



50 Things To Do This Winter Break

50 great ideas of things you can do with little, some or no budget, to help keep your children engaged during the Winter break!

NetSupport

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As the classic winter song goes, 'It's the most wonderful time of the year' but, as a parent, it can often seem daunting to keep your children active and engaged, both with their minds and bodies, whilst managing a tight budget!

With the holidays fast approaching and as our '60 Things To Do This Summer' guide proved so popular, we thought a winter edition would be ideal! So here, please find 50 ideas of things you can do with little, some or no budget, to help keep your child engaged across the Winter break!

Draw-pin Santas

For this easy and fun activity, you'll just need:

- some cardboard (old cereal packets are great for this)
- some draw-pins
- some markers to colour in the various elements

Simply cut out Santa's arms, legs, body and head, and join the various elements together to pose him however you see fit. These make for great table decorations or could even be hung from your Christmas tree to make it even more festive. Jazz up your designs by using a glue stick and some left over tinsel to add sparkly layers to your Santa.



#1

Quilled Christmas tree

Now with this one, take your time, be patient and enjoy yourself! To complete this activity, you'll need some:

- paper (colour in with festive colours, if you so choose)
- card
- glue



Quilling is done by rolling up strips of paper and sticking them down to make pretty spirals. You can arrange them into shapes like a Christmas tree. We found it easier to complete this activity by starting with a baseline cardboard cut-out of a Christmas tree.

#2

Go stargazing!

Whilst the nights start earlier and we remain in darkness for longer, it provides us with more opportunities to gaze into the night sky and see the huge expanse of our universe. If you have a smartphone, why not try getting a free app such as '[Star Walk](#)' ([available on Android here too](#)) to help you, through the power of augmented reality, explore the night sky and learn what stars and constellations you can see! Please note that the app shared has ads built in - to gain an ad-free environment, a purchase is required.

#3

Write your own festive song

Whether you have GarageBand handy or just a pen and paper for the lyrics and a tune in your head, writing your own song can be great for celebrating your family, any religious festivals or even simply as a creative means of expression. Top tip, if you're going to write your own festive song but you're not too hot on the melodies, pick the melody of one of your favourite songs and re-write the lyrics for your own means. It'll certainly help with others being able to join in singing along with your new song!

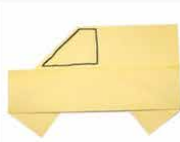
#4

Build some festive origami designs

Origami is a great way of focusing your mind and, whilst the first few attempts might seem a bit frustrating, concentration levels will be at their highest when trying to make some of your builds. Why not [visit this site](#) for some great introductory origami designs to get you started?



Easy Origami Claws



Origami Car



Easy Origami Boston
Terrier



Flapping Butterfly



Easy Origami Bird

Image by Origami Way

Make your own Christmas crackers



Making Christmas crackers is a fun and affordable activity. A sustainable and eco-friendly way of having crackers on the table, whilst making use of items you may already have around the house, making your own crackers can be interesting and they can be something to look forward to sharing over your Christmas lunch. There are many ways you can do this but we really liked the instructions and approaches [shared on this site](#) to start your cracker making journey.

#6

Make your own dreidels

Dreidel is Yiddish for spinning top but, unlike regular spinning tops, a dreidel has four sides. They were designed as a way of helping young people study the Torah and learn Hebrew in secret after Greek King Antiochus IV had outlawed all Jewish religious worship in 175 BCE. They are inscribed with four symbols from Hebrew meaning, "Nes gadol hayah sham" or "a great miracle happened there".



You could make your dreidel in the traditional sense or add whatever you wanted to the four sides. A great way we've discovered of making your own Dreidel is to build it using Lego! Working on the basis that many families with young children will have bits of Lego available, why not [check out this little guide to making your own Dreidel](#) using your spare Lego.

#7

Make a seasonal collage

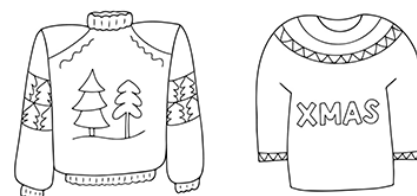
Getting outside into the frosty weather is a great way to explore whilst getting some exercise – and a collage-building activity to take place after your walk is a lovely way to give your trip outside some focus.

