

Stay Cool at Christmas

A guide to help your Christmas be as stress free as possible



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Hello, and thank you for signing up to receive this FREE Christmas stress busting guide.

We're told that Christmas is a time for peace, love and joy to all mankind. However, it can so often become a stressful period fraught with worrying, fall outs, and trying to live up to what society has come to view as being a perfect Christmas. It doesn't need to be like that, though.

A lot of people have been contacting me to say that the festive period is a stressful time of year, so I have created this handy guide to help your Christmas be as stress free as possible.

By following the tips in this guide, this Christmas and every Christmas after should be much less stressful and a lot more enjoyable for you and your loved ones.

Each tip has been tried and tested by me and a team of willing volunteers, who all now enjoy less stressful Christmases.

I wish you a most wonderful Christmas.

Daniel

A Guide to Reducing Your Christmas Stress

1. Cut down the 'to do' list

There's just so much we have to do at Christmas time, right?

Wrong!

The question to ask yourself here is 'what will happen if I don't do this?' If the answer is anything less than COMPLETE DISASTER, consider removing it from the list. The aim here is to cut down on the amount you have to do at Christmas by realising that you don't actually have to do all those things.

2. Reduce the gift list

Have a look at the gift list you've written and consider whether you need to buy presents for all of those people. If you only see someone once a year (at Christmas), is it really necessary to buy them a present?

Thinking about who you *really* need to buy presents for should help you reduce your gift list and in the process alleviate any stress you may feel about affording to buy all the presents or wondering what on Earth to get someone.

3. Tell yourself that grand gestures are not really necessary

It can be easy to get carried away at Christmas, but are the grand gestures really worth the stress that can accompany them?

If you feel the need to get a present for someone, it doesn't need to be expensive. Smaller, simpler gestures can often mean more to the recipient, so keep this tip in mind when planning for the big day.

4. Wrap as you go

I don't think anyone likes to spend Christmas Eve wrapping all of the presents. It can be time consuming and you could be doing more enjoyable things with your time.

Wrapping presents as you buy them can make it seem like less of a chore.

5. Cut down on the obsessive cleaning

If you have family or friends coming to visit you over the festive period, by all means clean up the public areas of your home, such as the kitchen, bathroom and living room. The private areas of your home (i.e. the rooms where your guests won't be going) can wait though.

Letting standards slip slightly over Christmas isn't such a bad thing. Once the festivities are over you'll be able to get all of the housework done, but it's good to be able to take some time out to enjoy yourself and not worry about how clean the house is. The people coming to see you probably won't care anyway.

6. A bit of cheating is ok

It's lovely if everything is homemade and perfect, but the reality is that it's time consuming, often more expensive, and can be stressful.

Buying items such as ready-made stuffing, gravy granules, and an easy to carve turkey crown can save you time, money, and a whole lot of stress.

This allows you to relax a bit more and enjoy the day.

7.It's all in the planning

I'm a big fan of making lists for just about everything in life. It provides a focus and shows a concrete plan for something.

Making a list in advance of all the things you need to do in the lead up to Christmas can help bring order to chaos and you may well find that everything runs a bit smoother than usual.

Plan who you are going to buy presents for, what you are going to buy them, and what your budget for gifts is.

Work out what food you need for the period and start buying items in advance. Doing things this way can be much easier than leaving it all until the last minute and going into meltdown.

8. Delegate

It's not all up to you. If you have a partner, children or other family members at home, be sure to get them involved and delegate certain tasks to them.

Not only will it make your role a bit easier; it's also positive to involve others in the preparation for this special time of year.

Even if you feel something may be done quicker if you do it yourself, involving others could help them to feel part of the festive preparations and it will surely relieve any pressure you feel.

9. Make sure you have some 'me time'

It can be so easy to get caught up in the Christmas whirlwind that we end up neglecting our own needs.

'Me time' is important all year round, but it's even more crucial during the festive season.

Whether it's taking the dog for a walk, meeting friends for coffee, or sending everyone out for the day so you have the house to yourself, taking some time out to indulge in yourself is

something that you'll thank yourself for later
(and your family may thank you for it too).

General Stress Busting Tips

Helpful tips for reducing your stress levels at Christmas and all year round

1. Keep perspective

Remember who and what is important.

2. Try to avoid arguments

Christmas fallouts can be all too common, but if you feel one coming on, remind yourself that it's supposed to be a peaceful time of year. Think about the bigger picture, and accept that it's ok to have a difference of opinion.

3. Breathe deeply

Ok, so this is an obvious one. However, simple breathing techniques can absolutely help you to remain calm when faced with a stressful situation.

Counting to 7 on the inhale and 11 on the exhale is a useful relaxation technique to try.

4. Remind yourself to KEEP YOUR COOL

Ask yourself the following questions:

What will becoming angry achieve?

Will become stressed actually help you?

Taking a step back to ask yourself those questions will provide you with the answers you need to keep your cool.

5. Remove yourself from the situation

Physically walking away is often the best option.

This frees you emotionally too, so you can think more clearly about the situation.

6. Count backwards from twenty to one

Aim to have calmed down by the time you reach one.

7. Go for a walk, ideally in a park or open space

Fresh air is good for you and strolling in the park or other open space can be calming as well as freeing.

Simple things can often make a massive difference.

8. Visualise a calm, tranquil place

It could be the sea, mountains, fields or anywhere that you consider to be calming.

Visualise that place for about two minutes.

Close your eyes, focus on your breathing, and let your mind drift to that calm place. Let your mind be still in that place.

9. Let go of any expectations you have

Sometimes it is better to not have any expectations.

By following the advice in this guide, you may well find that your stress levels remain low this Christmas (and all year round). It should be an enjoyable time of year, and I sincerely hope that this guide enables you to enjoy the festive period to the fullest.

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