

Christmas Parenting Schedule



Christmas is a special time for families and we know that where parents are apart from their children this can add extra worry to what is already a busy and sometimes stressful time. We've put together our Christmas survival guide and this parenting schedule to help the Christmas period flow more smoothly so that you and your children can get on with enjoying your time together.

Use this document as the basis for your conversation and the arrangements you make. Every family is different and there are no right or wrong answers.

Each section is intended to be a guide to help you think about the big and small stuff, keep it brief or make it detailed, whatever is going to work best for you.

We suggest you start with the easy stuff like term dates, special events or things you are already in agreement about. That way you will know there is already some progress when it comes to sorting out the more difficult issues. If you can, sit down together and work through the sections.

It can be hard to agree on everything, but it's much better to have some things sorted than none at all. If there are important things that you really can't agree on, then there are options that could help you move forward.

There might be a friend or family member who could help you agree on a compromise that works for everybody, or Family Mediation can also help - a mediator can work with you both to help you reach agreement. To find out how mediation works or to book an appointment with a mediator visit www.nfm.org.uk



Turn arguments... into agreements

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Who are the special people in their life?

Use this section to think about the people your child will most want to see over the holidays. This might be mum and dad, siblings, grandparents and extended family, step family, family friends or school friends. Remember that Christmas can be a whirlwind at the best of times, so when making arrangements think how much they can handle, as well as what is do-able for both of you, especially if there has been a lot of change this year.

Special dates or events in the run-up to, or after Christmas

We know our children's social life is usually better than our own! December can be busy and there might be a school nativity, school trip, a trip to the pantomime, a party or a visit to Santa's Grotto. Make a note of these key dates here :



Christmas Angel

If there are friends or family members you both trust to help if things get difficult, note them down here. This might be someone who can help with practical stuff like handovers, or someone you can both talk to if you can't talk to each other. Make sure they know they are on the (good) list!



Christmas Gifts

Jot down any Christmas gifts each of you or your family will be buying the children to avoid duplication.

Child Arrangements



Use this section to record how your child will spend time with each of you during the holidays, including how and where handovers will happen. If you need to share or exchange clothes or personal items for your child, then you can also record it here (e.g. school play costume, Christmas outfit, outdoor clothes etc.)

	Mon 18th Dec	Tues 19th Dec	Weds 20th Dec	Thurs 21st Dec	Fri 22nd Dec	Sat 23rd Dec	Sun Xmas Eve
Where will the children be?							
Important Notes/Reminders							
	Mon Xmas Day	Tues Boxing Day	Weds 27th Dec	Thurs 28th Dec	Fri 29th Dec	Sat 30th Dec	Sun New Years Eve
Where will the children be?							
Important Notes/Reminders							
	New Years Day	Tues 2nd Jan	Weds 3rd Jan	Any other important things to note :			
Where will the children be?							
Important Notes/Reminders							



Unexpected Changes

Use this section to agree what happens or who to contact if an unexpected emergency arises.

If plans need to change....



Contact details in case of emergency :



What happens if one of us is ill :



What happens if our child/children are ill :

If the plan breaks down or you can't agree :

Come and talk to us as soon as possible. We will book an initial pre-mediation meeting (MIAM) with you both separately before booking a joint mediation appointment you will attend together.

Appointments can take place in person or online through a secure meeting portal. You can book an appointment here.

National Family Mediation

NFM is a charity that helps families resolve all the practical, legal, emotional and financial issues that arise from separation.

NFM helps families turn arguments into agreements that are long-lasting and benefit everyone in the family, especially their children.

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