

# Getting Ready for the Holidays Weeks 1 & 2

My main goals for the past two weeks have been as follows:

1. As we do our weekly 'Home Blessings' we are also looking for things that don't belong and getting them put away where they belong or getting rid of things we don't really need.
2. I am making lists in my Holiday planner about things I want to do, gift ideas, things I need to order, menu ideas, etc. I also try to set my budget for things... I know money is tight this year so we won't be 'going all out' but it does help to have an idea of what things will cost. I review the menus and such so that I can add a few things to my grocery lists here and there so it's not so much to buy at one time when supplies may be limited. *I also take a few minutes to review my old notes and things I wanted to change or do for the next year. I also keep a copy of our favorite recipes in the folders for each special occasion so I'm not looking everywhere for them and I can easily add items to my grocery lists.*
3. Checking our supply of wrapping paper and supplies so that we have them ready... I've also pulled out my box of Christmas cards in case I decide that I want to send out cards this year because I know I like getting cards in the mail. Anything I need to buy goes on a shopping list in my notebook. I then take a picture of it so it is always with me.
4. As I was putting out the Fall decor I was also making notes of where we might want to put some of the Christmas decor. Last year the majority of it was on the pool table (we had the ping pong table on it with a couple of tablecloths to cover) I am not entirely sure where will be putting the tree yet but at least I've got a plan started.
5. Making a list of the kids' sizes and what they are interested in because I know that friends and family will start asking soon. I just printed out my [FREE printable gift guide](#) so that I can get it filled out this week. Then I'll snap a picture with my phone for easy reference and the paper copy will go in my Holiday planner.
6. I frequently review my current list of ideas so that I can try to tackle a few things when I go grocery shopping or run errands... I also check the lists for things that I may need to add to my [Amazon](#) or [Sam's Club](#) carts for later purchases. *This really helps to eliminate the 'What was I going to get?' moments. It can also help keep your budget under control because things like baking supplies tend to get a little more expensive towards the holiday season.*

7. I've been starting to come up with ideas for some homemade gift items as well as that helps keep the budget under control.
8. I've also pulled out our [Polar Express](#) planning folder as I do need to order a few things to make the experience a little more fun. I also have a note to check our projector setup because we haven't really used the projector since we moved the living room around. *Our [Polar Express party](#) last year was a lot of fun even though it was the first one that we've had in this house and a lot of my decor had been lost/damaged.*
9. In addition to our Polar Express party, we usually have a fun little [St. Nicholas Day celebration](#) where we set up the Christmas tree and I know that I want to change things up a little this year so I need to research some ideas. *I really want to try to make some paper mache shoes that resemble the wooden shoes I got last year at the flea market. You may also want to start looking for candy corn, candy pumpkins, and gold-covered chocolate coins if you will need them for any celebrations.*
10. For our homeschool, I have been wanting to take the time between Thanksgiving and Christmas to do an [Advent Study](#) and just focus on the real reason for the season... I've been adding ideas to this list throughout the year and now I just need to narrow down what Advent Study I want to use so that I can make a list of activities and items that we will need. *I'll try to post about the Advent Study I chose later on.*
11. Last year, we also added a [Bethlehem Dinner or Shepherd's dinner](#) to our celebrations... I highly encourage this tradition! [Our 1st Shepherd's Dinner](#)

*Please note: my 'Holiday Planner' is an old 'trapper keeper' that the kiddos no longer use. It has different folders for any parties that we have or holidays where we usually host meals. I keep old menus and plans in the folders so I can reference them later to decide what I want to do or change for the upcoming year... it is so HANDY!*

It may seem like a lot of work to get a Holiday Planner set up but once you invest the time to set it up then you won't regret it! It really does make life so much easier around the holidays and special occasions. I try to break things down into small chunks and just spend 10-15 minutes at a time working on them... you'll be surprised at just how much you can accomplish in just a few minutes. *If I get interrupted... just like I've been interrupted 1,027, 893 times while writing this post, then I can just close up my planner and my ideas are safe and I can pick right back up where I left off.*

I hope this helps someone we pray that you have a blessed week!