# Kids Christmas Party Games

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Hints For Using Games

Consider Safety – Always consider safety of the players. Be aware of situations that could cause an injury.

Establish Safety Rules – Before beginning give clear instructions about what is permitted and what is not permitted, e.g. how players are to move, what areas are out of bounds, etc.

Have Clear Signals – Have a signal that is used for all players to stop, look and listen. It may be a whistle for outdoor games or a word that is called out for indoor games.

Promote Sportsmanship – Stress the importance of good sportsmanship and discourage poor sportsmanship.

Always Be Prepared – Like a good boy scout, it is important to always be prepared, i.e. have all equipment ready before beginning, make sure you are familiar with how the game is played and the rules of the game.

Include All Players – Involve as many players as possible in the games. This keeps children interested and attentive if they are actively participating.

Have Prizes Ready – Prizes can be candy, chocolates, small toys or games, stationary or novelty Christmas decorations. Children can select a prize from a Prize Box or choose a mystery prize without looking from a Prize Bag.

Include Games Without Prizes – Play some games just for the fun of it.
1. Reindeer Groups

Equipment – cards with numbers from 1-8 placed in a Santa Sack or in a Santa Hat, music

One person is nominated to be Santa.
Santa has the numbered cards in a Santa Sack or a Santa Hat.
Children dance around in a large circle in the center of the room as Christmas music is played.
When the music is stopped they all call out, ‘How many reindeer does Santa have?’
Santa draws a card and calls out the number. Children scramble to form a group the size of the given number. Then sit when their group is formed.
Any children not belonging to a group of the correct size are eliminated and sit on the outside of the designated area.
Repeat until a group of 2, 3 or 4 remain. They are the winners.

2. What’s My Present?

Equipment – a card and a pin for each child, each card has the name of a present on it.

A card is pinned onto the back of each child without the child seeing what it says but players can see each others cards.
When each player has a card, they all mingle asking each other yes/no questions about what their present is, e.g. Do I use it for sport? Is it a toy?
First player to guess what their present is, wins but continue playing until all have guessed.
3. **All I Want For Christmas …**

Play around the room or have children sit in a circle. The first player says, ‘All I want for Christmas is a …..(names a present, e.g. puppy).’ Next player repeats this adding a gift of his/her choice, ‘All I want for Christmas is a puppy and a skateboard.’ Next player repeats adding his/her gift, ‘All I want for Christmas is a puppy, skateboard and doll.’

Game continues with the list becoming longer and longer until a child is unable to remember the list in order.

4. **Jingle Bells and Santa’s Sleigh**

Players sit in a circle. IT is in the centre of the circle. IT walks up to a player and says JINGLE (or BELLS or SANTA’S SLEIGH) and then counts to 5. The player that IT has spoken to has to respond appropriately.

If IT says JINGLE – the player says the name of the person to his/her right.
If IT says BELLS – the player says the name of the person to his/her left.
If IT says SANTA’S SLEIGH – the player says his/her own name.

The player has to respond correctly without hesitating while IT counts to 5. If the player is successful, IT moves onto another player. Play continues until IT gets someone out and this person then becomes the next IT.
5. **Spot the Santa**

Children sit in a circle.
One child is chosen to be the Spotter.
The Spotter leaves the room or turns his/her back while a child from the circle is chosen to be Santa.
Santa chooses the repetitive, rhythmic movements that everyone will make without standing or moving from their places.

Movements might include
- rubbing his/her belly
- wrapping present action
- driving a sleigh action
- climbing down a chimney action
- taking presents out of a sack

Encourage Santa to be creative with his/her actions.

Once everyone is copying Santa’s action, the Spotter returns to the room and starts to observe the group.
The Spotter’s job is to guess who Santa is in 3 guesses.
Santa changes the actions as often as possible without being seen by the Spotter. Everyone follows copying Santa’s actions.
After 3 guesses or when the Spotter guesses Santa’s identity, a new game begins with a new spotter and a new Santa being chosen.

HINT – Children may need to be encouraged not to look at Santa as this will give the game away to the Spotter. Instead they can scan the group and change movements when they notice others changing their movements.

HINT – Game can also be played with children standing. This allows for a larger variety of movements.
6. **Christmas Story Word by Word**

Equipment – pencil and paper if you choose to write the story

The first few words to start a Christmas story are given to the players, e.g. Santa was … On Christmas Eve … Suddenly Santa’s sleigh … A story is built word by word with each player adding a word. The story can be done verbally - encourage everyone not to hesitate. OR the story can be written down with each player adding a word. Writing it down is a little slower but players then have a record to reread.

**Variation**

**Add A Sentence Story**

Played in a similar way but this time each player gets to add a whole sentence.

7. **Who is Santa?**

Children all sit facing the same way.

