

DECEMBER 18, 2013

Celebrating Christmas and the Holidays, Then and Now

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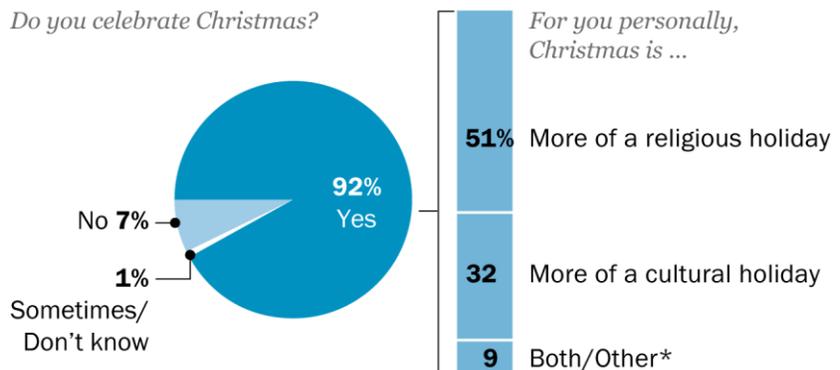
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Celebrating Christmas and the Holidays, Then and Now

Nine-in-ten Americans say they celebrate Christmas, and three-quarters say they believe in the virgin birth of Jesus. But only about half see Christmas mostly as a religious holiday, while one-third view it as more of a cultural holiday. Virtually all Christians (96%) celebrate Christmas, and two-thirds see it as a religious holiday. In addition, fully eight-in-ten non-Christians in America also celebrate Christmas, but most view it as a cultural holiday rather than a religious occasion.

Celebrating Christmas: Religious or Cultural Holiday?

Do you celebrate Christmas?



Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q80, Q81.

*Includes people who celebrate Christmas but do not say whether they think it is a religious or cultural holiday.

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The way Americans celebrate Christmas present is rooted in Christmases past. Fully 86% of U.S. adults say they intend to gather with family and friends on Christmas this year, and an identical number say they plan to buy gifts for friends and family. Roughly nine-in-ten adults say these activities typically were part of their holiday celebrations when they were growing up.

But fewer Americans say they will send Christmas or holiday cards this year than say their families typically did this when they were children. The share of people who plan to go caroling this year also is lower than the share who say they typically did so as children. And while about seven-in-ten Americans say they typically attended Christmas Eve or Christmas Day religious services when they were children, 54% say they plan to attend Christmas services this year.

Holiday Activities

% who typically did each activity as a child, and % who plan to this year

		Childhood	Now
	Attend a gathering with extended family or friends on Christmas Eve or Day	91%	86%
	Buy gifts for friends or family	89	86
	Put up a Christmas tree	92	79
	Send Christmas or holiday cards	81	65
	Give homemade gifts, such as baked goods or crafts	66	58
	Attend religious services on Christmas Eve or Day	69	54
	Pretend Santa Claus will visit home on Christmas Eve or Day	72	31
	Go caroling	36	16

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q84, Q85, Q86, Q87.

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There are significant generational differences in the way Americans plan to celebrate Christmas this year, with younger adults less likely than older adults to incorporate religious elements into their holiday celebrations.

Adults under age 30 are far less likely than older Americans to say they see Christmas as more of a religious than a cultural holiday.

They are also less likely to attend Christmas religious services and to believe in the virgin birth. This is consistent with other [research](#) showing that younger Americans are helping to drive the growth of the religiously unaffiliated population within the U.S. But the new survey

also shows that even among Christians, young people are more likely than older adults to view Christmas as more of a cultural than a religious holiday.

Religion Less Central to Young People's Observance of Christmas

	Celebrate Christmas as religious holiday %	Plan to attend Christmas religious services %	Believe in virgin birth %
Ages 18-29	39	46	66
30-49	50	57	76
50-64	55	55	76
65+	66	60	76

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q80-81, Q85b, Q88.

