



## How many school days until Christmas?

### Why count down the school days?

Advent Calendars that count down the twenty-five December days until Christmas are great for families to use in the home but not so suitable for school. What about counting down the **school days** until Christmas? Twenty-five school days would mean starting at least five weeks before school finishes, which might be a bit soon, so choose another number which suits your program. Fifteen (three weeks) could be a good number.



### Suggestions for using the countdown calendar

The calendar is presented in two formats — Christmas and Holidays. Choose the format that suits your needs and the needs of your children best.

1. **Countdown the days:** At the beginning of the third last week of term, print the Countdown Calendar and display it in your classroom. Explain to the children that you are going to use the calendar to count down the number of school days remaining in the term. Starting with 15, each day, cross one day off the calendar.
2. **Write end of term events on the calendar as reminders.**
3. **Share Christmas (or holiday) traditions:** Schedule opportunities for the children to present information about their family traditions as part of the countdown.
  - (i) Decide how many children will present on each day. This will depend on the number of children in the class and which days are available for presentations. For example, you might schedule two or three children to share each day.
  - (ii) Place tiles numbered for each presentation day into a bag. You will need enough for the number of children presenting on each day. For example, if two children will present on each of the days numbered from 15 to 5, then you will need two tiles for each of those numbers. If just one child will present on the days numbered from 4 to 2, then you will just need one tile with those numbers. (Note: a 'tile' could simply be a square of paper, or you could print multiple copies of the calendar and cut out the numbered squares to use.)
  - (iii) As children take turns to draw a tile from the bag, write their names in the countdown boxes.

Prepare the schedule the week prior to the commencement of the talks to give children time to discuss their presentation with their families. It would be useful to send home a note explaining the process. (Example included.)

Note: If, for inclusivity, you didn't wish to count down to Christmas, you could count down to the holidays.





# How many school days until Christmas?

## Countdown Calendar



15

14

13

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1



# How many school days until the holidays?

## Countdown Calendar



15

14

13

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1



## Your family's Christmas traditions

*Dear Parents and caregivers,  
Christmas is coming and it is almost the end of the school term.*

*During the next three weeks as we count down the last days of term, we would like the children to tell us about their family's special traditions when celebrating Christmas and the holidays; for example, you might have a special day for putting up the Christmas tree or decorating the house, you might have a special holiday destination each year or you might have relations come to visit, you might have special foods to celebrate, or special procedures for giving and opening gifts. (Even Santa might have a special tradition at your house.)*

*Please help your child prepare a short presentation by discussing your family's traditions. Your child may bring photographs or artefacts (e.g. decorations) to show but please don't send anything precious that may be broken.*

*Your child's presentation is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_.*

*We look forward to learning more about this special celebration for you and your family.*

*Best wishes,*



## Your family's holiday traditions

*Dear Parents and caregivers,  
The holidays are coming. It is almost the end of the school term.*

*During the next three weeks as we count down the last days of term, we would like the children to tell us about their family's special holiday traditions; for example, you might have a special holiday destination you visit each year or you might have relatives come to visit, you might have special arrangements to entertain the children if you need to work through the holidays, you might have special outings you like to do as a family.*

*Please help your child prepare a short presentation by discussing your family's traditions. Your child may bring photographs or artefacts to show but please don't send anything precious that may be broken.*

*Your child's presentation is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_.*

*We look forward to learning more about this special time for you and your family.*

*Best wishes,*

