

Organizing Tips for Carefree Holidays

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Tip #1: Cook Ahead

Prepare your own freezer meals to get dinner ready in minutes during hectic or stressful times surrounding the holidays.

- Download free freezer meal recipes to try at home by visiting www.simplyinorder.com
- When making dinner, double or triple the recipe. Eat one for tonight and freeze the others for future meals.
- Prepare and freeze homemade edible gifts in advance of the holiday to cut down on gift-giving stress.

Tip #2: Plan Ahead

- Keep all of your favorite holiday ideas, recipes, and worksheets handy in a holiday binder organized by month or by holiday.
- Create master worksheets to help track holiday to-do's. You can download the following free printable holiday worksheets by visiting www.simplyinorder.com
 - Make a holiday [gift wish list](#) to help you and others purchase gifts that will be useful to the receiver.
 - Make a holiday [gift tracker](#) for planning and keeping track of gift items you have purchased throughout the year.
 - Make a holiday [card tracker](#) for keeping track of the cards you send/receive.
 - Made a holiday [calendar](#) and write down important family activities before your schedule gets booked up with less important activities.
 - Make a holiday [decorations inventory](#) for knowing what you already have on hand to avoid holiday impulse buys.

Tip #3: Simplify Your Holiday Decorating

- Limit your holiday decorations to one container, shelf, room, etc. When that limit has been reached, practice the "one-in, one-out" rule by getting rid of old decorations before buying new ones.
- Display general seasonal decorations for several months and add only a few specific holiday decorations. For example, you can use pumpkins during the months of September, October, and November. For Halloween, leave the pumpkins displayed and add a few Halloween decorations. For Thanksgiving, remove the Halloween decorations (leaving the pumpkins displayed) and add a few Thanksgiving decorations, and so forth.
- Take photographs of your holiday decorating to make it easier to set up decorations year after year.

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