There are lots of things that you could consider for inclusion in your collage. We thought you could add things such as leaves, berries, holly, winter fruits, ivy – and you could even, if you have access to a printer at home, print out some photos taken with your phone to place into your design.

Items to help you make your collage include: some cardboard from an old cereal box as the backing, glue, string and a marker pen to add any writing you might like to include in your creation.

#8

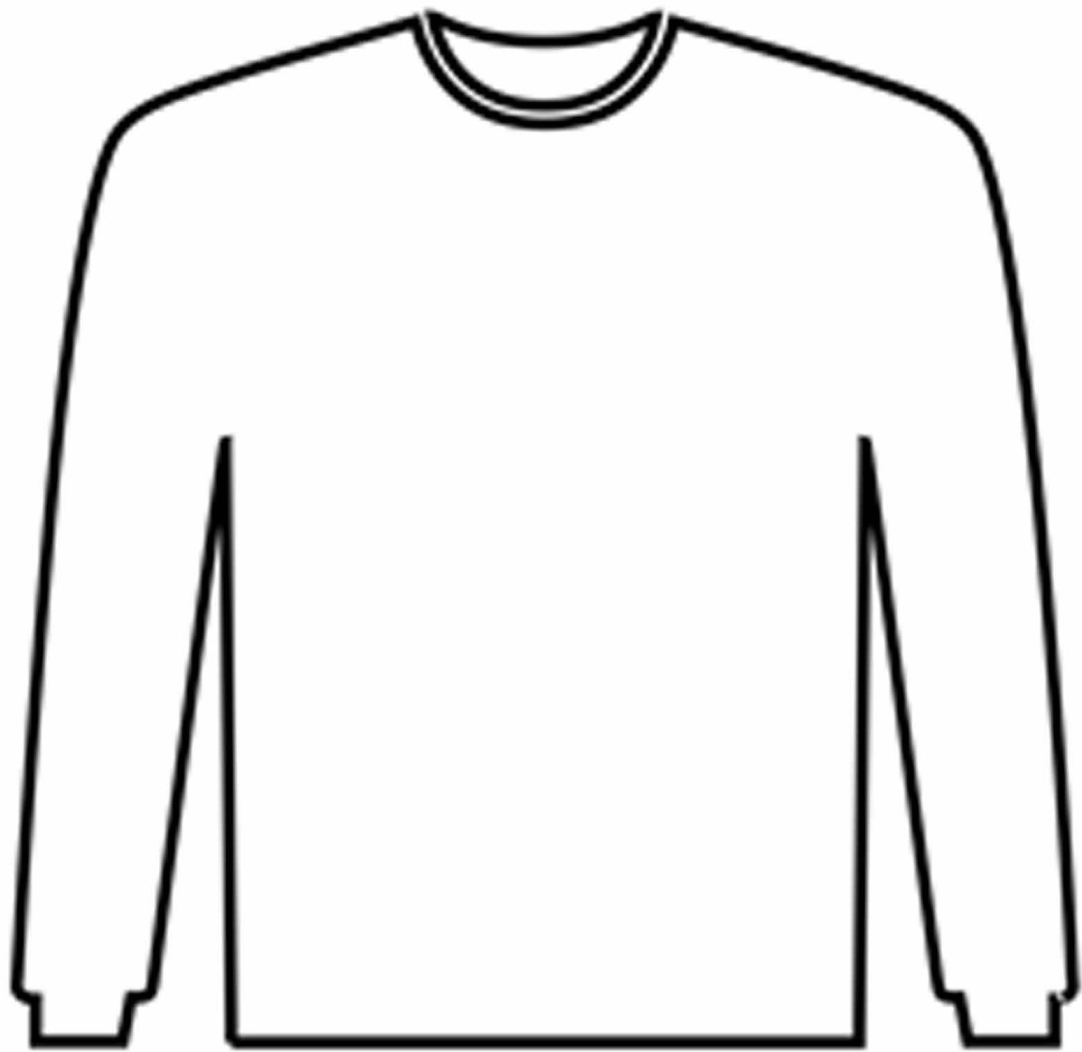
Design your own Christmas jumper



Now, there's a world of difference between designing a Christmas jumper and making one yourself. If you were keen to get knitting and work on this with your family, then this [free design from Hobbycraft](#) looks superb. We thought, however, that using a simple jumper template which you can print out and then colour in would be a great and fun activity for you to undertake. Find one we created for you to use on the following page - simply print it out and use as you see fit!

