess how we view Christmas, reflect on what it means within our own homes and find a balance between that and the materialism associated with Christmas.

Make Christmas 2020 one to remember for all the right reasons!

This free printable booklet will help you plan a festive season that you love. Plan your values, list some gift ideas to avoid becoming overwhelmed by advertising and choose some family activities from our suggestions!





Creating a Conscious Approach to Christmas

Use these prompts to help you create some values around this Christmas season.

Which images or words come to mind when you think of Christmas?

What do you enjoy most about the Christmas period?

What do you think your children enjoy most about Christmas outside of gift receiving?

What are your core values for Christmas?

What does this tell you about the kind of Christmas experience you want to create for your family?



Think about these areas and make notes about the kind of experiences, lessons and atmosphere you'd like to create.

Giving

Receiving

Advent

Ambience (light, smell etc)

The Magic of Christmas



Gifts with Intention

To gift with intention, put aside the latest 'best toys' guide and think about your child's interests instead.

Ask yourself these questions as you compile your child's Christmas list:

- Does this work for our budget?
- How much longevity does this item have?
- Is this something my child really wants?
- How much has advertising or their peers influenced their decision to list this item?

Setting an intentional budget

Create a budget to work within for each child you have. Don't feel you have to set the same budget for each child! Remember that children don't focus on the monetary value of the toys they receive and won't compare how much you spend on each of them. Older children might observe the number of items they have compared to a sibling. Depending on your parenting values or personal circumstances, the number of items each child receives may be something you want to organise equally. Or it could be something that serves as a growth opportunity for your children, e.g. empathy, generosity, understanding (as in my situation with my eldest who has stopped believing this year and will learn that one of her items costs as much as 4 of her younger brothers).

What is your overall budget for your children's gifts?

How will you allocate this within your family?



Creating a Gift List

Asking your child to create their gift list is a great way to gauge the sorts of things they might like.

But keep in mind that some children don't always really know what they want and can feel pressurised to make choices because they know writing a list is just something that's done at Christmas time. I've known children be scared that Santa won't bring them anything if they don't give specifics in their letter. On the other hand, some children have no trouble making a long list of items they'd like! My 4 year old is currently telling me he 'wants that' during every advert on children's TV! But is this really what we want our children to feel Christmas us about?

When you've set your overall budget, you can have conversations within your family that helps guide your children to intentionally creating their Christmas list. This will also help manage expectations around how much Santa can realistically bring! Asking why your child wants each thing on their list will help deepen their thinking. Guide them into finding a purpose in each, such as having fun, learning something etc.

Use the prompts below to help guide your children in creating their list and then yourself in your Christmas Shopping. Use the next page to keep track of your gift buying and stay intentional in your purchasing.

- Choose a gift that is needed.
- Choose a book.
- Choose something you like to eat.
- Choose something we can enjoy together.
- Choose something that supports mindfulness, relaxation or wellbeing.
- Choose something that supports creativity.
- Choose something educational.



Festive Family Fun

Here's our suggestions for festive activities that the whole family can enjoy, making a December memorable and magical!

Organise the ideas into an order for an Advent Activity Countdown or if that feels too overwhelming, take one or two ideas to enjoy each week in December.

Activities

- Decorate the tree
- Wrap a gift for a loved one
- Hold a family quiz night
- Take a family Christmas Jumper photo
- Have a family movie night
- Make paper snowflakes
- Tell Christmas jokes
- Write a letter to Santa
- Talk about why Christmas is special to you
- Wear your Christmas PJs
- Make kindness vouchers for each other
- Bake Christmas Cookies
- Learn about Christmas traditions from
 - other countries
- Make a wreath or decoration
- List as many Christmas related words as you can (within a time frame for added excitement and fun!)
- Listen to Christmas music and play a game
- Take a drive to see the neighbourhood lights
- Play charades
- Read the Night before Christmas
- Go for a Winter Walk
- Do a random act of kindness
- Yearly Gratitude List
- Decorate a Gingerbread House
- Record a video for family and friends
- Design a family Christmas card
- Make up some new lyrics to a Christmas song
- Prepare a gift box for charity
- Read Christmas stories