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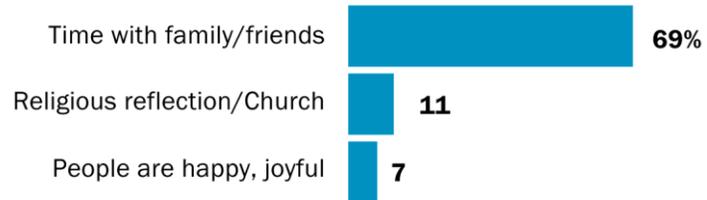
These are among the key findings of a new Pew Research Center survey conducted Dec. 3-8, 2013, among a representative sample of 2,001 adults nationwide. The survey – which explores Americans’ Christmas plans, childhood traditions, and likes and dislikes about the holiday season – also finds that most Americans say gathering with family and friends is what they most look forward to about Christmas and the holidays. When asked what they like the least about the holidays, many express frustration with the commercialization of the season; one-third say they dislike the materialism of the holidays, one-fifth dislike the expenses associated with the season, and one-tenth dislike holiday shopping and the crowded malls and stores.

One-fifth of Americans say they are the parent or guardian of a child in their household who believes in Santa Claus, and 69% of this group says they will pretend that Santa visits their home this Christmas Eve. But Kris Kringle’s visits will not be restricted only to houses where children retain their belief in the “right jolly old elf”; even among adults who say there are no children residing in their household, 21% will pretend that Santa visits their home this year.

Other highlights from the survey include:

- Among the religiously unaffiliated, 87% say they celebrate Christmas, including 68% who view Christmas as more of a cultural holiday and 10% who see it as more of a religious holiday.

Christmas and the Holidays: What Do You Most Look Forward To?



Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q82F1. Only top three responses shown.

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Christmas and the Holidays: What Do You Like the Least?



Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q83F1. Only top three responses shown.

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- Roughly eight-in-ten Americans (79%) say they plan to put up a Christmas tree this year. By comparison, 92% say they typically put up a Christmas tree when they were children.
- Nearly six-in-ten Americans say they plan to give homemade gifts this holiday season, such as baked goods or crafts. There is a big gender gap on this question; two-thirds of women (65%) plan to give homemade gifts, compared with 51% of men.
- Those who celebrate Christmas as more of a religious event are much more apt than those who view it as a cultural occasion to say they will attend religious services this Christmas (73% vs. 30%) and to believe in the virgin birth (91% vs. 50%). But on other measures, the differences in the ways the two groups will mark the holidays are much smaller. Roughly nine-in-ten in both groups will gather with family and friends and buy gifts this Christmas, and identical shares of each group will pretend to get a visit from Santa Claus on Christmas Eve (33% each).

Religious Observance of Christmas

Half of Americans (51%) say they see Christmas as a religious holiday, while 32% say that, for them, personally, it is more of a cultural holiday. A few (9%) give other responses, such as saying it is both a religious and a cultural holiday or saying it is neither a religious nor a cultural holiday, while 7% say they do not celebrate Christmas, and 1% say they sometimes celebrate Christmas or decline to answer the question.

Eight-in-ten white evangelical Protestants (82%) see Christmas as a religious holiday. Smaller majorities of white Catholics (66%), black Protestants (60%) and white mainline Protestants (56%) see Christmas as more of a religious than a cultural holiday, as do about half of Hispanic Catholics (51%).¹ Among the religiously unaffiliated, two-thirds celebrate Christmas as more of a cultural than a religious holiday.

Is Christmas More a Religious or Cultural Holiday?

