

Christmas

ADVENT IDEAS





It's no secret that Christmas is my favorite time of year and I long to make Advent - the days spent in anticipation of Christmas day - special and memorable.

Advent in the simplest terms means “arrival” and the season of Advent generally refers to the weeks prior to Christmas that are spent in reflective and intentional preparation for the arrival of Christmas Day and the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

In our family, we start our Advent Calendar on December 1st and we do something special each day to build excitement, prepare our hearts, celebrate or otherwise enjoy the season of Christmastime.

In addition to the daily “Advent Celebration”, we read a story from the [Jesus Storybook Bible](#) by the fire before bedtime. If you start at the beginning of this particular book and read one story each day, the story of Jesus’ birth lands on December 24th, how cool is that?!



We use [this advent calendar from Gathre](#) to hold the cards that tell us what our activity is each day. I’ve also gathered [several other beautiful options](#) that you can shop to make this tradition your very own!

The last thing we need during this busy season is yet another “to-do” so I encourage you to plan ahead to weave Advent in to your normal day-to-day!

I’ve included more than 50 ideas to get you started brainstorming ways to incorporate celebration and anticipation in to your December without being overwhelming.

Some of these require preparation or planning, many do not. Hopefully lots of them can be done with things you have around the house and can fit in to the nooks and crannies of your day.

Some of them are a monetary investment but they certainly don’t have to be! We budget for some of our Advent activities as a part of our Christmas expenses - like seeing a show all together (Nutcracker anyone?!), doing a special Christmas light activity, or seeing a movie in the theater.

Many of them are things we would *already do* like sibling Secret Santa shopping dates, shopping for a family in need that we’ve adopted that year, or make cookies and take them to neighbors.

The excitement of choosing the card out of the calendar to see what our special thing is, though, builds anticipation and excitement and whether the Advent activity for the day is big or small, my kids always look forward to it, which is my goal!



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- Put on Christmas jammies, pop some popcorn and jump in the car to tour the neighborhood Christmas lights
- Make Christmas cookies
- Make fudge
- Snuggle up and watch a Christmas movie
- Go Caroling
- Go to a drive-through Christmas lights show
- Take Christmas photos (in front of the tree, set up a box for cute box photos, pajama photo shoot wrapped in lights at home, etc.)
- Set out a goodie station for the delivery drivers on the front porch
- Make salt dough ornaments or gift tags
- Make paper bag snowflakes to hang around the house
- Set up Christmas trees in the kids rooms
- Leave \$5 bills and a note in the kids toy section at the Dollar Store as a random act of kindness
- Read a Christmas book by the fire
- Put on Santa hats and go shopping for a family in need
- Donate old warm jackets to a coat drive
- Wrap a bunch of Christmas books and unwrap them throughout the month to read by the fire
- Decorate the kids bedroom doors (like a snowman, tree, reindeer, etc)
- Go on a family movie date to the theater
- Build a snowman
- Go sledding
- Attend a Christmas parade or find a horse-drawn sleigh ride
- Family Christmas-themed “Minute-to-Win-It” style game night
- Decorate a gingerbread house



- Have a picnic dinner by the light of the tree, candles and the fire
- Hot chocolate and board game night
- Set up a hot drink bar in your kitchen that stays stocked all month
- Set up a candy cane scavenger hunt around your house
- Choose names for “Sibling Secret Santas” and go on a shopping date with each child individually to shop for their chosen sibling
- Make cookies or treats and take them to your neighbors
- Go ice skating
- Decorate the Christmas tree
- Pick out a new family or individual Christmas ornament for the year
- Host an ornament exchange, white elephant gift exchange or Favorite Things Party
- Make a fancy Christmas “mocktail” by freezing cubes of orange juice containing rosemary and cranberries and serve with sparkling apple cider
- Have a Christmas music dance party with all of your favorite albums, new and old
- Send out a Christmas card to a friend or relative far away
- Take photos in matching Christmas pajamas
- Make Christmas cards and take them to a nursing home or send them using www.caringbycard.com
- Write letters to Santa
- Take a photo with Santa - our Cabellas and Bass Pro Shops have a great Santa that is free but requires an appointment booked online
- Take a poinsettia and some cookies to grandparents
- Clean out your toy room and donate several toys to a local charity
- Make a Christmas blanket fort and watch a Christmas show or movie
- Make “snow cream” (ice cream made with freshly fallen snow)
- Do a random act of kindness
- Make reindeer and snowman pancakes



- Make cinnamon roll Christmas trees
- Do a Christmas puzzle
- Roast chestnuts
- Go to a Christmas concert
- Go see reindeer
- Attend a Christmas parade
- Do a Christmas train ride
- Fill and Operation Christmas Child shoebox and drop it off to be sent to a child in need
- Contact your local Red Cross to participate in their Holiday for Heroes initiatives (like sending cards or candy to active duty or reserve military families)
- Attend your local town tree-lighting ceremony
- Have a gift-wrapping party complete with music and treats
- Have a sleepover by the Christmas tree
- Track Santa on Christmas Eve - www.noradsanta.org



Use the next page to print out and plan your Advent Activity Calendar. Send me a message and let me know your favorite activities and any that you add, I love to have new ideas every year!

Merry Christmas!!

Our Advent

CALENDAR