#9

Design your own festive jumper!



This jumper was designed by:

Make your own Christmas cards

Making your own Christmas cards is as fun as it is simple. You could even explore reusing old Christmas cards by cutting off the front portion of the card, gluing it to a new piece of card and 'hey presto' you have a new card. Failing that, follow these simple instructions to make your own card.

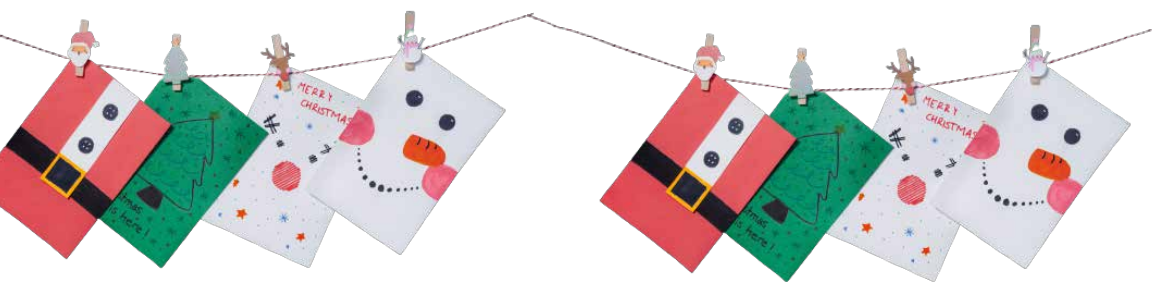
What you'll need:

- Some card
- Some colouring pens or pencils
- Some envelopes
- Your imagination



How to make one:

1. Using your envelope as a template, cut your card into a wide rectangle twice the width of the envelope (leave a bit of a gap to make sure the card will fit inside your envelope).
2. Fold the card in half across the middle to make the front and back of your card.
3. Design your card's front cover.
4. Add your message on page 3 of your card design.
5. Pop your card into its envelope.
6. Give your card to its recipient and enjoy the smile on their face when they receive it!



#10

New vehicle for Santa



Now, we all know that Santa has a sleigh, pulled by his reindeer, but what if he was looking for a new mode of transport? What would that look like? What features would that have? Would it be eco-friendly? What would it be powered by? Would it have a heated steering wheel? The great thing with this activity is that YOU get to decide!

Simply grab some paper, pens and colouring pencils to make your own innovative creation. If you have siblings or friends, you could even have a competition to design the fastest, most eco-friendly, most colourful, or whatever competitive element you'd like to include. The best ingredient with this activity is fun!

#11

Make reindeer food



Many houses put a mince pie out for Santa on Christmas Eve, but "what about all of his reindeer?" This question has been asked by many children over the years, resulting in some extra goodies being placed alongside Santa's own treats.

This activity is great fun, as you can research what reindeer normally eat; you get to learn what sort of food they enjoy and include that within your recipe. We won't spoil the fun in telling you what to include, but you might find [this site useful in your research](#) as it's full of fun facts about reindeer and caribou!

#12

Write a letter to Santa

We all know how much Santa likes a good letter and, as happens every year, Royal Mail is supporting you in getting in touch with him and has shared the following information:

Dear Children,

Are you looking forward to Christmas this year? I certainly am! Christmas is a very exciting but busy time for me.

The elves are busy making toys

The reindeer are practising their sleigh runs

And I'm busy preparing my list of who's been good.

I will be getting my sleigh ready for the long journey on Christmas Eve. In between I will try and reply to as many of you as possible.

Please send your letters to:

**Santa/Father Christmas
Santa's Grotto
Reindeerland
XM4 5HQ**



So don't leave your success to chance and get that letter off to him as soon as possible!

#13

Make paper snowflakes

This lovely activity is so simple to do, yet can create some amazing designs. The designs you make can also double up as fantastic decorations to hang up and place around your home.