	Celebrate Christmas and see it as...			Don't celebrate %	Sometimes celebrate/ DK/Ref %
	Religious %	Cultural %	Other* %		
Total	51	32	9	7	1=100
Men	46	36	9	9	1=100
Women	57	29	8	5	1=100
White	54	31	9	5	1=100
Black	50	28	9	12	1=100
Hispanic	46	37	7	8	3=100
18-29	39	44	8	8	1=100
30-49	50	36	7	7	1=100
50-64	55	26	11	7	1=100
65+	66	19	9	5	1=100
Protestant	67	20	8	5	*=100
White evangelical	82	9	7	2	0=100
White mainline	56	31	11	2	0=100
Black Protestant	60	21	8	11	1=100
Catholic	59	26	11	2	2=100
White Catholic	66	21	12	*	1=100
Hispanic Catholic	51	35	8	3	4=100
Unaffiliated	10	68	9	11	3=100

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q80, Q81. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Includes people who celebrate Christmas but do not say whether they think it is a religious or cultural holiday.

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More women (57%) than men (46%) see Christmas as a religious rather than a cultural event. And there is a striking generational component to views on this question. Fully two-thirds of Americans age 65 and older see Christmas as a religious holiday, as do most Americans ages 50-64 (55%) and

¹ In Mexico and several other Latin American countries, the feast of the Epiphany (Jan. 6) rather than Christmas Day is the traditional day for large celebrations and exchanging gifts. Hispanic respondents may have been indicating in their answers to this question that the large-scale celebration centered on Christmas Day is more characteristic of U.S. culture than of Latin American culture.

half of those in their 30s and 40s (50%). By contrast, 39% of adults under 30 say Christmas is more of a religious holiday, while 44% say for them, personally, Christmas is more of a cultural occasion.

Slightly more than half of the public (54%) says they plan to attend religious services on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day this year. By comparison, about one-third of the public (36%) says that they attend religious services in a typical week.

Three-quarters (73%) of people who say Christmas is more of a religious holiday plan to attend religious services either on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Far fewer people who say they see Christmas as more of a cultural holiday or who do not celebrate Christmas at all say they will be in the pews this Christmas (30% and 24%, respectively).

Women are somewhat more likely than men to say they will attend Christmas services this year (58% vs. 50%), and parents who are currently raising minor children in their household say they will attend Christmas services at higher rates than non-parents (59% vs. 51%). A majority of adults age 30 and older say they plan to attend religious services this Christmas, compared with 46% of adults under 30.

Among religious groups, three-quarters of Catholics (76%) and seven-in-ten white evangelical Protestants (71%) plan to attend Christmas religious services this year, as do two-thirds of black Protestants (65%). About half of white mainline Protestants say they will attend Christmas services. Among U.S. adults who are unaffiliated with a religion, just 16% say they intend to go to religious services this Christmas.

Roughly seven-in-ten Americans say they typically attended Christmas religious services when they were growing up. Younger adults are less likely than older adults to have grown up doing this. Roughly three-quarters of adults age 50 and older say they grew up attending Christmas services, compared with two-thirds of those in their 30s and 40s and 62% of those under age 30.

Attendance at Christmas Religious Services

	Plan to attend this year	Typically attended as a child
	%	%
Total	54	69
Men	50	67
Women	58	70
White	53	70
Black	58	74
Hispanic	65	73
18-29	46	62
30-49	57	67
50-64	55	73
65+	60	76
Parent/Guardian	59	67
Not parent/guardian	51	70
Protestant	62	71
White evangelical	71	72
White mainline	47	69
Black Protestant	65	76
Catholic	76	89
White Catholic	82	95
Hispanic Catholic	70	78
Unaffiliated	16	50
See <i>Christmas as ...</i>		
Religious holiday	73	79
Cultural holiday	30	57
Don't celebrate	24	43

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q85b and Q87b.

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Roughly three-quarters of adults (73%) say they believe Jesus was born of a virgin. About one-in-five (19%) say they do not believe this, and 7% say they don't know or decline to answer the question.

The vast majority of white evangelical Protestants (97%), black Protestants (94%) and white Catholics (88%) believe in the virgin birth of Jesus, as do 81% of Hispanic Catholics. Fewer white mainline Protestants (70%) believe this. Among the religiously unaffiliated, 32% believe that Jesus was born to a virgin.

