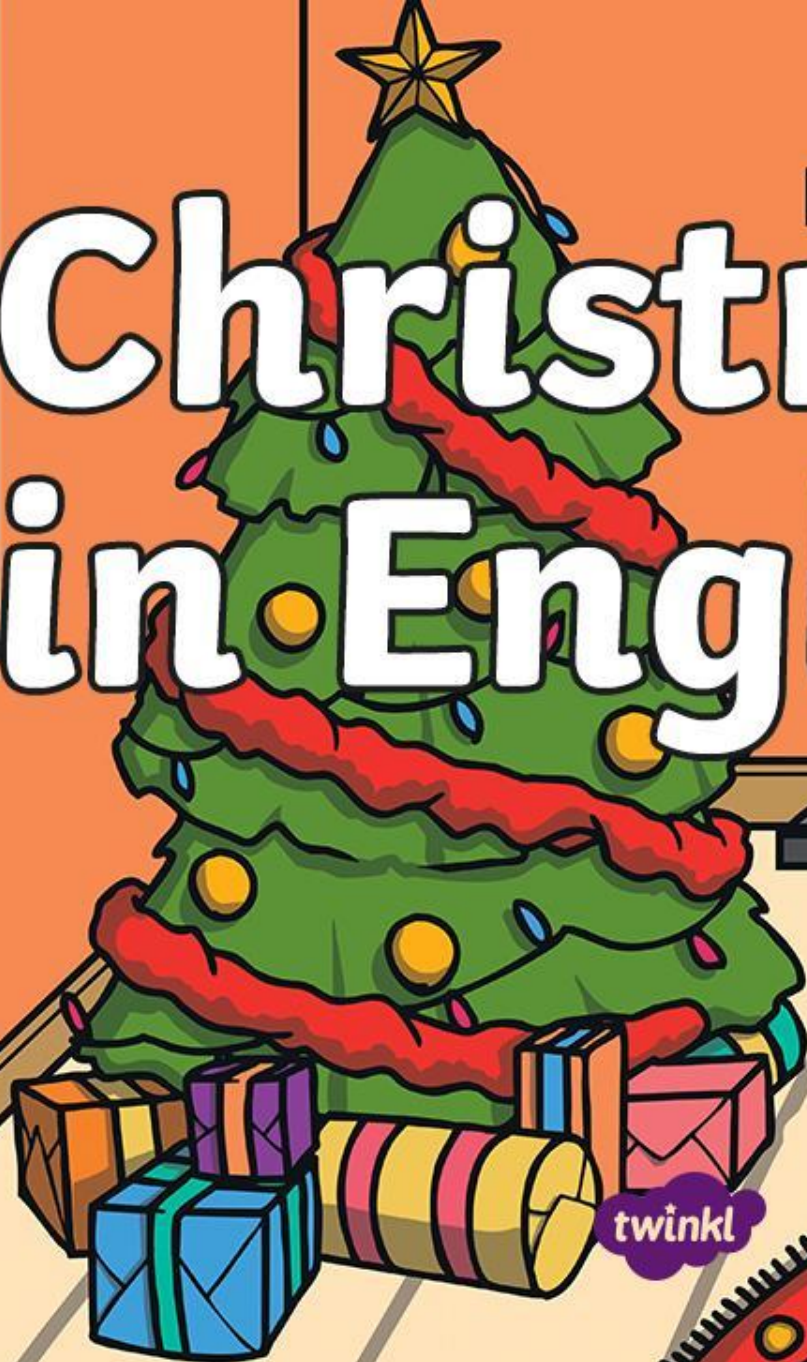


Christmas in England



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Advent

Christmas in England starts with Advent, which begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day.

Some children have Advent calendars with little numbered doors. Each day, they open the door for that date. Behind the door is usually a chocolate or a picture.



In church, an Advent candle is lit. Sometimes, the candle is one of four on a wreath, with one being lit each Sunday in Advent and the fifth one (in the middle), being lit on Christmas Day.

Decorations

Many people in England decorate their homes in December. They hang lights outside their houses and paper chains, sprigs of holly and other decorations inside.



Christmas Trees

In England, many people will buy a real fir tree that they bring inside their homes and decorate with baubles and lights. Some homes have a pretend fir tree, so that they can re-use it each year. Presents are often placed under the tree.



Christmas Cards

People in England often send cards wishing their friends and relatives a 'Happy Christmas.' Cards are then sometimes hung up on display in homes.



Letters to Father Christmas

A few weeks before Christmas, it is traditional in England for children to write letters to Father Christmas, with a list of what they would like. It is thought that they will only receive presents if they have been well-behaved during the year.



Nativity Plays

In many English schools, young children will take part in Nativity plays. They dress up as characters from the Christmas story and act it out.

Many churches will also have a Nativity scene set up throughout December.



Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve is on 24th December and is the day before Christmas Day.

A lot of children hang stockings at the end of their beds in the hope that Father Christmas will visit and leave them some presents. They sometimes leave a mince pie and a drink out for Father Christmas and a carrot for Rudolph, his reindeer.



Christmas Day

In England, Christmas Day is on 25th December.

When they wake up, children will usually open the presents in their stockings. Sometimes, other presents are given and received. Some people go to a special carol service in church on Christmas Day.

Many families spend time with their relatives and lots of food is eaten.



Christmas Dinner

In England, a traditional Christmas dinner is roast turkey, pigs in blankets (sausages wrapped in bacon), roast potatoes and vegetables. Dessert is Christmas pudding made from fruit, with cream or custard.



Boxing Day

Boxing Day is on 26th December, the day after Christmas Day.

Traditionally, employers would give their servants a box of gifts such as food, money and clothes and let them have the day off. Servants would go and visit their families, having worked on Christmas Day.



Twelfth Night

In England, some people used to have parties on Twelfth Night, which occurs on 5th January. It is thought to be bad luck if you leave Christmas decorations up after this date.





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