One child is IT. IT stands at the front with his/her back to the others. Choose a child to be Santa. Santa says, ‘Merry Christmas! Ho! Ho! Ho!’ Encourage the child to disguise her/his voice. IT then has a number of chances (2-3) to guess who spoke. If IT is correct, she/he has another turn. If IT isn’t correct Santa takes ITS place.
8. **Ribbon Match**

Equipment – lengths of wrapping ribbon - one length for each child. Ribbons are varying lengths but cut so that there are pairs of equal lengths.

Each child is given a length of ribbon. On ‘GO!’ children move around and compare lengths of ribbon until they find their partner with the same length.

Any child without a partner is eliminated.

Collect ribbons and one ribbon is swapped for another ribbon of a different length. Repeat with children without a partner being eliminated.

Play until only one pair remains, the winners.

9. **Santa Says**

Play as for Simon Says but use the term Santa Says instead.

One person is chosen to be Santa.

Santa gives instructions and tells the other what to do.

When Santa starts the instructions with, ‘Santa says…’, the players follow the instructions. When instructions are given without starting with, ‘Santa says’, the players don’t follow the instructions.

Players are eliminated when they make a mistake, until only one player remains, the winner.

The winner can then become the next Santa.
10. **Santa’s Hat**

Players sit in a circle. Players slowly clap a 4 beat pattern. Try - Clap hands, Clap hands on knees, Clap hands, Clap hands on knees (repeat).

1st player says, ‘Santa’s Hat is a/an (adjective starting with A) Hat.’ Adjective could be awful. This is said to the 4 beat pattern.

Clap the 4 beats again then 2nd player gives an adjective starting with B, e.g. beautiful Hat.

Play continues with each person having a turn and keeping to the pattern – clap 4 beats, say the sentence (while the clapping continues), clap 4 beats, next person says the sentence. See how far through the alphabet the group can go without breaking the pattern.

11. **Jingle Bells**

A Christmas Spelling Bee Game (Great for classroom Christmas parties)

Children stand in a circle. The caller gives a word for the children to spell and nominates the person to start. Children give one letter at a time going in a clockwise direction. The child who is after the person who says the last letter says ‘Jingle Bells’. The next child is out and sits down. If a child says a wrong letter, he is out and sits down also. Next person must give the correct letter.

When the word is completed, the caller then gives the next word and play continues around the circle. Last child standing is the winner.

Christmas Words can be used for the spelling bee. Here are some words to get you started - merry, holly, presents, Santa, elves, Rudolph, tree, candles, angel, stocking, chimney, wreath, carols, sleigh, decorations.
12. **Bases - Santa, Reindeer, Christmas Tree**

Players spread out and face the caller. The caller says ‘Santa’, ‘Reindeer’ or ‘Christmas Tree’.
If the caller says ‘Santa’ the players must have 2 bases on the ground, e.g. 2 feet or 1 foot and 1 hand.
If the caller says ‘Reindeer’ the players must have 4 bases on the ground, e.g. 2 feet and 2 hands.
If the caller says ‘Christmas Tree’ the players must have 1 base on the ground, e.g. 1 foot or sit on the bottom with hands and feet off the ground.
The last player to get into the correct position is eliminated.
Any player that doesn’t have the correct number of bases on the ground is eliminated.
Repeat until only one player is left – the winner.
For larger groups the caller may need helpers to spot who is last.

13. **Twenty Questions**

One player thinks of something that could be a Christmas present and tells if it is animal, vegetable, mineral or mixture, i.e. animal - an animal or derived from animal; vegetable - a plant or derived from plants; mineral - from the mineral world and has never been alive; a mixture – a combination. The others then ask up to 20 Yes/No questions to guess what the present is. If someone guesses they then choose the next present.
HINT – Encourage broad questions rather than wild guesses, e.g. Is it used outside? Can it move by itself? NOT Is it a teddy? Is it a vase?
14. **Christmas Tag**

**Need – 2 blindfolds**

One child is chosen to be the Santa and another to be the reindeer. Both are blindfolded. Other players form a circle. Santa and the reindeer both stay inside the circle. When Santa says ‘Rudolph’ the reindeer must say ‘Santa!’ Santa has to tag the reindeer. When Santa tags the reindeer a new Santa and reindeer are chosen.

HINT – To avoid injury insist that Santa and reindeer walk not run.