About nine-in-ten adults (91%) who see Christmas as a religious holiday say they believe Jesus was born of a virgin. However, even among those who celebrate Christmas as a cultural holiday and those who do not celebrate Christmas, roughly half say they believe in the virgin birth.

Belief That Jesus was Born of a Virgin

	Believe %	Do not believe %	Don't know %
Total	73	19	7=100
Men	69	22	9=100
Women	78	17	5=100
White	71	21	7=100
Black	90	7	4=100
Hispanic	78	17	4=100
18-29	66	27	7=100
30-49	76	18	6=100
50-64	76	16	8=100
65+	76	17	7=100
Protestant	87	9	4=100
White evangelical	97	1	2=100
White mainline	70	21	9=100
Black Protestant	94	4	2=100
Catholic	86	10	4=100
White Catholic	88	7	6=100
Hispanic Catholic	81	17	2=100
Unaffiliated	32	53	15=100
See Christmas as ...			
Religious holiday	91	6	3=100
Cultural holiday	50	39	11=100
Don't celebrate	51	41	8=100

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q88. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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Gathering with Family and Friends

Nearly nine-in-ten Americans (86%) say they plan to gather with extended family or friends on Christmas or Christmas Eve this year. This type of gathering is common among all demographic and religious groups in the population. Similar shares of those who celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday and those who see it as more of a cultural holiday say they will gather with family and friends on Christmas (89% and 88%, respectively). And even among those who say they do not personally celebrate Christmas, half (51%) say they nonetheless will get together with family or friends on Christmas or Christmas Eve.

Gathering with family and friends on Christmas was also a common experience for most people when they were growing up. Nine-in-ten Americans (91%) say they typically gathered with extended family and friends on Christmas when they were children.

Gathering with Extended Family or Friends on Christmas or Christmas Eve

	Plan to do this year	Typically did as a child
	%	%
Total	86	91
18-29	91	93
30-49	85	91
50-64	85	89
65+	83	89
Protestant	88	92
White evangelical	90	93
White mainline	89	94
Black Protestant	87	92
Catholic	85	92
White Catholic	88	95
Hispanic Catholic	81	88
Unaffiliated	84	90
See <i>Christmas as ...</i>		
Religious holiday	89	93
Cultural holiday	88	92
Do not celebrate	51	67

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q85a, Q87a.

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Exchanging Gifts

Fully 86% of Americans say they plan to buy gifts for friends and family over the Christmas or holiday season this year. This includes large majorities of people in all large U.S. religious groups as well as those without any religious affiliation.

Buying gifts is less common among Americans whose annual household income falls below \$30,000. Roughly three-quarters of those earning less than \$30,000 plan to buy gifts this year, compared with roughly nine-in-ten or more of those in higher income brackets.

Nine-in-ten Americans (89%) say buying gifts was also typically part of how they marked the holidays as they were growing up.

Buying Gifts for Friends or Family

	Plan to do this year %	Typically did as a child %
Total	86	89
White	90	93
Black	79	90
Hispanic	77	72
18-29	91	93
30-49	88	89
50-64	85	89
65+	78	87
<i>Current family income</i>		
\$100,000 or more	94	94
\$75,000-\$99,999	96	94
\$50,000-\$74,999	93	92
\$30,000-\$49,999	88	91
Less than \$30,000	78	84
Protestant	87	90
White evangelical	90	91
White mainline	92	94
Black Protestant	79	91
Catholic	84	88
White Catholic	88	97
Hispanic Catholic	78	72
Unaffiliated	89	91
<i>See Christmas as ...</i>		
Religious holiday	88	91
Cultural holiday	91	91
Do not celebrate	54	73

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q84c, Q86c.

