THE 40 WORDS A1 to C1

Christmas Vocabulary

Forty words in five topics, from the Christmas tree at A1 to expressions adults use at work all year at C1. Every topic has its own page with three short exercises. Students can work alone or in pairs, and every answer is on page 7.

LEVEL	STUDENTS	WORDS	TIME
A1 to C1	Adults and older teens	8 per topic, 40 in all	20 to 30 minutes a page

1 Decorating the Home A1-A2 · page 2

Christmas tree	a tree you decorate
Christmas lights	small lights on a long wire
star	it goes on top of the tree
angel	a small figure with wings
tinsel	long shiny strings
garland	a long rope of leaves
candle	wax with a small flame
nativity scene	small figures of baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph

2 The Christmas Table A2-B1 · page 3

main course	the biggest dish of the meal
side dish	a small dish with the main course
stuffing	bread and herbs cooked in a bird
gravy	a hot brown sauce
leftovers	food you keep for later
mulled wine	hot red wine with spices
to carve	to cut cooked meat into pieces
to make a toast	to lift a glass and say good words

3 Gifts and Shopping B1-B2 · page 4

wish list	a list of gifts you want
Secret Santa	everybody buys one gift for one secret name
stocking stuffer	a small cheap gift
gift card	a card with money for one store
gift receipt	a receipt with no price on it
to exchange	to take a gift back and get another
to regift	to give a gift you got to another person
last-minute shopping	buying gifts very late

4 Traditions in Europe and Latin America

B1-B2 · page 5

Christmas Eve	the evening of December 24
Midnight Mass	a church service at midnight
Christmas market	an outdoor market in December
Saint Nicholas Day	December 6
Three Kings' Day	January 6
to fast	to eat nothing or very little
meatless	with no meat
an extra place at the table	a seat for a guest you don't expect

5 Christmas Expressions for Every Month

B2-C1 · page 6

a Scrooge	a person who hates spending money
Christmas came early	something good happened before you expected it
the gift that keeps on giving	something that keeps bringing good (or bad) things
don't look a gift horse in the mouth	don't complain about a free thing
a white elephant	an expensive thing nobody wants
with all the trimmings	with all the usual extras
lit up like a Christmas tree	with lots of bright lights
on the naughty list	in trouble with a person

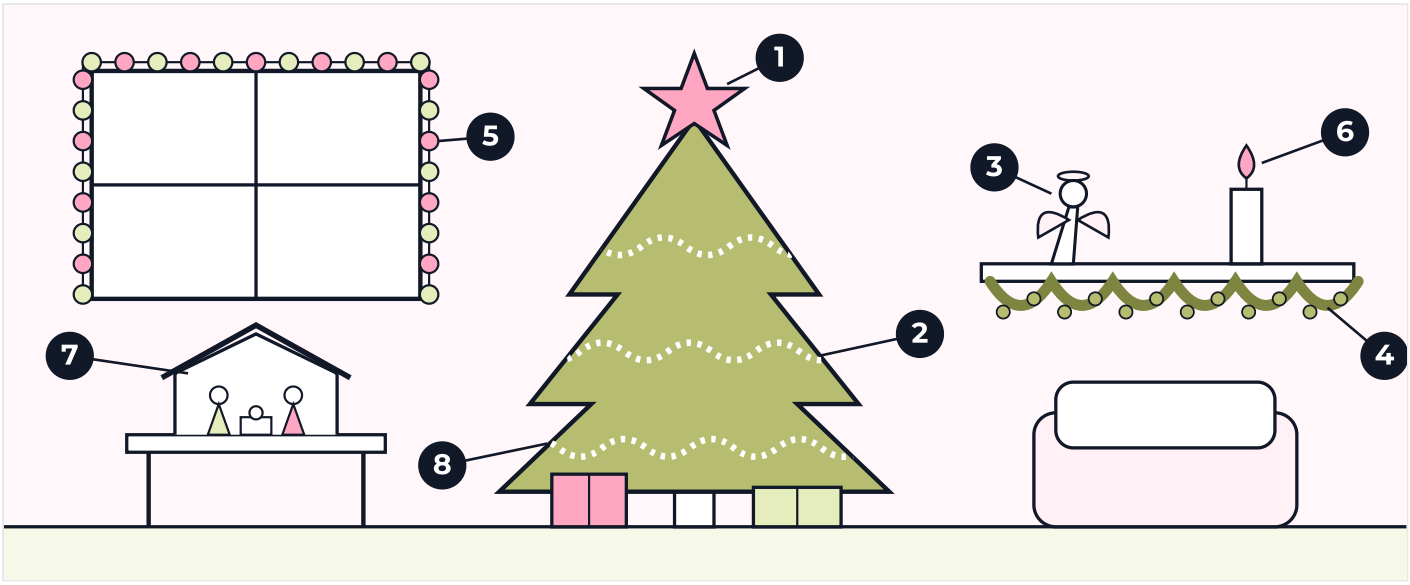
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TOPIC 1 A1-A2

Decorating the Home

A Look at the picture. Write the word for each number. Use the words in the box.

