



9 Ways to Share the Spirit of the Season —Starting From Home

The holiday season is upon us, and many of us have already begun to celebrate. From trimming trees to lighting candles, it's the time of year to fill your homes (and hearts) with holiday joy.

But there's no need to stop at your front door. Let the spirit of the season radiate outward from your house into your community. Some homeowners hang outdoor lights and decorations to help make the neighborhood “merry and bright.” But that's not the only way to share the magic of the holidays with others.

Not sure where to start? Check out these 9 inspirational ideas for spreading cheer far and near!

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

You probably don't have to look far to find someone who could benefit from a gift or kind gesture this time of year. Try one (or all) of these ideas for sharing the season with those closest to home.

1. HOST A HOLIDAY PARTY

Invite your neighbors over for a potluck dinner or cookie exchange. It's a great way to reconnect with old friends and welcome new families to the neighborhood. And if you have a neighbor who you've been at odds with in the past, consider extending them an invitation, as well. It could be the perfect opportunity to make peace in the new year.

2. HELP A NEIGHBOR IN NEED

Next time you head out to rake your leaves, take care of an elderly neighbor's, as well. Or drop off dinner for a friend recovering from surgery. Even a small gesture of kindness can make someone's holiday extra jolly.

3. TREAT YOUR MAIL AND PACKAGE CARRIERS

Extend comfort and joy from your own front porch during your postal and package carriers' busiest time of year.¹ Leave a goody and note of gratitude in your mailbox or a basket of water and snacks by your front door. Attach a sign that says: “Thank you for working hard to deliver our holiday packages. Please take a treat to enjoy on your route!”



DON'T STOP AT YOUR STREET ... BRING HOLIDAY CHEER TO EVERYONE YOU MEET

Surprise and delight those you encounter with a small act of kindness or a generous gesture. 'Tis the season of giving, but the reaction you get in return may be the best gift of all!

4. OVERTIP

Don't be a Grinch when it comes to tipping at the holidays. Your waiter, your Uber driver, your hairdresser, and other service providers will all appreciate an extra-generous tip this time of year. Everyone could use a little extra cash around the holidays. If you can afford it, share a bit of your abundance with others.

5. THANK THOSE WHO DON'T GET A HOLIDAY

Santa isn't the only one working on Christmas. Emergency workers, hospital staff, airline employees, toll booth attendants, movie theater staff, and many others will be working over the holidays. Bring breakfast or pass out coffee shop gift cards to people working to make your holiday safe and bright.

ARE YOU READY TO MAKE YOUR MOVE?

One more easy way to support the community this year? Shop local! From locally-owned stores to service providers, please consider spending your holiday dollars here at home. We have an extensive network of local businesses and would love to recommend some of our favorites. Give us a call, and let us know how we can help!

6. FILL STOCKINGS FOR THE HOMELESS

Not everyone gets to go home for the holidays. Pick up some inexpensive Christmas stockings from a craft store and fill them with items such as bottled water, granola bars, beef jerky, small toiletries, and warm socks or gloves. Hand them out at a shelter or keep a stash in your car so you can offer one when you encounter someone in need.

SEND JOY TO THE WORLD BY BECOMING A SECRET SANTA

Reach beyond your sphere by sending some holiday magic out into the community. Surprise a stranger with an anonymous gift that's sure to make their holiday shine.

7. OFFER WARMTH ON A COLD DAY

As temperatures drop, some members of our community will be left out in the cold. Donate your gently used coat to a collection site and leave a note in the pocket wishing the recipient a warm and happy holiday. Or tie a scarf around a tree and attach a sign that says: "I am not lost. If you need this to stay warm, please take it!"

8. PAY OFF A STRANGER'S LAYAWAY

Media stories often surface this time of year about anonymous donors who pay off a stranger's layaway account to the surprise and delight of the recipient. You don't have to drop a bundle to participate in this fun tradition. Ask the layaway attendant to search for accounts with balances that fit within your budget.

9. DONATE TOYS TO A TOT

One of the most popular ways to give back during the holidays is to participate in a toy drive. Before you shop, find out if the organization has a wish list of preferred items or guidelines for wrapping and labeling the gift. Involve your kids in the process so they can experience the joy of giving to those less fortunate, too.

Sources: 1. NASDAQ

Name
Company
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Email