To make a paper snowflake, simply:

1. Start with a square piece of paper.
2. Fold the paper in half, diagonally, to make a triangle.
3. Fold the triangle in half again, making the pointed ends meet.
4. Fold the paper triangle in thirds, overlapping the left-hand pointed corner over the triangle.
5. Overlap the right-hand pointed corner over the triangle.
6. Now trim the pointed corners away from the bottom of your triangle.
7. Next, simply cut your folded paper with a variety of small cut-outs to make the holes in your snowflake.
8. Finally, carefully unfold your design to reveal your snowflake. Don't worry if it isn't completely perfect or as you wanted, that will just add to its uniqueness!

#14

Make a Christmas decoration

There are so many different types of Christmas decorations you could make. One that is a chosen favourite in many households with small children is to turn an old 4-pint milk container into a festive elephant. Of course, you don't have to do this, but if you wanted to, the [instructions on this great craft website](#) will get you up and running and designing your own festive elephants in no time at all!

#15



Cotton wool snowman

It's the frosty end of the year and, with any luck, we might get to see some snow over Christmas. But if we don't, you can still make a festive snowman using some everyday household items!

What you'll need:

- cotton balls
- white paper
- larger alternatively coloured paper for your background
- glue – something like PVA glue or a Pritt Stick
- scissors (remember safety)
- decorations – choose whatever you think would work, but things such as buttons, scrap paper, lolly sticks, fabric, craft foam are all good things to include.



How to make one:

1. Start by cutting out a snowman shape from the white paper.
2. Generously apply some glue to the paper.
3. Add your cotton balls to the paper.
4. Dab some more glue onto the cotton balls where you want to fix your decorations.
5. Fix your decorations to the design.
6. Stick your snowman design to the backing paper.
7. Allow time for it all to dry.
8. Stand back and admire your awesome snowman designs!

#16

#17

Make a snow globe



Snow globes are lovely and often a thing of wonderment for younger children. Making one doesn't need to be difficult either. The [BBC Good Food site](#) has some [simple-to-follow instructions](#) on how you can go about building yours and of course, the great thing about this is that you get to decide what's included!

Festive cupcakes



We're no master bakers, that's for sure, but we do enjoy a nice cake and cupcakes are certainly something within our comfort zone - even if we aren't 'Bake off' worthy! If you'd like to have a go at making your own festive cupcakes, then we can strongly recommend a great recipe which can be found on the [BBC Good Food site](#).

#18

Learn how to say 'Merry Christmas' in another language

Christmas is a religious event celebrated the world over and, as such, people share their festive greetings by saying 'Merry Christmas'! If you'd like to learn how to say Merry Christmas in another language, then a good place to start would be to use [Google Translate](#) and see how that would work. [This blog also contains ten translations](#) alongside ten other festive phrases you might consider learning too! Bonne Année!

#19

Create a pop-out 3D Christmas tree card



This is a simple activity, and you don't need many components to make your own fantastic pop-out 3D Christmas tree card. We found [this great guide on YouTube from Craftastic](#) which will guide you through every step of the process. If you make one, we'd love to see it, so please do share it with us [@NetSupportGroup](#) on Twitter if you do!

#20

Festive-themed treasure hunt

With this activity, all you need is your creativity and some ingenuity! One great strategy is to use Post-it notes to write and leave clues around the house to be found. You don't have to do it that way though – you could create a list of clues that need to be answered that could involve searching the internet, finding local places or reading information from local information boards. You can make it as easy or as difficult as you want; you just need to find the time to make it, however you want to do it! Either way, we're confident your family will appreciate the time you've put into creating something fun and interesting for them to do!

#21

Watch a festive film



Whether you're on Netflix, Prime, Disney or not, this time of year there is always a plethora of festive films available to watch. So why not get hold of a handy TV guide (such as the [Radio Times](#)) and book yourself in with a family festive film marathon.

#22

Go to see Christmas lights

Many of the NetSupport team live in areas where residents go all out at Christmas time, with extraordinary light displays, decorations and festivities! One such example is Trinity Close in Burnham on Sea - often featured on national television around Christmas to share the residents' amazing initiative as they raise money for charity!



Credit: Burnham and Highbridge Weekly News

We're sure it's not the only place in the country that does this though, so why not find where your local Christmas lights hotspot is, even if it's in your local town centre! Wrap up warm and get yourself down there for some festive cheer with the glittering lights displays that are on offer.

