Holiday

PLANNER

momsoftweensandteens

YOUR GUIDE

to a...

STRESS FREE

Holiday

FILLED WITH

Peace

&

Joy



Thanksgiving
COUNTDOWN CHECKLIST



EARLY NOVEMBER

- [ ] GUESTS: Invite guests
- [ ] Write down what the guests are bringing.
- [ ] MENU: Plan out menu (use printable).
- [ ] SHOPPING: Create your grocery and shopping list (use printable).
- [ ] DECORATIONS: Make preliminary decision about table decorations & activities.
- [ ] ORDER: Get anything you'll need for the big day, such as a fresh turkey or a table centerpiece.
- [ ]

4 DAYS BEFORE THANKSGIVING

- [ ] SHOPPING: Make a non-perishable list and purchase all nonperishables.
- [ ] TURKEY: Start defrosting the frozen turkey in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
- [ ] HOME: clean out refrigerator and make room for Thanksgiving items
- [ ] BAKING: If you're baking pies, make the dough and lay into pie plates and freeze
- [ ] OTHER:
- [ ]
- [ ]

2 DAYS BEFORE THANKSGIVING

- [ ] STUFFING: Homemade stuffing calls for stale bread. Cut bread and place on a baking sheet.
- [ ] CRANBERRY: Make cranberry sauce. A couple days in the fridge will give the flavors time to develop.
- [ ] TABLE PREP: Prepare the serving pieces, plates, flatware, glasses, etc. if using cloth napkins or tablecloths, iron tthem.
- [ ] ACTIVITIES: Come up with activities for younger kids. Ask parents to bring games or think about how to set it up to make it easy.
- [ ]

1 DAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING

- [ ] PIES: Defrost pie dough. Assemble & bake pie
- [ ] SIDES: Make the vegetables and side dishes that require baking, and assemble them today. Peel the potatees, and then refrigerate them in a pot of cold water
- [ ] CRANBERRY OR FRUIT MOLDS: Make cranberry sauce or fruit molds. A couple days in the fridge will give the flavors time to develop.
- [ ] TABLE: Set the table tonight or first thing in the morning.
- [ ] ACTIVITIES: Plan adult activities if you will have any or a way to express gratitude.

Thanksgiving Planner

DRINKS:

APPETIZERS:

ENTREE:

SIDES:

DESSERT:

OTHER:

3

Create a vision for the holidays with these reflective questions:

What would an ideal Thanksgiving/Christmas look like? Write it down. Be specific.

What is one thing you could do that would make it fun for you?

What could you do that would make it meaningful?

How can you take care of yourself and get grounded or refreshed when you notice you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed?

Reflect on where you get stuck or bogged down.

What strategies have in place for potential breakdowns (when you're feeling overwhelmed, a relative is getting on your nerves, your kids are not helping, or you find yourself mad at your husband). Come up with a few areas that can suck your energy and joy and what you can do to shift your mindset, ask for help or let something go?)

Way to go friend for taking this time!

I'm confident that this holiday season will be meaningful, joy-filled, and fun because you have been intentional to plan ahead, create a vision, include others, and find creative ways to have fun!

GRATITUDE LIST

I'm grateful for...

IDEAS TO MAKE HOLIDAYS LESS STRESSFUL

welcoming intentionality to create a meaningful, fun and joy-filled holiday season

Make a list of “to dos” and have each person pick 2 on the list. (one of my children likes to be creative so she sets and decorates the table). Want a great way to get way to get everyone to help out - use our chore sticky note method!)

Cut corners – buy some dishes pre-made.

If you’re a perfectionist, remind yourself that things don’t have to be perfect; it’s about being together than really matters.

Ask your guests to bring their favorite dish.

Give your mother-in-law or other family members a job to do that she enjoys.

Get on the same page with your husband. How can you partner together?

Use our Thanksgiving and Christmas Planner to prepare ahead of time so you're not stressed out.

Order out or go to dinner the night before (if restaurants are open) so you don’t have to cook.

When you notice yourself feeling resentful ask yourself what you need.

Make helping fun and an opportunity to connect with one another.

Remind yourself that others actually do like to be needed and help out.

Figure out how you will take care of yourself in specific situations.

Talk to your spouse about figure out ways you can support each other.

Remember to breathe and be in the moment.

Speak up. If someone begins to talk about something that you don’t like, kindly say, “Let’s talk about something else.”Extend some grace to family members that irritate you.