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Roughly six-in-ten Americans say they plan to give homemade items, such as baked goods or crafts, as gifts this holiday season. Far more women than men say they plan to give homemade gifts this year (65% vs. 51%). Making homemade gifts is also more common among whites (62%) and Hispanics (54%) than among blacks (41%), and it is more common among parents of minor children than among those who are not currently raising children in their households (64% vs. 55%).

Similar numbers of high-income earners and those with lower household incomes say they plan to give homemade gifts this year (61% among those earning \$100,000 or more, 59% among those earning less than \$30,000).

Two-thirds of Americans say they typically made homemade Christmas and holiday gifts when they were growing up.

Giving Homemade Gifts

	Plan to do this year %	Typically did as a child %
Total	58	66
Men	51	63
Women	65	69
White	62	69
Black	41	62
Hispanic	54	59
<i>Current family income</i>		
\$100,000 or more	61	65
\$75,000-\$99,999	58	60
\$50,000-\$74,999	58	66
\$30,000-\$49,999	59	69
Less than \$30,000	59	67
Parent/Guardian	64	66
Not parent/guardian	55	66
Protestant	58	69
White evangelical	67	71
White mainline	60	69
Black Protestant	40	65
Catholic	59	69
White Catholic	61	74
Hispanic Catholic	56	61
Unaffiliated	55	58
<i>See Christmas as ...</i>		
Religious holiday	64	71
Cultural holiday	56	63
Do not celebrate	28	42

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q84a, Q86a.

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Santa Claus Coming to Town?

One-in-five adults say they are the parent or guardian of a child in their household who currently believes in Santa Claus. An additional 14% of Americans are parents or guardians of at least one child under the age of 18 but say their children do not believe in Santa Claus. (About two-thirds of Americans are not the parents or guardians of any children in their household.)

Nearly six-in-ten Hispanics say they are parenting minor children in their homes, including 38% who have children who believe in Santa Claus. By comparison, fewer blacks and whites say they currently have Santa-believing children (21% and 15%, respectively), in part because blacks and whites are less likely than Hispanics to have minor children in the home.

Being the parent or guardian of a child who believes in Santa Claus is most common

among Americans ages 30-49. Nearly two-thirds of respondents in this age group (63%) say they are parents, including 38% who have a child who believes in Santa Claus. Compared with those in their 30s and 40s, both younger adults and those 50 and older are less likely to be parenting children and to have children who believe in Santa.

Currently Parenting a Child Who Believes in Santa Claus?

	Parent or guardian of minor child %	Have child who believes in Santa %	Do not have child who believes in Santa %	Not parent or guardian of minor child %
Total	33	19	14	67=100
White	28	15	13	72=100
Black	36	21	15	64=100
Hispanic	56	38	19	44=100
18-29	26	17	8	74=100
30-49	63	38	25	37=100
50-64	21	8	13	79=100
65+	5	2	3	95=100
Married	45	24	21	55=100
Not married	21	13	8	79=100
Protestant	32	16	16	68=100
White evangelical	30	13	17	70=100
White mainline	28	18	10	72=100
Black Protestant	38	22	16	62=100
Catholic	37	24	13	63=100
White Catholic	23	12	11	77=100
Hispanic Catholic	62	47	15	38=100
Unaffiliated	31	18	12	69=100

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. PARENT, SANTA. Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. The "Do not have child who believes in Santa" column includes those who are unsure or say they don't know if their children believe in Santa. The "Not parent or guardian of minor child" column includes those who decline to say whether they have a child in their home.

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Among those who have a child who believes in Santa Claus, seven-in-ten (69%) say they plan to pretend that Santa visits their house on Christmas Eve this year. But even among U.S. adults without a child who believes in Santa, sizable numbers plan on receiving a visit from Old St. Nick. Roughly one-in-five parents whose children do not believe in Santa (18%) say they will pretend to get a visit from Santa this year, as do 22% of those who are not the parents or guardians of minor children in their household.

Nearly three-quarters of Americans say they typically received Christmas Eve visits from Santa as children. This includes big majorities of those age 65 and older (who were raised in the 1940s, 1950s and earlier) as well as those who grew up several decades later in the 1980s and 1990s.

