



Christmas Break Planner

If you're like me, you're looking forward to spending Christmas break with your kids, but you might be a little overwhelmed at all of the extra time that you'll be spending together without the usual structure and routine. Kids everywhere will be sure to be declaring, "I'm bored!" within hours (or minutes!) of being out of school. But with a little advance planning, you can make this Christmas break meaningful and fun.

First, set up some expectations:

What are ideal wake and bedtimes during the break?

What is an acceptable amount of daily screen time? (including TV, video games, tablets, etc.)

- What, if anything, will need to be accomplished to "earn" screen time?

What are daily chores each child should do during the break?

How long should your child read each day?

Will you implement a rest/naptime? If so, at what time and for how long?

How much physical activity/exercise do you want your child to do each day?

What are some daily to-do items that YOU would like to accomplish each day (including daily prayer/Bible reading, exercise, reading for fun, playtime with kids, Christmas/Advent preparations, craft/hobby activities, etc.)

Look at the notes you made above and fill in your ideal daily schedule on the next page. This isn't a hard and fast schedule - it's Christmas break, after all! It's just a way to organize your thoughts - remember to include lots of time blocks for play and fun!



7:00am

8:00am

9:00am

10:00am

11:00am

12:00pm

1:00pm

2:00pm

3:00pm

4:00pm

5:00pm

6:00pm

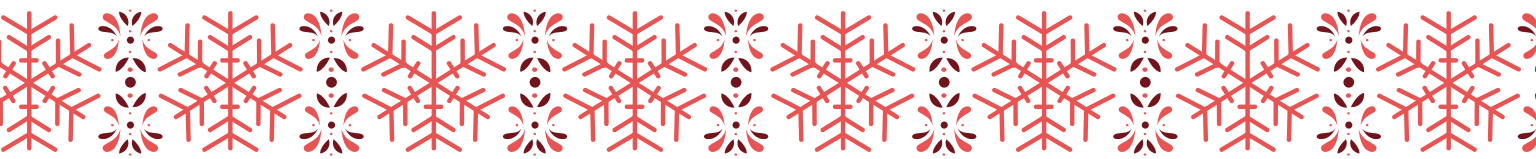
7:00pm

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Now that you know what you'd like your daily schedule to look like, now let's add some fun to those blocks of free time you have.

First, decide on a budget for activities (if it's \$0, don't worry; we'll talk about free activities below)

What are some activities that your family wants to do which fit within your budget?

(Ideas: ice skating, trampoline park, movie, zoo, children's museum, sports event)

What are some free or inexpensive activities that your family enjoys?

(Ideas: library event or storytime, local museum, Christmas light display, a Redbox movie)

Write the names of friends that you would like to connect with over the break. This is a great time to see friends that you haven't seen in awhile!

What family get-togethers and church events are you planning on attending?

Now, take the events you noted about and plug them in on the calendar below. You're well on your way to a well-planned Christmas break!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
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Want to go a little deeper? Implement one of these ideas over the break:

-Encourage your kids to set a goal, and work on it during Christmas break. The goal could be memorizing scripture, learning a times table, achieving a sports-related goal, mastering a song on their musical instrument, reading a certain number of books, etc. Make it fun by offering lots of encouragement and a big reward at completion.

-Plan a family service project and assign your kids jobs related to it. For example, if you are going to visit a nursing home, have your kids make cards and practice a musical number to share with the residents. Or if you choose a homeless shelter, have your kids assemble goody bags with necessities. Or have them help you make cards and cookies to deliver to elderly friends. (Here are two great kid-friendly cookie recipes: <http://tinyurl.com/SnowballCookies> or <http://tinyurl.com/ChocOreoCookieBalls>)

You now have a plan in place and are ready to make the most of this special time together with your kids! But if you hit some bumps along the way, here are some helpful links to have as resources:

-Series on Sibling Rivalry from Focus on the Family: <http://tinyurl.com/DealingWithSiblingRivalry>

-Ideas for Winter Activities (from familyeducation.com): <http://tinyurl.com/WinterIdeas>

-How to Get Yourself out of a Grouchy Mood (from moneysavingmom.com): <http://tinyurl.com/GrouchyMomTips>

Have a wonderful Christmas Break!