#23

#24

Make gift tags

A great way to recycle your Christmas cards from last year is to cut out some of the patterns on the front of your cards and instantly turn them into festive gift tags! Simply cut them out, use some string and Sellotape to attach the string and 'hey presto!' – instant saving and you've got some amazing gift card tags!



Read Christmassy stories

Whether you celebrate Christmas or not, the messages of family and friendship that are shared around Christmas are lovely for all. Why not start by having a family read of the classic Beatrix Potter book, *The Tailor of Gloucester*? And if that's a bit too young for your audience, try it anyway. Some members of our team still find lots to love about the story and if you don't have a copy, then you can always have it read to you by a wealth of others on sites such as YouTube.

#25

Design your own board game

Something many children love to do is to make their own competitive games – and we're confident yours will too. Simply providing your children with the challenge of creating their own board game will keep them busy for some time, especially if you ask them to write the rule book too! If you or your children come up with something particularly imaginative, we'd love to hear from you, so get in touch [@NetSupportGroup](#) – we all love our board games here and who knows, we could end up playing it too!?

#26

Write 'thank you' notes



This time of the year is definitely a time for giving, but as we approach the end of the calendar year, it is also a time to reflect and be thankful. Why not complete an activity where you reflect upon the year and consider what and whom you are grateful for? Then, simply write a little thank you note and send it on to that person. You know they'll love it and we're confident you'll get a warm fuzzy feeling, knowing that the person you've sent the note to will feel good about receiving it, too!

#27

Home-made gifts

Everyone appreciates the personal touch. Just recently, a colleague of mine gave me something they'd baked at home as a small gift. So, why not think about something you could make as a simple gift to pass on to a friend, neighbour or colleague who's gone the extra mile for you this last year? It doesn't even have to be anything extravagant, as the most important thing about home-made gifts is that it's the thought that counts.

#28

#29

Snuggle up with a hot chocolate and a blanket



To be fair, this idea is good at pretty much any time or place – unless, of course, you live in a super-hot country, but even then, it can be comforting too. Taking some time to just sit quietly, breathe and relax in your own space can be a fantastic way to unwind and reflect upon a busy day, week, month or even the year. The important thing is that you find the time to do it, whether you have hot chocolate and a blanket or not.

Winter walk



Now this is definitely a better idea to undertake when it's not raining! However, wrapping up warm and going for a walk in the crisp, cold, wintry air, is a great way to not only blow away the cobwebs but also to recharge your batteries. It also counts as exercise too, so why not get yourself outside and visit a local site of natural beauty such as a local park, coastline or Site of Scientific Special Interest (SSSI) and enjoy the best of what's on offer for free in your local area.

#30

Sing Christmas songs for others

Now, we did share back on idea #4 (can you remember back that far?) that you could write your own festive song. If you didn't get to do that one, why not instead (or as well!) have a go at building a performance for your family where you're the star?! You could build a short playlist of Karaoke songs on YouTube and deliver a stunning performance for your family. It would be fun, enjoyable and even if you're not the world's best singer, will still probably bring lots of happy memories!

#31

#32

Dance like no-one is watching

Here's a little secret: this is something many people love to do. There's no pressure. Nobody's watching. It doesn't matter if you lose your balance (although don't fall over!) or if you get the moves or your steps wrong – it's just good unadulterated fun (and exercise!). Another bonus is, you get to choose the music and for how long you do it for!

Make a Christmas tree out of bread



That's right, you read it here first. Make a Christmas tree out of bread. Simply cut out the shape on a slice of bread and there you have it! It's what you do with it next that's the truly fun part though. Do you spread jam on it? Nutella? Do you toast it? Make two and turn it into a funky festive falafel sandwich? The beauty is... you decide! Just make sure you're careful with the knife whilst cutting out the bread!

#33

Capture all those special moments

One highly popular present to give at Christmas time is photo collections - a thoughtful gift incorporating memories of family and loved ones from across the year. You can make calendars, collages, and all other kinds of designs if you wanted to print them out and do that.