15. **Wild Card**

**Equipment – 4 cards and 4 signs with the words – Santa, Elves, Reindeer, Angels. Music is required.**

Each corner or 4 areas of the room are assigned Santa, Elves, Reindeer, Angels. A sign is put up in each corner. Children dance to the music. When the music stops each child chooses a corner or area to go to. The caller then draws a card and calls out what is on the card. All children in that corner are eliminated. When 4 or less children remain, each corner can only have one child at the most. Winner is the last child remaining.
16. **Pass the Present**

**Equipment** – small presents (small wrapped gift, chocolate bar, small toy)

Players sit in a circle with their hands behind their backs.
One child is IT and stands in the centre.
IT closes his/her eyes while one person has the present put into his/her hands.
IT opens his/her eyes and players pass and pretend to pass the present behind their backs.
IT gets 3 guesses to say who has the present and keeps the present if correct.
HINT – Tell children to keep pretending so IT can't tell the real passes from the pretend passes.

17. **Reindeer, Reindeer, Rudolph**

**Need** – 2 blindfolds

This is a Christmas version of the old favorite, 'Duck, Duck, Goose.'
Choose a child to be IT. The other children sit in a circle. IT walks behind the children tapping each child on the head and saying 'Reindeer, Reindeer, Reindeer ....' until he/she taps a child and says ‘Rudolph’. Rudolph then jumps up and chases IT around the circle. IT has to try to run around the circle and back to the Rudolph’s place. If the Rudolph catches IT, the Rudolph now becomes the new IT.
18. North Pole, South Pole, Santa’s Sleigh

If playing inside, choose one wall to be the North Pole, the opposite wall as the South Pole and the floor in between to be Santa’s Sleigh. If outside, use two fences or ropes on the ground to be the areas for North Pole and South Pole and in between as Santa’s Sleigh.

All players stand on Santa’s Sleigh. Caller calls ‘North Pole’, ‘South Pole’ or ‘Santa’s Sleigh’. Players run to the North Pole area, the South Pole area or stand still on Santa’s Sleigh. Last player to reach the North Pole or South Pole is out. If ‘Santa’s Sleith’ is called players stand still and are out if they move. Last player left is the winner.

HINT – Callers can bluff by calling ‘Nnnnnnnn…..no-one moves’ or ‘Sssssssanta’s Hat.

19. Present Snatch

Need – a wrapped box to be the present, blindfold

Choose one player to be IT. Divide the other players into 2 teams. Teams make 2 lines about 4 large paces between them.

IT sits in the middle with the blindfold on and the present in front of him/her. One player from each team attempts to take the present without being caught. A player is caught if IT points directly to him/her. A caught player must return to his/her place. The team to snatch the present the most times is the winner.
20. **Wrapped Up**

Equipment – Pieces of wrapping paper large enough for one child to stand on, music, 3 cards with ‘On’, ‘Off’ and ‘Safe’ on them.

Pieces of wrapping paper are spread over the floor. Have enough pieces for about half of the players.

Players dance around the room while the music plays. When the music is stopped, each player chooses to stand on a piece of paper or on the floor.

The caller then draws a card and reads out what is on it.

If it is the ‘On’ card – all children on wrapping paper are safe and those who are off the paper are eliminated.

If it is the ‘Off’ card – all children on the wrapping paper are eliminated.

If it is the ‘Safe’ card – everyone is safe and no-one is eliminated.

Continue play removing a few pieces of wrapping paper each time.

Play until only one player remains, the winner.

21. **Reindeer and Elves**

Equipment – Designate 2 areas as Reindeer’s Home and Elves’ Home

Divide players into 2 teams, one The Reindeer and one The Elves. Designate a Home area to each. Players stand in rows facing each other and slowly move towards the other team. Caller calls out either Reindeer or Elves. If Reindeer is called, the Reindeer have to chase the Elves as the Elves run to their Home. If Elves is called, the Elves do the chasing as the Reindeer run Home.

Any player who is caught joins the other team.

Encourage the caller to be clever and try to trick everyone calling ‘Rrrrrr….rabbits or ‘Eeee….lephants.
22. **Santa’s Sleigh**

Students find a partner. If one child is left over he can be the caller.
Pairs stand in a circle facing into the centre.
One child in each pair is SANTA and the other is the REINDEER.
REINDEER kneel on all fours.
SANTAS sit cross legged behind their REINDEER with hands up as though holding the reins.
Caller calls out either SANTAS or REINDEER.
When SANTAS is called, the SANTAS stand up and run clockwise around the outside of the circle, back to their REINDEER, and sit cross legged again.
The last SANTA back in place is eliminated with their partner.
When REINDEER is called, the REINDEER stand up and run clockwise around the outside of the circle, back to their SANTA and kneel in front of SANTA again.
The last REINDEER back to their place is eliminated with their partner.
Eliminated REINDEER and SANTAS stay in place to keep the circle formed but both players sit side by side. The game continues until only one pair is left.