Pretending Santa Claus Will Visit on Christmas Eve

	Plan to do this year %	Typically did as a child %
Total	31	72
White	31	78
Black	20	67
Hispanic	45	65
18-29	30	70
30-49	39	75
50-64	27	72
65+	23	72
Parent/Guardian	49	72
Have child who believes in Santa	69	76
Do not have child who believes in Santa	18	63
Not parent/guardian	22	73
Protestant	28	75
White evangelical	30	77
White mainline	31	81
Black Protestant	17	71
Catholic	40	75
White Catholic	32	81
Hispanic Catholic	53	68
Unaffiliated	30	69
See <i>Christmas as ...</i>		
Religious holiday	33	77
Cultural holiday	33	71
Do not celebrate	11	46

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q85c, Q87c.

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Caroling, Cards and Christmas Trees

Eight-in-ten Americans (79%) say they plan to put up a Christmas tree this year, and two-thirds (65%) say they intend to send Christmas or holiday cards. Far fewer (16%) say they plan to go caroling this year.

Putting up a Christmas tree is a common practice across a variety of demographic and religious groups. Even among those who are not affiliated with any religion, 73% say they plan to have a Christmas tree this year. And a recent Pew Research [survey](#) found that 32% of Jews say they had a Christmas tree in their house last year.

Erecting a Christmas tree is, however, somewhat more common among high-income earners (86% among those earning \$75,000 or more) than among those with lower household incomes (75% among those earning less than \$30,000). More whites (81%) and Hispanics (82%) than blacks (65%) say they intend to put up a tree. Fully 90% of parents of minor children say

Holiday Activities: Caroling, Cards and Christmas Trees

% who plan to do each of the following this year

	Put up Christmas tree %	Send Christmas or holiday cards %	Go caroling %
Total	79	65	16
White	81	68	15
Black	65	64	14
Hispanic	82	55	— [^]
18-29	82	59	16
30-49	82	63	18
50-64	77	68	15
65+	73	73	15
<i>Current family income</i>			
\$100,000 or more	86	68	15
\$75,000-\$99,999	86	68	14
\$50,000-\$74,999	79	70	13
\$30,000-\$49,999	77	64	15
Less than \$30,000	75	62	19
Parent/Guardian	90	68	19
Not parent/guardian	73	64	15
Protestant	81	68	17
White evangelical	87	72	22
White mainline	84	70	11
Black Protestant	66	67	15
Catholic	84	68	19
White Catholic	84	76	13
Hispanic Catholic	89	55	— [^]
Unaffiliated	73	57	8
<i>See Christmas as ...</i>			
Religious holiday	85	72	20
Cultural holiday	82	60	12
Do not celebrate	16	31	7

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q84b,d,e.

[^]In the Spanish translation, respondents were asked about singing Christmas carols more generally, making the results for Hispanic respondents not directly comparable with those interviewed entirely in English.

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they plan to put up a tree, compared with 73% of those who are not parents or guardians of children in their home.

Sending Christmas or holiday cards is more common among adults age 50 and older than among younger adults. Nearly three-quarters of adults age 65 and older (73%) say they intend to send Christmas cards this year, as do 68% of those ages 50-64. By comparison, 59% of adults under age 30 say they plan to send cards this year.

Upwards of nine-in-ten U.S. adults say they typically had a Christmas tree in their home when they were growing up, and 81% say they or their family sent out Christmas or holiday cards. Compared with blacks and whites, fewer Hispanics say their family typically had a Christmas tree (79%) or sent holiday cards (56%) when they were children.

Roughly one-third of Americans say they usually went caroling when they were children. Adults age 30 and older are more likely to remember caroling as a typical part of their holiday celebrations than adults under 30.