Christmas tree | Christmas lights | tinsel | nativity scene | garland | star | candle | angel



1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____

5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____

B Look at the picture again. Tick the right word.

1. The star is ◯ **under** ◯ **next to** ◯ **on** top of the tree.
2. The presents are ◯ **under** ◯ **in** ◯ **above** the tree.
3. The Christmas lights are ◯ **in** ◯ **around** ◯ **under** the window.
4. The nativity scene is ◯ **above** ◯ **behind** ◯ **on** the small table.
5. The angel is ◯ **next to** ◯ **in** ◯ **under** the candle.
6. The tree is ◯ **on** ◯ **between** ◯ **in** the window and the shelf.

C Your home in December. Write three sentences with three words from the box and *on*, *under* or *next to*.

We put the angel on the shelf next to the photos.

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TOPIC 2 A2-B1

The Christmas Table

A Match each word to its meaning. Write the letter in the box.

1 **main course**	☐	**A**	food that nobody ate, which you keep and eat later
2 **side dish**	☐	**B**	the biggest dish of a meal
3 **stuffing**	☐	**C**	to cut cooked meat into thin pieces at the table
4 **gravy**	☐	**D**	a mix of bread, onion and herbs cooked inside a bird or next to it
5 **leftovers**	☐	**E**	to lift your glass and say good words about a person or an event
6 **mulled wine**	☐	**F**	a smaller dish that you eat with the main course
7 **to carve**	☐	**G**	hot red wine with sugar, orange and spices like cinnamon
8 **to make a toast**	☐	**H**	a hot brown sauce made from the juices of cooked meat

B Sort the food and drinks into the four groups.

baked carp | mashed potatoes | Christmas cake | hot chocolate | roast turkey | green salad | mulled wine | poppy seed roll | roasted carrots | roast ham | ice cream | apple juice

MAIN COURSE	SIDE DISH	DESSERT	DRINK

C Complete the sentences. Use each word from the box once.

gravy | main course | carves | mulled wine | leftovers | make a toast

1. My uncle always _____ the turkey. He has a special knife for it.
2. There is so much food that we eat _____ for three days.
3. At midnight, my dad stood up to _____ to the whole family.
4. Can you pass the _____? I want some on my potatoes.
5. It's cold. Let's get a cup of _____ at the market.
6. This year the _____ is fish, not meat.

D Your Christmas menu. Write what your family eats, then compare with a partner.

Main course _____ **Side dishes** _____

Dessert _____ **Drink** _____

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TOPIC 3 B1-B2

Gifts and Shopping

A Read each situation and tick the right word or phrase.

1 Your sister texts: "What do you want this year? Send me your ..."

- ◯ gift card
- ◯ wish list
- ◯ gift receipt

2 At work, everybody takes a name from a hat and buys one present for that colleague. Nobody knows who their giver is.

- ◯ Secret Santa
- ◯ a stocking stuffer
- ◯ last-minute shopping

3 The sweater from your aunt is too small. You take it back to the store and get a bigger one.

- ◯ You regift it.
- ◯ You exchange it.
- ◯ You carve it.

4 You got a candle that you will never use. Next December, you give it to a friend.

- ◯ You exchange it.
- ◯ You wish it.
- ◯ You regift it.

5 It is 5 p.m. on December 24 and you are still at the mall, looking for presents.

- ◯ Secret Santa
- ◯ a wish list
- ◯ last-minute shopping

6 You don't know what your nephew likes, so you give him a card with $30 to spend at his favorite store.

- ◯ a gift card
- ◯ a gift receipt
- ◯ a stocking stuffer

7 You buy a scarf for your dad. You ask the store for a paper without the price, so he can change it.

- ◯ a gift card
- ◯ a gift receipt
- ◯ a wish list

8 Socks, chocolate, a tiny notebook: cheap little presents.

- ◯ leftovers
- ◯ gift cards
- ◯ stocking stuffers

B What would you do? Write your answer, then ask a partner.

I would keep it, because ... · I wouldn't ..., I'd rather ... · It depends on ...

1 Your Secret Santa gift at work is a mug with a cat on it. You don't like cats. Do you keep it, regift it or leave it in the office kitchen?

2 Your partner's wish list has only one thing on it, and it costs twice your budget. What do you do?

3 A friend gives you a gift card for a store you never go to. Do you use it, regift it or sell it?

TOPIC 4 B1-B2

Traditions in Europe and Latin America

A **Five people describe Christmas at home. Complete the texts with the words from the box. Write the number of the gap next to the word.**

☐ Saint Nicholas Day	☐ meatless	☐ Midnight Mass	☐ an extra place at the table
☐ Christmas market	☐ fast	☐ Three Kings' Day	☐ Christmas Eve

Kateryna · Lviv, Ukraine

On (1) _____, nobody eats until the first star appears in the sky. Then the whole family sits down to the Holy Supper: twelve (2) _____ dishes, and kutia always comes first. Kutia is wheat with poppy seeds, honey and nuts.