23. **Tic Tac Toe**

Equipment – a large Tic Tac Toe grid – chalk drawn on cement, four ropes laid out or four lines of tape laid out to make the grid

Everyone is divided into two teams – could be boys and girls or children with Santa Hats and children without. Each team takes turns to send a child to sit or stand on the Tic Tac Toe grid and play as for regular Tic Tac Toe.
24. **Gotcha**

**Equipment – a wrapped present, a blindfold**

Players sit in a circle with IT in the centre. IT is blindfolded. The present is placed in front of or behind IT. A player is chosen to be the thief. Everyone has to be still and silent while the thief sneaks over and takes the present. IT can catch the thief by grabbing the thief and calling ‘Gotcha’ (I’ve got you.) or by pointing at them and calling ‘Gotcha’. When a thief is caught, he/she returns to his/her place. IT only has 3 chances to call ‘GOTCHA’ and be wrong. If the thief takes the present and gets back to her/his seat, she/he is the next IT.

HINT – Players must be quiet and still and can’t make noises to distract IT.

25. **Perfect Present**

**Equipment – card, tape, markers, 3 hats (Santa Hats are ideal)**

Three children are selected to wear the hats. The names of three presents - are written on cards and taped to their hats so everyone can see them except themselves. E.g. CD, Train Set, Book, Teddy, Toy Car, Doll.

Each player then asks Yes/No questions about their present. E.g. Am I made of metal? Do you use me in the garden? When they receive a No answer, the next player starts his/her turn. The winner is the first player to guess the present.

HINT – Instead of using hats, players can sit with their backs to the wall and the present cards can be taped to the wall behind them.
26. **Give Up the Present**

**Equipment – a present to pass, a timer**

Children sit in a circle. The present is the eliminator. It is passed from person to person around the circle. The timer watches the clock and calls out ‘Give It Up!’ every 20 seconds. The person holding the present when the timer calls ‘Give It Up’, is out and leaves the circle. The winner is the last person left and this person wins the present.

27. **Christmas Whispers**

Players sit in a circle or in a row.

The first person is told a Christmas sentence in a whisper. It can be something silly like, ‘Santa and Rudolph eat banana sandwiches on Christmas Day.’ This player then whispers it to the next, who repeats it to the next and so on. The fun part is when the last person tells what they think the message is. It has usually become quiet distorted by the end.

It can also be fun to let each person tell what they thought the message was.

**Variation Christmas Movement**

For this version, players sit in a line all facing away from the first player. The first player is shown or creates a miming action, eg unwrapping a Christmas Present.

This player then taps the next player on the shoulder so he/she turns around and watches the first player do the movement. The movement is then passed on to the next player and so on until it reaches the last person.
28. Santa's Smelly Socks

This one always brings lots of laughs.
One child is IT. The other children ask questions but the only answer IT can give is, ‘Santa's Smelly Socks'. IT has to keep a straight face and is out if she/he laughs.
Let children ask silly questions to try to make IT laugh, e.g. What is your favorite food? What is in your ear? What do you want for your birthday?

29. Christmas Categories

Equipment - pencil, paper, list of categories.

Each player is given the list of 5 categories:
1. Christmas Presents
2. Christmas Food
3. Christmas Decorations
4. Santa’s Clothes
5. Christmas Songs

Players are told a letter of the alphabet. Within the specified time (3 minutes), the players write down as many things as they can for each category. Each thing must start with the given letter of the alphabet, e.g. B - Presents – Bike, Blocks, Book.

When time is up, players count up the number of items that they have, scoring 1 point for each. An additional 5 points is given if they have at least one answer for each category. Player with the highest score tells others their answers so they can be checked. This player is the winner of the round.
Players can also team up and play in pairs or teams.
**30.  Stuck in the Chimney**

**Equipment – Christmas music, 2 lengths of rope**

Children run or dance in a clockwise direction around the room. 2 lengths of rope are placed across their path about 5-10 feet apart. This creates the chimney that all children must cross. Play music while children run or dance around the room. When the music stops all children who are between the ropes are eliminated as they are stuck in the chimney. Game continues until only one winner is left.

**31.  Christmas Riddle Match**

**Equipment – large sets of cards with Riddles on cards and matching answers on other cards.**

The group sits down and each player is given a Riddle Card or an Answer Card. On the signal to start, the group mingle reading each others cards and trying to find their match. When a match is found the pair sit down together. A prize can be given to the first to find their match.

The game can also be played as an elimination game with some cards being included without a match. Those without a match are eliminated.

**Here are some riddles to get you started.**

What do snowmen eat for lunch? (Ice burgers)
Why does Santa Claus like to work in the garden? (He likes to Hoe Hoe Hoe.)
What kind of motorcycle does Santa have? (A Holly Davidson)
Who delivers presents to baby sharks on Christmas Eve? (Santa Jaws)
What did Adam say to Eve the day before Christmas? (It’s Christmas, Eve)
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