



KEEP THE HAPPY IN YOUR HOLIDAYS

By staying relaxed and safe

The holidays are often a time of great joy. A time when friends and family come together, reconnecting over rich and delicious home-cooked meals. But sometimes, the pressure of pleasing everyone, throwing the perfect party or finding that special gift for grandma can cause less than joyful feelings for you.

Here are some tips to help you stop sweating the small stuff so you can focus on having a healthy and relaxed holiday season.

- › Make the holidays about the people in your life, not things
- › Practice gratitude every day
- › Eat because you're hungry, not because you're feeling sad or overwhelmed
- › Remember to take care of yourself as well as others
- › Overspend now and you may pay later. Instead, set a limit on gifts. Or get creative and make a homemade frame, paint a picture or make cookies and candy from scratch
- › Give your time and volunteer at a local school or charity
- › Try not to overcommit and learn to say "no." After all, these are your holidays, too
- › Plan ahead. This is one of the easiest ways you can avoid unnecessary stress

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Together, all the way.®



The gift of a stress-free holiday

For many people, stress is the first thing that comes to mind when the holidays roll around. Figuring out what makes you feel stressed and addressing it head-on can make all the difference. Consider the following stress-relievers.

- Find the positive in situations, rather than dwelling on the negative
- Plan fun activities, such as building a snowman or going ice skating
- Get up and go; take an exercise class or go walking with a friend
- Pile on the fruits and veggies for better health and well-being
- Practice portion control and eat on a regular schedule
- Socialize! Hanging out with friends and family can do wonders for your stress levels
- Try relaxation techniques, such as listening to music, meditation or yoga
- Listen to your body, slow down and be sure to take regular breaks
- Indulge in a personal hobby or interest and learn to do what makes YOU happy



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Wrap up a safe holiday season

The holidays are an exciting time for children of all ages. It's up to you to make them as safe as possible. Here are some simple guidelines that cover the basics.

- 1. Trees.** If you opt for a fake tree, always look for a “fire resistant” label. For live trees, be sure to buy a freshly cut one. Fill your tree stand with water regularly, since a dry tree can become a fire hazard.

Place your tree away from fireplaces, radiators or portable heaters. It's also a safe bet to position your tree in a low-traffic area and where it isn't blocking any doorways.

- 2. Lights.** Before hanging lights, it's a good idea to check all the bulbs and make sure there are no frayed wires or loose connections. Only hang lights outdoors that have been certified for outdoor use.

Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shocks. Remember to turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house to avoid a potential fire.

- 3. Toy safety.** When it comes to your kids' safety, you can't play around. Choose age-appropriate toys, since toys that are too advanced can be a safety hazard for little kids.

Be sure to always read the instructions carefully before buying a toy or allowing your child to play with one received as a gift. Store toys in a safe place, like in a toy chest or on a shelf, and keep older kids' toys away from young children.

- 4. Food safety.** Don't let bad food spoil your holidays. Always fully cook meats and poultry. Wash fresh vegetables and fruits and keep them away from raw meat juices. Always use separate cutting boards.

Don't forget to wash your hands often while preparing food, and make sure your children do the same. Last but not least, never leave foods that require refrigeration out for more than two hours.



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