

Staying Safe Through the Holidays - Safe Celebrations



Celebrating virtually or with the people you live with is the safest choice this winter.

If you do gather with people who don't live with you, gatherings and activities held outdoors are safer than indoor gatherings.

Steps that everyone can take to make the holidays safer

- Have conversations with the host ahead of time to understand expectations for celebrating together.
- Bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, utensils, and condiment packets.
- Wear a mask indoors and outdoors.
- Avoid shouting or singing.
- Stay home if you are sick or have been near someone who thinks they may have or have been exposed to COVID-19.

It's okay if you decide to stay home and remain apart from others. Do what's best for you.

Hosting a Winter Holiday Celebration

If you choose to have guests at your home, make sure that everyone follows the steps to make holiday celebrations safer. Other ways you can make your celebration safer include:

- Have conversations with guests ahead of time to set expectations for celebrating together.
- Limit the number of guests.
- Have a small, outdoor celebration with family and friends who live in your community, weather-permitting.
- Have extra unused masks available for your guests and encourage everyone to wear them inside and outside.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items between use.
- If celebrating indoors, bring in fresh air by opening windows and doors, if possible. You can use a window fan in one of the open windows to blow air out of the window. This will pull fresh air in through the other open windows.

- Have a separate space for guests to wash their hands or provide hand sanitizer.
- Keep background music volume low so guests don't need to shout.
- Cancel your gathering if you or someone who lives with you is sick or has been near someone who thinks they have or has COVID-19.

It's okay if you decide to postpone or cancel your gathering. Do what's best for you.

Food and Drink at Holiday Celebrations

When it comes to winter holidays, food traditions are often an important part of celebrations. There is no evidence that handling or eating food spreads COVID-19, but it is always important to follow food safety practices. Also make sure to:

- Bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, and utensils.
- Avoid going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen.
- Use single-use options, like salad dressing and condiment packets, and disposable items like food containers, plates, and utensils.
- Use a touchless garbage can, if available.
- Consider Other Winter Holiday Activities

The safest way to celebrate winter holidays is to celebrate at home with the people you live with. Here are some ideas for celebrating the winter holidays safely.

Host a virtual celebration with friends and family

- Schedule a time to eat a meal together virtually and have people show their main dish, vegetable, or dessert.
- Host a virtual "ugly" holiday sweater contest.
- Gather virtually for a gift exchange or activity
- Schedule a time to meet virtually to open gifts together.
- Build gingerbread houses, decorate cookies, or make holiday crafts and decorations.
- Decorate for the season
- Decorate or create a winter holiday scene and take family photos at home.
- Drive or walk around your community to look at decorations from a safe distance or drive through a local holiday light display.
- Make holiday crafts, cards, or cookies to send or deliver to family, friends, and neighbors in a way that does not involve contact with others, such as leaving them at the door.
- Throw a virtual dance party
- For winter holidays that traditionally include music and dance, set aside time with loved ones to meet online to share music and dance.
- Collaborate with friends and family on a holiday playlist.

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- Enjoy the winter weather, if you live somewhere with snow
- Hold a snowman or snow angel contest with neighbors or friends in your community.
- Build a snow fort or other snow structure.
- Volunteer and help others in need
- Reach out to your local community service organizations to get involved and give back. Make sure to ask about their safety precautions in advance.

- Find virtual opportunities to contribute.

If your holiday traditions usually involve visiting Santa Claus, check local opportunities and know requirements for visiting safely.

Schedule a virtual visit to the North Pole.

Visit Santa Claus outside while wearing a mask and staying 6 feet apart.

If Santa Claus is staying indoors, he will likely be taking safety measures; you may be able to visit him through a plexiglass safety window.