

2020 Guide to the Holidays: Indoor Activities



Cookie Exchange



There is nothing better than the smell of freshly baked cookies coming out of the oven. Typically, cookie exchanges require you to bake 5 to 6 dozen cookies and print out recipes to share with friends and family at a party.

While being inside to exchange cookies this year may be difficult, you can still have the party outside with special precautions in place like gloves, hand sanitizer, and masks. Or you can plan a cookie exchange porch pick up/drop of system. Leave cookies on your porch with plenty of printed recipes for people to pick up and drive around your neighborhood picking up cookies from your friends and family.



DIY Surprise Box!



Make your own “surprise box” for First Night of Hanukkah or Christmas Eve! Include PJ’s, a holiday book, popcorn, hot cocoa, and a special little toy!

This will give them something to look forward to and a fun surprise to unbox! Take a video of the unboxing or have them pretend to be a Youtuber as they unbox!

Have siblings make surprise boxes for each other where they get to pick out and wrap the surprises!

Holiday Art Show

With not being able to see all the friends and family you’d like this year due to different restrictions depending on your location, spread the cheer right from home.

Have an arts and crafts day where signs can be made to display in the window for those passing by. Materials can be from paper, coloring instruments, crafts such as cotton balls and pipe cleaners onto paper or even window paint/markers. These can be seasonal or holiday specific.

If you have friends in your neighborhood, encourage them to participate and then have a walk or drive by to look at everyone’s display.

Recipe Exchange



Every families holiday dinners look different. Some people eat turkey, ham, latkes, tamales, or even seafood. Some families can't live without the cranberry sauce while other demand the fruit cake.

This year, talk to your friends and create a recipe exchange! Pick your favorite dish, unique to your family and share the recipe. Once you have a few recipes from other families, plan a dinner with all the dishes that represent your friends traditions! Don't forget to share a picture with the group! It's fun to see the different interpretations!

Santa's Elves (aka Grandma)

Letters to Santa are always a big hit! But this year, try to include the grandparents!

Instead of mailing the letter off to the North Pole, secretly send it to grandma or grandpa or another caregiver in your life. Then Grandma or Grandpa can write a letter and respond as one of Santa's Helpers!

This way the grandparents or other caregivers can be involved in the magic of the holidays, in a safe, socially distant way!

Holiday Traditions Basket



Every family has a fun holiday tradition. So what better way to connect with friends this holiday season, then sharing your family traditions. Get a group of families to each create a basket that has the supplies and instructions for one of their favorite holiday traditions. Make sure to include a note explaining where the tradition originated and the meaning behind the tradition. Once completed, exchange these baskets and let the fun begin!

Germany Basket

The Advent Wreath! Many families in Germany put an Advent wreath on the living room table the fourth Sunday before Christmas. The wreaths have four large candles and, traditionally, pinecones and berries. As lights are dimmed, the whole family gathers around the wreath. As one, they spend a quiet, reflective hour together. Some families may sing Christmas carols or enjoy a child's performance on the flute or piano. Others may watch an afternoon family movie.

Israel Basket

Dreidel! The custom is often explained with a legend that, during the time of the Maccabees, when Jewish children were forbidden from studying Torah, they would defy the decree and study anyway. When a Greek official would come close they would put away their books and take out spinning tops, claiming they were just playing games. By playing dreidel during Chanukah we are reminded of the courage of those brave children.

Mexico Basket

Rosca de Reyes! On el Dia de los Reyes the presents are left by the Three Kings (or Magi). This tradition of eating together and sharing a rosca de reyes bread with a hot chocolate to remember the Holy Kings, is made as a snack or pre dinner at an early hour in the late evening, so that children are present and can participate in the tradition of getting together to enjoy and share a slice of rosca de reyes and it is important when you cut a slice, that on both sides of the rosca, does not appear the figure of the infant Jesus (plastic doll symbolizing Jesus newborn).

Ugly Sweater Party for Toys



Throw an Ugly Holiday Sweater Party for your dolls and action figures! Here's your chance to continue the tradition, just in a slightly different way.

Bring out the arts and crafts and let your child(ren) and the rest of the family get creative by designing an ugly sweater for their doll and/or action figure.

To get in some competition, have a time frame and anonymous drop off location in the house. Once everyone has submitted their ugly sweater, have a vote; winner gets to pick what movie is shown for the night or what treat is served after dinner.

Indoor Snowball Fight

Why not bring the snow to your home and have a little laughter while trying not to get hit? Materials that can be used are rolled up socks, crinkled up papers, cotton balls, marshmallows or other soft items found in the home.

Make sure to set up boundaries so you can find all your snow at the end when it comes time to clean up.

Winter Race with Hot Wheels



Work together with your child on turning their Hot Wheels track into a winter scene!

If you have snow, take the track outside and set up some epic snowy stunts!

If you don't have real snow, get some fake snow, pine trees, and other winter scenery and set up a winter track race!

Hot Chocolate Stand

Encourage role play and an entrepreneurial spirit with a Hot Chocolate Stand!

Set it up in the house for just your family, or go outdoors with masks & gloves!

Let your kiddos set it up, take orders, set up a line with 6' apart floor markers. Let them count the money and sanitize their hands afterwards.

Encourage them to donate the money they earn to a cause they care about. Pretend to be their customer or co-worker, they will love seeing you switch roles!

Holiday Doll Displays



Let your child use their dolls to reenact family stories or special holiday stories and traditions. Let them use a window, table or area in the home to set up a doll display. Write out the story together and make a special time to share it with the family.

Send a video recording of it to family to share and connect.

Indoor Ice Skating Rink

Make a pretend indoor ice skating rink!

Encourage your children to make the ticket area, the snack bar and the ice rink.

Use socks to “skate around” the “rink.” Watch some winter Olympics first. Then put on an ice skating show. Parents can be the skaters and kids can be the judges!

Finish it off with some popcorn or nachos from the “snack bar.”

Winter Olympics at Home



Watch some old Winter Olympics Footage, and then set up your own fun obstacle course with downhill skiing, curling, speedskating and bobsledding.

Make your own metals and awards podium! Film the award ceremony. Have each child and parent pick a country they want to represent and make a flag to wave! Celebrate with some Olympic ring sugar cookies and hot cocoa!