Christmases Past: Caroling, Cards and Christmas Trees During Childhood

% who typically did each of the following as children

	Put up Christmas tree %	Send Christmas or holiday cards %	Go caroling %
Total	92	81	36
White	96	87	37
Black	90	81	31
Hispanic	79	56	—^
18-29	90	72	25
30-49	93	81	40
50-64	91	87	38
65+	93	86	43
Protestant	95	84	38
White evangelical	97	86	46
White mainline	97	87	36
Black Protestant	93	83	33
Catholic	89	79	44
White Catholic	98	94	37
Hispanic Catholic	75	53	—^
Unaffiliated	95	81	23

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q86b,d,e.

^In the Spanish translation, respondents were asked about singing Christmas carols more generally, making the results for Hispanic respondents not directly comparable with those interviewed entirely in English.

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Christmas and the Holidays: Likes and Dislikes

When asked to describe, in their own words, what they most look forward to about Christmas and the holiday season, seven-in-ten Americans (69%), including large majorities across a variety of religious groups, cite spending time with family and friends.

Smaller numbers say they look forward to the religious elements of Christmas (11%), to people being happy and joyful (7%), to the Christmas spirit (4%), to Christmas music, decorations and entertainment (4%) and to exchanging gifts (4%). Roughly one-in-twenty Americans (4%) say there is nothing about Christmas or the holidays they look forward to, except perhaps the end of the season.

Christmas and the Holidays: What Do You Most Look Forward To?

	%
Time with family/friends	69
Religious reflection/Church	11
People are happy, joyful	7
Christmas spirit/Joy/Love/Peace	4
Music/Decorations/TV/Movies	4
Giving or exchanging gifts	4
Vacation/Time to rest	3
Acts of generosity, kindness	3
Food/Drinks/Cooking/Eating	2
Winter weather/Snow	1
Shopping/Good deals	1
Other	4
Nothing/End of Christmas	4
Don't know/Refused	2
Sample size	977

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q82F1. Figures do not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

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When asked what they like least about Christmas and the holidays, fully one-third of Americans cite the commercialization of the season, while 22% say they dislike the heavy expenses associated with the holidays, and 10% say they dislike holiday shopping and crowds. Smaller numbers lament the de-emphasis of the religious elements of the season (6%), inclement weather (3%), seasonal music and/or garish decorations (3%) and the hectic pace of the holidays (3%). Roughly one-in-five say there is nothing they dislike about the holidays, other than that they often seem to be over too fast (6%).

Christmas and the Holidays: What Do You Like the Least?

	%
Commercialism/Materialism	33
Money/Too expensive	22
Shopping/Crowds/Crowded stores	10
Removal of religion, Christ	6
Winter weather/snow	3
Music/Decorations – too early	3
Hectic pace/Being busy	3
People are in bad mood	2
Travel/Traffic	2
Have to go to church	2
Inability to see family/friends	2
Food/Gaining weight	1
Remembering loss	1
Other	5
Nothing/It's over too fast	6
Don't know/Refused	8
Sample size	977

Source: Pew Research Center Dec. 3-8, 2013. Q83F1. Figures do not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

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About the Survey

The analysis for this report is based on telephone interviews conducted Dec. 3-8, 2013, among a national sample of 2,001 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (1,000 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,001 were interviewed on a cellphone, including 523 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cellphone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cellphone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2011 U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landlines and cellphones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2012 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landlines and cellphones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus...
Total sample	2,001	2.6 percentage points
Men	968	3.7 percentage points
Women	1,033	3.5 percentage points
White	1,481	3.0 percentage points
Black	191	8.3 percentage points
Hispanic	192	8.2 percentage points
Age 18-29	289	6.7 percentage points
30-49	513	5.0 percentage points
50-64	609	4.6 percentage points
65+	550	4.9 percentage points
<i>Current family income</i>		
\$100,000 or more	355	6.1 percentage points
\$75,000-\$99,999	215	7.8 percentage points
\$50,000-\$74,999	269	7.0 percentage points
\$30,000-\$49,999	362	6.0 percentage points
Less than \$30,000	545	4.9 percentage points
Parent/Guardian	540	4.9 percentage points
Not parent/guardian	1,458	3.0 percentage points
Protestant	1,068	3.5 percentage points
White evangelical	466	5.3 percentage points
White mainline	349	6.1 percentage points
Black Protestant	147	9.4 percentage points
Catholic	429	5.5 percentage points
White Catholic	283	6.8 percentage points
Hispanic Catholic	109	10.9 percentage points
Unaffiliated	346	6.1 percentage points
<i>See Christmas as...</i>		
Religious holiday	1,103	3.4 percentage points
Cultural holiday	573	4.8 percentage points
Don't celebrate	128	10.1 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
DECEMBER 2013 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
December 3-8, 2013
N=2,001**