Sometimes though, budgets are a little tight so, instead of doing this activity via a company who make these things from your photos, why not just use a simple app to do it instead? You can use one such as Pic Collage ([Android/iOS](#)) to create your own memories collage to share with friends and family digitally. They can always then print it out if they want to and you still get to share those happy memories from all of the special moments you've captured over the course of the year.

#34

Make a Christmas stocking



Now this isn't a stocking that you have to fill; this is a simple decorative stocking which can be hung for decoration wherever you want. Of course, if you want to get a pair of old (clean) tights, cut one leg off and start to fill it with gifts for your loved ones, then that is also a great, fun activity of giving and sharing.

With this idea however, we're going to look at making a decorative stocking to act as a decoration in the home. We thought [this guide with 33 different designs on, shared by womansday.com](#) which has templates, ideas, designs and more on creating Christmas stockings, was a great place to give some inspiration and help.

#35

Make a paper reindeer

Whether it's Blitzen, Rudolph or any of the other reindeer in the pack, making a paper reindeer is a quick and fun activity. Simply grab some paper, add the outline of a reindeer and colour it in however you wish. If you wanted to, you could even easily replicate the design to then cut out and put on your own hand-made festive greetings cards or simply use them for decoration in your home.

#36

Have a family board game night

Whether it's Scrabble, Monopoly, Guess Who, Chess, Snakes and Ladders, Noughts and Crosses, Connect Four or The Game of Life; it doesn't really matter. A great way to bring the family together (and hopefully not argue!) is to have a family games night. Don't feel like you must go out and buy games to make this one work for you either, as there are many games that don't require purchase in order to play, such as Noughts and Crosses. You can even find lots of the popular games you might like to play available as online versions which you can engage with for free such as on [this platform called Arkadium](#).



Visit your local garden centre

So long as you have the means to get there (and can keep it to a window shopping-only experience!), a trip to the local garden centre at Christmas time can be lovely. With their festive displays, lights and things to see, it's a great free visit which can be lots of fun. You might even get some inspiration or hints and tips on things you can make or change in your own garden too!

#38

Visit a local museum or site of historical significance



History is all around us. We can see it on the plaques on buildings commemorating people who've lived there or the activities that have taken place there. We can see it in the churches we have in our community or cathedrals in our city centres. Taking a trip out to examine some local history is not only interesting but it helps give context to the place where you live. So, get outside, get exploring and see what you can discover!

#39

Put some food together and take it to your local food bank

It's always the case that there is someone who is worse off than us, so the simple gift of giving not only helps others in need but can give us a sense of well-being too. If you're unsure how to get started or where to go, [the Trussell Trust shares a wealth of information](#) on the topic and has a database of food bank locations across the UK too.

#40

Go camping! (in the lounge)

Most children absolutely love a 'camp out' – it doesn't take much. Simply pop some cushions from your furniture onto the floor, grab some pillows and a cover from your actual bed and just 'camp out' on the floor.

Why do children love it so much? Perhaps it's the excitement of a different location or the fact that they inevitably get to stay up a bit longer! What we do know is... it is great fun and is a quick and easy activity to tidy up from afterwards, so why haven't you tried it yet? This Winter break is definitely the perfect time to grab the cushions and do it for yourself!

#41

Plan songs with the family to sing together

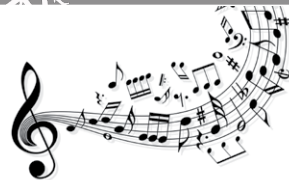


#42

You may have some musicians in your family, or you may not, but we all have a voice, and so choosing some songs to sing together during the Winter break, when families often come together, is a great way to have some fun and forge some happy memories together.

If a family member can play the guitar or the piano, then great (maybe not the drums so much – that can be quite noisy!), but instruments are not essential. The act of simply coming together and singing songs will create memories and can often give family members, particularly older ones, something to look forward to and look back fondly upon (even if the singing is a bit out of tune!).

Compile a festive song playlist to share with the family



Such a simple thing to do, whether you use a paid-for service such as Spotify or Apple Music, or on a free platform such as YouTube, this is a great way to get some festive music playing on loop. The beauty of using online services such as these is that you can share them beyond your own household too!

If you come up with a fantastic playlist, then why not share it with us too via our Twitter [@NetSupportGroup](#) and we can play it across our offices – plus, given many of us are working from home, you could even add some festive cheer to our homes too!

