

# Christmas and Winter Themed Party Games

## Part 1: Musical, running and hunting games



### Musical Christmas Cards (a themed version of musical chairs)

**You need:** A source of Christmas music and Christmas cards (1 less than the total number of players).

**Setting up the game:** Scatter the Christmas cards around the floor.

**Playing the game:** When the music is played the children dance around the cards. When the music stops, everyone picks up a card. The child without a card is out. The children put the cards back on the floor and the music is switched back on. The person in charge of the game picks 1 card up and the game continues.

**Winning:** The winner is the final child in the game.

**Suggestion:** Many children enjoy these games but hate 'being out'. Turn 'being out' into a positive thing by letting the child who is 'out' turn the music on and off in the next round.

### Musical Christmas Shapes (a faster version of musical chairs)

*With thanks to my sister for suggesting this one!*

**You need:** A source of Christmas music, a selection of Christmas pictures (Christmas trees, Father Christmas, Nativity scenes etc) and pieces of paper with the names of the pictures to pull out at random (or a dice if you have 6 pictures).

**Setting up the game:** Scatter the Christmas pictures around the floor.

**Playing the game:** When the music is played the children dance around the pictures. When the music stops, everyone stands by a picture. A picture is then chosen at random. Any children standing round this picture are out of the game. Repeat. Towards the end of the game you may wish to pick some pictures up to ensure a single winner.

**Winning:** The winner is the final child still in the game.

**Something to note:** Because this game moves more quickly than the traditional musical chairs it can be played more than once, stopping children becoming upset that they are 'out first'.

### Candy Cane Relay Race

**You need:** 4 or 8 candy canes per team (plus a few spare).

**Setting up:** Divide the children into teams and ask half of each team to stand at each end of the room. Give the first child in each team 4 (or 8 for a harder game) candy canes.

**Playing the game:** The candy canes should be held between the fingers. The child runs the length of the hall and then hands the canes over, without dropping them (so that the children have to carefully line up their fingers to take the canes). The second player then races back and repeats the process. When all players have had their turn, the team should sit down.

**Game objective:** To be the first team sitting down.



## Winter Clothes Relay

**You need:** A selection of winter clothes (e.g. hat, scarf, gloves, welly boots, coat) - enough for one per team and large enough for all the players to wear.

**Setting up:** Divide the children into teams and ask them to line up at one end of the room. Lay the items out across the room, e.g.

| Team 1 | Team 2 | Team 3 | Team 4 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Gloves | Gloves | Gloves | Gloves |
| Hat    | Hat    | Hat    | Hat    |
| Scarf  | Scarf  | Scarf  | Scarf  |
| Coat   | Coat   | Coat   | Coat   |

**Playing the game:** The first child from each team runs up to the first object and puts it on. They then run up to the second object and put it on. This continues until they are wearing all the objects. They then run to the end of the room, touch the wall and run back to the place where they picked up the final clothing item. They take that item off and run back to the second place, where they take that item off. They continue until all the winter clothes are back in place. They then run back to their team, tagging the next player. This player then repeats the process. When the final person is back the whole team should sit down.

**Game objective:** To be the first team to sit down.

**Safety Note:** If using adult sized boots with smaller children, make sure they do not have to 'run' too far in them as they might fall over. If using boots, make sure that children are wearing socks.

**Suggestion:** Use chairs to mark where each set of clothes should be left.

## Snowman Relay (Dressing up version)

**You need:** Per team you will need a hat, scarf, gloves, and an orange cone with an elastic loop attached to it (for a dress up snowman's nose).

**Setting up:** Divide the children into teams of 6 or less, with one volunteer 'snowman' per team sent to the opposite end of the room. Place the objects in front of each team.

**Playing the game:** The first child from each team picks up an object and runs to their team mate at the other end of the hall. They add the object to their 'snowman'. They run back, tag the next team member who then runs up with the second object. This continues until the snowman is fully dressed. The snowman then runs with the last person to the other end of the hall and the whole team sit down.