Focus on the positive.

Get out of the house and take a walk.

Resist being a people pleaser. It’s not your job to make everybody happy.

If needed, limit the amount of time you spend at a relative’s home or let guests know the time you’d like everyone to leave.

7

CREATE FAMILY FUN

Being together makes the most meaningful memories. Create opportunities for connection, playfulness and laughter.

Here are a few ideas:

Put the phones away for a time.

Embrace your playful side!

Play a board game. Here are a few of our favorites – Apples to Apples, Hedbanz, Would You Rather, Charades, Backgammon, and Checkers.

Get physical – take a family walk, play Turkey Tag, Freeze dance, touch football, or wiffle ball.

Have everyone write down 3 things they are thankful for and share them at the table.

Ask your kids for ideas to create family fun.

Have a puzzle for everyone to work on.

Play music. Maybe even dance!

Have your children pick a favorite dish to prepare together.

Share favorite memories of a loved one.

Spend time having coffee or go for a walk with your husband before the start of the day.

Set the day up for success -partner with your husband a few days ahead – talk through what would be fun for both of you and ask your kids.

"FAMILY TRADITIONS MAKE CHRISTMAS EVEN MORE SPECIAL."

Christmas COUNTDOWN CHECKLIST

to stay organized and prepare for a joy-filled day!

MID - END OF NOVEMBER

MAKE A FAMILY PLAN.

- Think about what's really important to you and keep it simple (answer the questions on page ____).

MAKE A LIST FOR GIFT GIVING.

- Have your kids use our Christmas Wish List and activities they'd enjoy. to create a gift list. This takes out the guesswork. This way you can plan ahead to stay within your budget, order gifts ahead of time, or pick things up as you see them versus stressing yourself out and running to the mall at the last minute and potentially over-spending. Don't forget to include stocking stuffers on your list.

CALL A FAMILY MEETING

- Discuss holiday schedules and activities and what is happening when and where and sync your calendars.
- Make a list for fun family activities you'd like to do. Call this your Christmas or Winter bucket list (click here fun family ideas) and actually schedule ahead of time so you will do them. Make sure to get your kids input.
- Put all other activities on a calendar to make sure you don't have any conflicting invitations.

START BAKING THINGS YOU CAN FREEZE.

- This is such a great idea! It's easy to wait until December to bake and then it can get super busy. I love this strategy to make un-iced cut-out cookies, bars, and nut bread ahead of time and to keep them in the freezer.

UPDATE YOUR HOLIDAY CARD LIST.

- Figure out how many cards you need, and make sure you have updated addresses.

SHOP FOR CARDS.

- Don't wait until the last minute when cards are picked over and you're on a time crunch to get them done. And, if you're ordering family photos or cards online, you'll want to have plenty of time for them to arrive.

DECIDE ON A BUDGET.

- Set a ballpark figure for how much you can spend on gifts—and use our Christmas list and write next to it the price to keep you responsible and accountable (it all adds up fast!)

START BUYING GIFTS EARLY.

- The more you can plan ahead the better. This will help you to avoid the holiday rush, crowds, and ensure you get your gifts ordered in a timely manner, especially if you're mailing gifts.
- Want to avoid the shopping malls all together? Order online and check out our awesome gift guides for ideas of what to get or to purchase a few things.

Another efficient way to manage your time (and keep the family from peeking) is to wrap gifts as you buy them.

END OF NOVEMBER - BEGINNING OF DECEMBER

- Start addressing your holiday cards.
- Get out the decorations. See if any supplies are needed.
- Decorate the house. Pick a day or evening to get your tree and to decorate as a family.
- Take stock of dishes, glasses and serving pieces.
- Invite guests for Christmas and if they are bringing something make a note of it, figure out what you are doing about gift giving to make sure everyone is on the same page (dollar amounts or if you're doing a white elephant).

TWO - THREE WEEKS BEFORE CHRISTMAS

- Mail cards.
- Finalize menus.
- Start a master grocery list.
- Order a turkey or ham or centerpiece for your holiday table.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE (2ND WEEK OF DECEMBER)

- Try to have gifts in the mail by December 10.
- Shop for nonperishable items.
- Buy alcohol and any canned goods or pantry staples you'll need.

ONE WEEK BEFORE

- Clean your house (get the kids involved with this awesome chore idea).
- Clear out your refrigerator to make room for big dishes and food for the holidays.
- Buy batteries for children's toys.