#43

Make some fluffy slime

Now, we must admit, when colleague [Kat Cauchi](#) shared this idea from her time as a teacher, we were a bit sceptical; so some of the team had a go themselves with the recipe she shared ([you can find it here](#)). Yes, it was a bit messy. No, it didn't work perfectly the first time; but the most important feature of the activity for us was, it was really great fun and for sure it will be for you too!

Top tip: In the recipe's instructions it mentions Elmer's White school glue – we had no idea what this was, but it looked like standard PVA glue, and with a bit of research, that is exactly what it was, so we advise using that!

#44

Upcycle your old Christmas decorations



Christmas decorations can fade over time, so why not take some of your more tired or tarnished decorations and give them a festive makeover? You could use beads, glue, glitter (bio-degradable), buttons or whatever you can lay your hands on that would help to give them a facelift.

#45

Bake some festive biscuits



Yes we've already had cupcakes on the list of ideas, but we couldn't share a list such as this without including some biscuits too. As always, the BBC Good Food site has some fantastic options and so [here are 59 different festive biscuit recipes](#) for you to choose from. Of course, you don't have to follow their guide if you already have a great recipe you use. The important element in this idea is doing the activity together with your children. They will enjoy the process, as we suspect you will too, and of course, you get the additional benefit of getting to eat them at the end!

#46

Make hot chocolate from scratch

Now of course, you might just want to go back to idea #29 and use some instant hot chocolate powder so you can get straight on with the snuggling with a blanket element, but there's something really satisfying about making something yourself from scratch. Just as with idea #46 above, [the BBC Good Food site has 25 great recipes](#) to choose from – our favourite was the gingerbread hot chocolate recipe. Which will yours be, we wonder?

#47

Celebrate Kwanzaa by creating a Kinara

First celebrated in 1966, Kwanzaa was created by Maulana Karenga as a means of celebrating African American culture and is held from 26 December to 1 January. Based around the harvest festival traditions from various parts of Africa, the founder created it whilst in the aftermath of the 'Watts Riots' in the US where he gave the reason for starting it to "give blacks an alternative to the existing holiday of Christmas and give blacks an opportunity to celebrate themselves and their history, rather than simply imitate the practice of the dominant society."



During Kwanzaa, seven candles are placed in the Kinara – three red on the left, three green on the right, and a single black candle in the centre. The word Kinara is a Swahili word that means 'candle holder'. Each of the candles also has a meaning. The black one symbolises the African people, the red their struggle, and the green the future and hope that comes from their struggle.

To get involved, all you'll need is the seven candles, coloured how they are represented in the image above and lit each day from 26th December through until 1st January.

#48

#49

Build your own house - using biscuits and sweets!

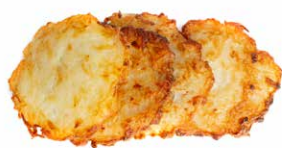
That's right! You too can help your own children become Hansel and Gretel, although this time, they can help build the house of sugary treats and biscuits. Flat biscuits such as 'Biscoff' make for fantastic building blocks for a house, and you can also use Biscoff spread as a great tasty concrete mix to help bind and join the building blocks of your house together.

Don't worry, you don't need a degree in architecture. The fun is in the making and if you don't manage to make an amazing house, still don't worry – it'll still be just as tasty and as much fun, as you'll still get to eat all the ingredients.

Happy building!



Make latkes



Latkes are a type of pancake often eaten during Hanukkah. These pancakes are meant to symbolize the miracle of Hanukkah and, whether you celebrate it or not, they are too delicious to leave off these ideas shared with you. One of our favourite recipes for these comes this time, not from BBC Good Food, but from Jamie Oliver and you can [find his "not too tricky" latkes recipe here](#).

#50

Bonus #51

And finally...

Yes, there's a bonus idea, but it's not really an idea in itself, but more a wish: a final wish to share that whatever you do during the Winter break, whether you celebrate it as a Christian or from within any other faith or background, it is undeniably a fantastic time to bring together friends, family and loved ones.

So, with that in mind, from all of us at NetSupport, we wish you a simply fantastic Winter break, that you may be happy, safe and get to spend time with those who mean the most to you.

Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year!

NetSupport