**Game objective:** To be the first team to sit down.



## Snowman Relay (Cardboard version)

**You need:** Per team you will need a cardboard snowman's body, head, hat, scarf, nose, and buttons.

**Setting up:** Divide the children into teams. Place the card pieces in front of each team.

**Playing the game:** The first child from each team picks up the snowman body and runs to the other end of the room, placing it on the floor. They run back, tagging the next player. The second child picks up the head and places it on the body. Subsequent players pick up the other pieces, adding them to the correct part of the snowman. When the snowman is fully built, the final player rushes back and the whole team sits down.

**Game objective:** To be the first team to sit down.

**Alternative:** This could also be played using reindeer pieces.

**Suggestion:** Have the children help to make the snowman pieces as they arrive at the party.

## Christmas Swap

**You need:** Chairs (1 less than the number of children).

**Setting up:** Place the chairs in a circle. Choose 1 volunteer to stand in the middle. The other children should sit on the chairs. Give each sitting child the name of something Christmas-y, such that each Christmas-y name is given to several children. (For a group of 12 children, we recommend giving 3 names e.g. holly, ivy, mistletoe. For a group of 24 children we recommend using 4 names, e.g. santa, snowmen, robin and reindeer.)

**Playing the game:** The game leader calls out one of the Christmas-y names. Everyone with that name tries to swap seats. They may not sit back down on their own seat. The person in the centre tries to sit in one of the seats. Whoever is left standing is the new person in the centre.

**Suggestion:** If the person in the centre successfully sits down, they will take the name of that round. This can sometimes be confusing as their name might change from one round to the next. You could label the chairs so that they can check their name.

## Christmas Dash (a themed version of 'shops')

**You need:** Nothing except a hall or clear, large room!

**Playing the game:** Designate the walls of the room 'Christmas decorations', 'Christmas dinner', 'Christmas Presents' and 'Church'. Call out different objects of people. Children should run to the appropriate end of the room. For example children should run to 'Christmas decorations' if the game leader calls out 'tinsel'. The last child to the end of the room is out.

**Game objective:** To be the last person in the game.

**Alternative version:** If there are only a small number of players, the last player could be given a small sticker or token instead. The winner would be the player with the fewest tokens when play finished.

**Suggested Christmas dinner items:** Turkey, roast potatoes, parsnips, gravy, Christmas pudding, Christmas cake.

**Suggested Christmas decoration items:** Tinsel, tree, fairy lights, stocking, baubles, paper chains.

**Suggested church items:** nativity, carols, prayers, Jesus, manger, Bethlehem, bible, shepherds, christingle.

**Suggested Christmas presents:** The 'must-have' gifts will change each year - ask the children to suggest some of the things they would like before the game begins.



## Toy Hunt

**You need:** Pictures of toys or other presents stuck or printed onto card (e.g. cut from a catalogue or printed from the internet).

**Setting up:** Hide the presents around the play area. Divide the children into teams. Give each team a list of presents to find (if they are not unique lists, make sure there are enough for everyone to find).

**Playing the game:** Each team tries to hunt for the presents on their list. The first team to find all the presents could win a small prize.

**Alternative:** For smaller numbers of children give each individual or pair a list.

## Christmas Card Hunt

**You need:** Old Christmas cards, cut in half (at least one per player).

**Setting up:** Hide half of each card around the play area.

**Playing the game:** Give each child half a Christmas card and send them to find the other half.

**Longer Alternative:** For a longer game, when the child finds the other half of their card they should show it to the game leader who gives them another half to find. The aim is then to complete as many cards as possible in the time allowed.

## Hunt the Gift Tags

**You need:** A selection of different gift tags (we suggest 4 different types).

**Preparation:** Write each child's name on a set of gift tags and hide them around the play space.

**Playing the game:** Show the children what the gift tags look like and let them hunt for those with their name on. Make sure they know how many they are looking for and not to touch other people's tags.

**Winning:** When children have found their gift tags they could exchange them for a small prize.

