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Skate to music - safely!

Special advice for the novice:

- * Wear good-fitting skates and lace them tightly.
- * Know how to fall: Try to land on your bottom rather than on out-stretched arms.
- * Skate with a friend or a group, never alone.
- * Beginners can protect themselves with knee pads.
- * Wear warm, sturdy gloves or mittens to protect your hands.

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Christmas is in the Air

It not only looks like Christmas, it *sounds* like Christmas, everywhere you go — from the Salvation Army's Santa's ringing of their bells to the Nutcracker Ballet performed every year to the songs and carols heard everywhere.

The rollicking "Jingle Bells," written as a Thanksgiving song, was created by James Pierpont in 1857. He had no idea that it would become popular.

The sentimental favorite, "White Christmas," was written by Irving Berlin in 1940. Introduced in 1942, it was a song of peace in a time of war. Bing Crosby's rendition is still famous.

Can you believe Eddie Cantor almost declined to record "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" in 1934 because he thought it was too much of a kiddie song.

"Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" was written by Johnny Marks for a Christmas book given as a promotional item to Montgomery Ward Christmas shoppers in 1939. Gene Autry sang it.

More recently, a modern style of Christmas music has produced new classics:

- "I saw Mama Kissing Santa Claus," was composed and first sung by Reba McEntire. At the time, she was a little-known gospel singer.
- "Jingle Bell Rock" composed and sung by the late Bobby Helms is another holiday classic.
- "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" was composed and sung by Randy Brooks in 1977. The hit song was also recorded in 1984 by Elmo & Patsy.
- "Santa Baby," with words and music by Joan Javits, is a hit as sung by Eartha Kitt. Others who have recorded the song are Patti Labelle, Vanessa Williams, and Gregory Hines.
- "Rocking around the Christmas Tree" was composed by Johnny Marks. Sung by Brenda Lee and others, it continues to be a holiday treat.



A Merry Musical Christmas, Everyone!

CHALK TALK

Add a tradition that will enrich your holidays

Help your children enjoy the benefits of charitable giving at an early age. It can create a holiday tradition that will enrich the season for the rest of their lives.

Start early by explaining to small children that some people may not have Christmas dinner without help from the bell-ringing Santas. Those who believe in Santa Claus may wonder why there are so many Santas and why they don't leave toys for every child. Explain that Santa needs help. In both cases the children will love putting a few coins in the kettle or picking out a toy that Santa could give to a less privileged child.



~ cont'd on page 2

SEASONAL TIPS

Make your outdoor decorations bright, colorful and safe

There's nothing quite like the effect of lighted trees and houses. They put all who view them in a peaceful holiday mood and make neighbors and visitors feel appreciated.

Depending on how far you want to go with decorating, it can be a small task or a major undertaking. Before you set up the ladder, here are a few tips:

- First, if you're not up to climbing ladders, you could decorate the outside of the house from the inside. Place your Christmas tree in a window where it can be seen from outside. Put battery-operated candles in several windows.
- For outside lighting, always use mini lights that are designed for outdoors and that have fuses on the strings or plugs.
- When choosing colors, keep in mind that a white theme is classic and can be seen from a greater distance than multi-colored, red or blue lights.
- Always use insulated hooks to keep outdoor lights in place, rather than wire, nails or metal hooks.
- If you have several evergreens, you may choose to light them with different colors. Some people use colors on evergreens and white lights on deciduous trees and roof outlines.
- For areas that are high or difficult to reach, buy new light strings every year so you won't have to troubleshoot the decoration when one string goes out. Last year's lights can be used on low bushes that are accessible and may not be noticed if they go out on a cold night.
- It's better to use one long extension cord than several small ones. Connect only three strings before plugging into an outlet, but more than one set of strings can be plugged into the extension cord.
- Most people wait until after Thanksgiving before lighting trees and wearing Christmas-themed clothes and take the decorations down on New Year's Day.



December Project

Make a Musical Bed



Want to have some extra fun during the holidays that will not involve your toys? Make a musical bed.

Here's what you'll need:

- A bed with springs
- Several small bells (from tree decorations or a craft shop)

Affix several small bells to the springs under a friend's bed. When in bed it won't be easy for them to tell where the sound is coming from. They'll even ask you to help search.



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The simplest toy that even a very young child can figure out is a grandparent!
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Traditions - Cont'd from pg 1

A story about why other kids may not get much for Christmas could be in order. Tell your children about recent floods or hurricanes that destroyed other kids' parents' homes and belongings. Don't make the story too frightening.

Older kids could:

- Help with choosing the cause to support
- Give part of their cash Christmas gifts to help others
- Help serve a free dinner at church or soup kitchen
- Invite cousins, schoolmates or pals to join them.



Enjoy the traditions!

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Mistletoe Millie

The whole family's gathered
and Mistletoe Millie
is kissing and smooching
and acting all silly.
She caught Grampie Zeke
and kissed him on the cheek.
She found Cousin Flynn
and kissed him on the chin.
She found Mr. Fips
and kissed him on the lips!
She ran up to me...
but I figured it out
I held up our dog
which she kissed on the snout.
She found it so gross
that she fell on the floor.
Guess she won't try
to kiss me anymore.

~ Robert Pottle



Kidz Bop is a series of sanitized cover versions of popular songs of the day recorded for kids by kids - with a little help from the adults for the verses.

Songs from this and other albums are also available to purchase as MP3s. Ships from and sold by www.Amazon.com. Gift-wrap available.

Shop Now for the holidays!
See details for Free Delivery.