



## 24 Fun, Free, Eco-friendly Christmas Activities

by Sheri Radford / Nov 23, 2021

Count down to the big day with these festive family-friendly activities that focus on accumulating memories instead of more *stuff*

1. **Start a gratitude jar.** Each day during the holiday season, every family member writes down one thing they're grateful for and places the slip of paper in the jar to be read out loud on Christmas Eve.
2. **Research unusual Christmas traditions around the world,** such as roller skating to Christmas morning mass in Caracas, Venezuela, or including a pooping figure known as the Caganer in nativity scenes in Catalonia, Spain. Also learn about other holidays at this time of year, such as Hanukkah (Nov. 28 to Dec. 6, 2021), Kwanzaa (Dec. 26, 2021, to Jan. 1, 2022) and winter solstice (Dec. 21, 2021).
3. **Find a local business that offers free visits with Santa Claus and snap a few photos.** Some places even offer special days for your furry four-legged friends. Or borrow a Santa suit and do your own festive photos at home.
4. **Make Christmas cards by hand or on the computer** (perhaps using the photos from number 3). Old Christmas cards can be upcycled into new and beautiful cards using some ingenuity—and a little glue and glitter.



Photo by pure julia on Unsplash

5. **Host a gift exchange in which no one is allowed to spend any money,** so every present must be either something made by hand using upcycled materials or a handwritten coupon for a service, such as babysitting or shovelling snow.
6. **Write a letter to Santa.** Be sure to thank the jolly fellow for last year's gifts.
7. **Bake seasonal sweets,** such as sugar cookies and shortbread.



Photo by Yulian Karadzhev on Unsplash

8. **Attend a free outdoor concert, tree-lighting ceremony or Christmas parade.**
9. **Sing Christmas carols,** whether that means around a piano, in front of a karaoke playlist on the computer or strolling through the neighbourhood.
10. **Tune in to a radio station** that plays non-stop Christmas music.
11. **Volunteer** at a soup kitchen, food bank or toy drive.
12. **Make decorations for the tree or for the whole house using a mix of found objects** (pinecones, fallen branches) and **upcycled materials** (old CDs, used wrapping paper). Paper snowflakes, paper chains and popcorn garlands are fun and easy. For a whole wealth of ideas and inspiration, search on Pinterest.
13. **Dress up in a tacky Christmas sweater** and seasonal deely bobbers, then decorate the Christmas tree while sharing the stories behind beloved ornaments.



Photo by Skin Communication on Unsplash

14. **Wrap gifts** using [creative, sustainable alternatives to wrapping paper](#).
15. **Watch your favourite seasonal movies and TV specials.** You can't go wrong with classics such as *Elf*, *Home Alone*, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*, *A Christmas Story* (based on five short stories by the very funny Jean Shepherd) and *It's a Wonderful Life* (inspired by Philip Van Doren Stern's story *The Greatest Gift*). Then argue (good-naturedly, of course) over whether *Die Hard* is or isn't a Christmas movie.
16. **Drink hot chocolate in front of a roaring fire**—or a video of a crackling fire on TV.
17. **Dust off the old sleds, snowshoes or cross-country skis buried in the garage,** then enjoy the snow—and maybe build a snowperson or two. If Mother Nature stubbornly refuses to deliver the white stuff, then make snowpeople out of paper while watching videos of winter sports on YouTube.
18. **Find a free community skate in your area,** and channel your inner Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir.
19. **Make a Christmas video** to share with friends and family. Don't forget to include precocious pets wearing festive outfits.
20. **Borrow a big stack of Christmas books from the library.** Some classics: *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* by Dr. Seuss, *A Visit from St. Nicholas* by Clement Clarke Moore, *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg and *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. To learn how Dickens dug himself out of debt and saved his career by self-publishing this classic tale (after his publisher turned it down), dig into *The Man Who Invented Christmas* by Les Standiford. Fans of Hallmark Christmas movies will enjoy reading *Royal Holiday* by Jasmine Guillory, *One Day in December* by Josie Silver, *Comfort & Joy* by Kristin Hannah, *Christmas in London* by Anita Hughes, *Winter Street* by Elin Hilderbrand and *Starry Night* by Debbie Macomber.
21. **Bake and decorate** gingerbread people and a gingerbread house.



Photo by Oriol Portell on Unsplash

22. **Walk around your neighbourhood** to admire all the Christmas lights.



Photo by Steven Van Elk on Unsplash

23. **Write and illustrate your own seasonal story,** weaving in some of your family's holiday tales and traditions.
24. **Reminisce about past Christmases** by sorting through old photos or compiling an online memory album.

**TRUE EARTH** This little laundry strip helps keep 700,000 plastic jugs out of the landfill

Like Share Tweet In Share Pin

### Recommended for You

**Solutions Journalism: What It Is and How It Leads to More Climate Action**

**Eco-friendly to the End: Green Options in the Death-care Industry**

**Why Your City Needs to Use Goat Brigades to Sustainably Cut Lawns**

**Bats: All About The Underappreciated Creature That Benefits Our Ecosystem**

**29 Books on Intersectional Environmentalism**

**What Does "NIMBY" Mean and How Does This Mindset Affect Our Environment?**

### Comment on this Article