Marta · Kraków, Poland

Many people (3) _____ during the day. Before dinner, we break a thin wafer and share it with good wishes. We always set (4) _____ for a guest we don't expect. The main dish is usually carp.

Lucía · Seville, Spain

On December 24, we have a very late family dinner, and then some families go to (5) _____. We call it Misa del Gallo, the Rooster's Mass. Children don't get many presents in December. They wait for the Three Kings in January.

Diego · Mexico City, Mexico

On (6) _____, January 6, we share a big ring of sweet bread called rosca. There is a tiny figure of baby Jesus inside. If you find it in your piece, you make tamales for everybody on February 2!

Jonas · Nuremberg, Germany

Our (7) _____ is one of the most famous in Germany, and the old town smells of gingerbread for weeks. On the evening of December 5, children clean their boots and put them outside the door. On (8) _____, they find chocolate and nuts inside.

B · And in your family?

Write two sentences about Christmas at home with two words from the box. Then tell a partner which tradition above you would like to try.

_____

_____

_____

C **Who says it? Write the name.**

1. Before dinner, we break a thin wafer. _____
2. Children find chocolate in their boots. _____
3. A star in the sky tells us that dinner can start. _____
4. Finding something small in your food means more work in February. _____
5. Children wait until January for most of their presents. _____
6. The whole town smells of something sweet. _____

TOPIC 5 B2-C1

Christmas Expressions for Every Month

A **A team chat before the holidays. Complete each message with an expression from the box.**

with all the trimmings | a white elephant | on the naughty list | Christmas came early | the gift that keeps on giving | lit up like a Christmas tree | don't look a gift horse in the mouth | a Scrooge

LINA Our new client paid the whole invoice two weeks early. _____!

MARCO No team lunch this year because it costs too much. What _____!

ANA Have you seen the office? With all those lights, it's _____.

TOM The canteen did turkey _____: stuffing, gravy and three side dishes.

LINA I won a huge coffee machine in the raffle. Nobody can clean it. It's _____

MARCO Sure, the free laptop is old. But _____: it works.

ANA That one Excel course taught me things I still use every week. It's _____.

TOM I forgot to send the boss the report before the break. I'm definitely _____ now.

B **One word is wrong in each sentence. Write the right word.**

1. Don't look a gift horse in the ear. _____
2. That old printer is a real white giraffe. _____
3. We had roast chicken with all the decorations. _____
4. He never pays for anything. He's a real Santa. _____

C **Write two true sentences about your work or your studies. Use two of the expressions.**

ANSWERS

Answer Key

Topic 1 · Decorating the Home page 2

A 1 star, 2 tinsel, 3 angel, 4 garland, 5 Christmas lights, 6 candle, 7 nativity scene, 8 Christmas tree
B 1 on, 2 under, 3 around, 4 on, 5 next to, 6 between

Topic 2 · The Christmas Table page 3

A 1 B, 2 F, 3 D, 4 H, 5 A, 6 G, 7 C, 8 E
B **Main course** baked carp, roast turkey, roast ham; **Side dish** mashed potatoes, green salad, roasted carrots; **Dessert** Christmas cake, poppy seed roll, ice cream; **Drink** hot chocolate, mulled wine, apple juice
C 1 carves, 2 leftovers, 3 make a toast, 4 gravy, 5 mulled wine, 6 main course

Topic 3 · Gifts and Shopping page 4

A 1 wish list, 2 Secret Santa, 3 You exchange it, 4 You regift it, 5 last-minute shopping, 6 a gift card, 7 a gift receipt, 8 stocking stuffers
B Students' own answers.

Topic 4 · Traditions in Europe and Latin America page 5

A 1 Christmas Eve, 2 meatless, 3 fast, 4 an extra place at the table, 5 Midnight Mass, 6 Three Kings' Day, 7 Christmas market, 8 Saint Nicholas Day
C 1 Marta, 2 Jonas, 3 Kateryna, 4 Diego, 5 Lucía, 6 Jonas

Topic 5 · Christmas Expressions for Every Month page 6

A 1 Christmas came early, 2 a Scrooge, 3 lit up like a Christmas tree, 4 with all the trimmings, 5 a white elephant, 6 don't look a gift horse in the mouth, 7 the gift that keeps on giving, 8 on the naughty list
B 1 mouth (not ear), 2 elephant (not giraffe), 3 trimmings (not decorations), 4 Scrooge (not Santa)

Exercises with "your" answers have no key: compare with a partner or ask your teacher to check.

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