



Tips from the **Divorce Support Club**

Preparing for Christmas
and the Holidays.

1 Acknowledge how you feel

The emotions involved in a divorce can be intense and overwhelming.



Feelings can be **intense** and **overwhelming**, especially when faced with divorce. Left unchecked, they can wield power over us and prompt us to act in ways we normally wouldn't. If we acknowledge them and let them pass, that power is taken away.

Imagine your **emotions** as **waves**. When you feel an emotion rise up, instead of trying to push through it or go around it, ride the wave to the shore. See that emotion out, knowing that it won't last. Imagine surfing the wave until you arrive at the beach, where you can rest knowing the feeling has passed.

2 Plan ahead

Certainty really matters, it is always better to have clarity than to be worrying about something because you don't know what it's going to look like.

Planning ahead for Christmas is the perfect opportunity to have important conversations with your solicitor to discuss matters like children. Another way you can plan ahead is to put a proposal forward to your ex-partner:

-  How might you split the time of Christmas between you?
-  What will you buy your children?

3 What **won't** I miss?

Another helpful tip is to reframe how you feel about Christmas. Ask yourself:

- If there was one good thing about this situation, what would it be?
- If there is one thing that I'm not going to miss this year, what would it be?
- Perhaps it is that you will no longer have to put up with your father-in-law who drinks too much.
- Perhaps there was always something that your ex used to do at Christmas that you are glad you won't have deal with anymore.

4 Create **new** traditions

There is no right or wrong way to do Christmas. There are many weird and wonderful traditions out there. What is the best gift you can give yourself this year?

Is there a tradition you've **always wanted** to create at Christmas that your ex wasn't keen on?

You may have always wanted to spend Christmas morning drinking **Buck's Fizz** with a **bacon sandwich**.

Or it could be that your **ex-partner insisted** on having traditions that you didn't like.

Or perhaps there is a Christmas Day **TV programme** that you have been wanting to watch.

5 Your children will follow your lead

Instead of harbouring resentment about the time you don't spend with your children, focus on the time you do have with them.

When you are upbeat and you make plans to do things you will all enjoy in the time you are together, they are likely to do the same.

If you are angry and upset, your children are likely to be worried and stressed.

Try making a plan with your children, asking them the things they would like to do this Christmas, then be proactive in implementing their ideas.

6 Put yourself in their shoes

Really imagine the situation from you child's perspective, what are they seeing, hearing and feeling?

Your children are probably not going to want to hear arguments about where they will spend Christmas Day, and later on they probably won't remember which Christmas they spent where.

Remember, at the end of the day, most evidence shows that children simply want time with both of their parents, to have fun with both, and to be free to be able to love them both.