THREE DAYS BEFORE

- Shop for fresh ingredients.
- Hit the store for the last-minute vegetables or fruit you need for meals.Set the table. Iron the tablecloth and napkins if using cloth. Wash the goblets and silverware if needed.
- Reflect on how you can make Christmas day meaningful - read the Bible story of Jesus birth, have everyone go around and share what they're grateful for, play games, watch movies? Give it some thought about what you'd like the day to look like. Ask your family members too.

TWO DAYS BEFORE

- Start cooking. Put on Christmas music. :)
- Get everyone involved. It makes it more fun.
- Make a list of how your family members can help. Discuss ahead of time what they enjoy (for more ideas click HERE)

Prep main courses and make anything that can sit for a couple of days.

Buy fresh flowers.

THE DAY BEFORE!

- Finish last-minute wrapping.
- Finish cooking, and make a timeline for the next day.
- Decide when you'll be eating, then count backward to determine when to put the turkey (or ham or roast beef) in the oven and what else needs to be cooked.
- Sit back and relax and be in the moment. Celebrate the true meaning of this day!
- Enjoy your family and friends, take lots of pictures and savor the time.

Christmas Cards

Special People To Remember

Name	Address

Weekly Planning Checklist

MUST DO:

- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____

WOULD LIKE TO DO:

SELF-CARE:

Gift Giving

Special People To Remember

Name	Gift	Spent

My Christmas Wishlist

My First Choice:

Gift Ideas:

Favorite Things I'd Like To Do:

Food I like to eat:



Holiday Stress Busters

Give yourself permission say no to the things you don't really enjoy. No guilt!	Ask for a bear hug.	Stop long enough to ask yourself what you need. Lonely? Call a friend? Tired? Take a nap.	Don't like to bake cookies? Buy store bought.	Take a yoga class.
Do something creative.	Hate to shop? Order on Amazon Prime.	Make a list of what you love to do for the holidays & make a plan. Put it in your calendar.	Soak in a bubble bath.	Journal, pray or meditate on the things you're grateful for.
Read a good book, Christmas devotional or buy your favorite magazine.	Avoid the make everyone happy trap. Enjoy yourself.	Do nothing at all! A true gift!	Ask for help. Make a list of "to dos", let each member of the family pick off the list.	Get 8 hours of sleep.
Wake up without an alarm clock.	Cuddle up in a cozy blanket by the fire with hot chocolate or tea.	Take a few deep breaths. Count to 3 as you inhale, hold breathe for 3, exhale and count to 3, hold for 3. Repeat 3 times.	Order groceries online and have them delivered.	Do one random act of kindness a day for a family member, or a stranger and for sure YOU!
Write down 3 things you love about yourself and each member of your family. Tell them and yourself.	Go for a silence and solitude walk in nature. Notice the beauty around you.	Say "no" at least one time a day.	Enjoy a crossword puzzle, play cards, or a board game.	Take one whole day to just do something for you.

GIFT GUIDES FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

STOCKING STUFFERS

- The Best Stocking Stuffers For Teen Boys And Girls
- Stocking Stuffers for Tween Boys and Girls
- Teen Girl Stocking Stuffers
- Stocking Stuffers For Teen Boys
- Holiday Gifts Under $25!

TEEN/TWEEN GIRLS

- Great Gifts For Your Teen Girl That Are Under $50
- Ta-Da! Gifts Over $50 Your Teen Girl
- Best Gifts Your Teen Girl Won't Send Back
- Tween Girl Christmas Gift Guide

TEEN/TWEEN BOYS

- Gifts Your Teen Boy Will Love Under $50
- Showstopper Gifts For Your Teen Boy Over $50
- 32 Perfect Gifts For Your Teen Boy

TEACHER/HOSTESS

- Teacher's Gifts! Save the Gift Cards and Get Something Special
- Hostess Gift Guide

DAD

- A Holiday Gift Guide Just For Dad

MOM

- Moms Deserve Some Gifts Too! Here's a List of Hints to Drop!

FAMILY FUN

- The Best Family Games To Make You Laugh Until You Cry

TECH/GADGET LOVERS

- The Perfect Tech Gifts For Your Gadget Lovers!

DECORATING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

- Make Your House Merry And Bright For The Holidays
- Organizing Items and Ideas to Make Your Life Easier This Holiday Season