

The 10 best Christmas games and activities

1. Christmas bingo card generator (any level)

I bet you have played bingo at least once in your life. Well, so have our students, and we can use that knowledge and that spirit of competition to play a Christmas-themed game (and review a bit of vocabulary while we're at it). The cool thing? You can quickly and easily create your own set of Christmas bingo cards with [this website](#). Enter the Christmas vocabulary you want to include in the game, decide your settings, click next step and choose "30 cards for free": here are your bingo cards ready to print!



2. Write a letter to Santa with prompts (A1-A2)

This activity is well-suited for lower levels, though anyone can do it as we could all write a letter to Santa. Thanks to this [online activity](#), students have to answer simple questions and at the end, the website pulls the answers together to form quite a cool letter to Santa Claus.

3. Christmas memory (A1-B1)

Remember Christmas? Have your students play this Christmas-themed [memory game](#): set them a time and ask them not only to play the game but also to write down as many of the things they see. At the end of the set time, which students won the most and also remembers the most words?



4. All I want for Christmas is you: elision game (A2-B1)

If you came to the LanguagEd Day, you'll remember that in my webinar, I talked about using gap-fills creatively and gave a tutorial on how to use Lyrics Training (and if you didn't come, you can still watch all the videos and slides with [20% off until the end of 2022](#)). For Christmas, I thought I'd put the two together, so I took the uber-famous song by Mariah Carey and made a [gap-fill game with a twist](#): the words gapped are all examples of elision, i.e. the last sound is omitted in the way they're pronounced. For example, think about how Carey says "all I want for Christmas is you": the /t/ in the word *want* is omitted. Students listen and play the game, then you can ask them if they noticed something in how all the words are pronounced. If they didn't, you can tell them! This raises their awareness of how English is pronounced in real, spontaneous speech (aside from, of course, training their listening skills).



5. Christmas taboo cards (any level)

Taboo is truly one of the games I've played most often in class, especially at the end of long lessons, long days or – as is the case now – a long semester! Print these [Christmas-themed taboo cards](#). Put students in teams and taking turns, one person in the team has a set time (maybe give them a bit more than the one minute in the standard game) and they have to explain the words in bold on the cards without using the other words. You can review some vocabulary in class in the previous days or remove some cards if you think they'll be too difficult. Better yet: why not give students 20 minutes to make their own cards?



6. Google Santa Tracker (any level)

Did you know Google has quite a few Santa-themed games? My favourite is this [Elf Glider](#). It's easy to play and accessible: an elf on a glider has to dodge a number of obstacles. Put students in pairs and set them a time (I'd recommend 5 to 10 minutes). First, student A will play the game and student B will write down the names of as many of the objects the elf dodged. Then, the students swap roles. They continue swapping roles until the time ends. If they need help finding the names of the obstacles, they can be allowed to use a dictionary. By repeating the game, they repeat the task: one of the many advantages of task repetition is vocabulary consolidation (not to mention the motivation given by the competition aspect!)

7. December holidays around the world reading (A2 and up)

December is not just Christmas. There are lots of resources out there about the many other festivities celebrated in December but [this text](#) is nice and short. You can do lots of things with it: brainstorm all the holiday names students know, ask them to check them against the ones in the text. Or you can print the text, cut it into paragraphs, divide the class into groups and then assign a holiday to each group. After reading about their holiday, each person from each group will join another group and tell the rest of the new group about their holidays. Another idea: divide the students into groups or pairs, give them the names of the holidays and a set amount of time to find as much information as possible about it. Then, give them the text: how many things did they find? How many more did they learn from the text?

8. Video: The Weirdest Christmas Traditions From Around The World (A2 and up)

Did you know that the Austrians believe in Krampus, Santa's evil twin? Or that the Indians don't decorate pines but banana and pear trees? These are only some of the interesting weird facts about Christmas from countries around the world that you'll find in this [Buzzfeed video](#). You can ask your learners to share the weird traditions they know, from their families, hometowns or other places. Tip: you may need [to slow down the video](#) to help learners understand.

9. Twenty questions on Christmas (any level)

This game can easily be customised for any level. In groups or even as a whole class, one learner chooses a Christmas object and all the other learners can ask up to 20 yes/no questions to guess what the object is. If they guess with 20 questions, they win. And I bet you can see the grammar benefits of this straightaway: it's a great chance to review and consolidate the interrogative form and short answers (yes, it is/yes, it does, etc).



10. Submit your New Year's wish to the Times Square wishing wall (any level)

I've left this for the end because I've done this one for years and my students always enjoy it. It has real value and it's a prime example of a proper real-life task. As you probably know, Times Square in New York is the place to be for New Year's Eve, with its traditional celebration: the ball drops (and you can [watch it live](#), by the way), confetti flutter all around, everyone is happy. The brilliant thing is anybody can write a wish for the new year, submit it to the [Times Square website](#) and it will be printed on a real piece of confetti used on 31 December! Students normally get quite excited as their words will be part of a real celebration all the way across the Atlantic.