QUESTIONS 1-79 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED OR HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

On another subject ...

Q.80 Do you celebrate Christmas, or not?

Dec 3-8

2013

92	Yes
7	No
1	Sometimes (VOL.)
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

TREND FOR COMPARISON:

Do you celebrate Christmas?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
<i>Gallup/USA Today: December, 2010</i>	95	4	*
<i>Gallup/USA Today: December, 2008</i>	93	7	0
<i>Gallup/CNN/USA Today: December, 2005</i>	96	4	*
<i>Gallup: December, 2003</i>	95	5	0
<i>Gallup: December, 2000</i>	96	4	*
<i>Gallup/CNN/USA Today: December, 1994</i>	96	4	*

READ TO ALL:

[IF R CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS OR DECLINED TO SAY (Q.80=1,3,9), READ: I have a few more questions about Christmas and the holiday season; **IF R DOES NOT CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS (Q.80=2), READ:** Even though you don't personally celebrate Christmas, I have a few questions about Christmas and the holiday season in general].

ASK IF CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS OR DECLINED TO SAY (Q80=1, 3, 9):

Q.81 For you personally, is Christmas **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**?

BASED ON TOTAL:

Dec 3-8

2013

52	More of a religious holiday
33	More of a cultural holiday
7	Both of these (VOL.)
1	Other/none of these (VOL.)
0	Do not celebrate Christmas (VOL.)
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
7	<i>Does not celebrate Christmas (Q.80=2)</i>

RANDOMIZE Q.82F1 AND Q.83F1**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=977]:**

Q.82F1 What do you most look forward to about Christmas or the holiday season? **[OPEN END; RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE; RECORD UP TO THREE MENTIONS IN ORDER MENTIONED BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL]**

Dec 3-8

2013

69	Spending time with family/friends
11	Church/Religious reflection
7	People are in a good mood/Children
4	Christmas spirit/Joy/Love/Peace
4	Gifts/Receiving gifts/Exchanging gifts/Buying gifts
4	Nothing/The end of Christmas/Christmas being over
3	Vacation/Rest
3	Giving/Acts of kindness/Generosity
2	Music/Decorations/Movies/TV Shows
2	Food/Drinks/Cooking/Eating
1	Shopping/Holiday deals
1	Snow/Winter weather/Winter
4	Other
2	Don't know/Refused

RANDOMIZE Q.82F1 AND Q.83F1**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=977]:**

Q.83F1 What do you like the least about Christmas or the holiday season? **[OPEN END; RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE; RECORD UP TO THREE MENTIONS IN ORDER MENTIONED BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL]**

Dec 3-8

2013

33	Commercials/Materialism/Consumerism/Greed
22	Expectation of buying gifts/Money/Cost
10	Shopping/Crowds/Crowded stores/Black Friday
6	Lack of religious reflection/Removing Christ
6	Nothing/It's over too fast
3	Snow/Winter weather/Winter
3	Music/Decorations/Decorations too early/Season starts too early
3	Hectic pace/Being busy
2	People/People that are in a bad mood
2	Travel/Traffic
2	Having to go to church/Too religious/Controversy about religion
2	Inability to spend time with family/friends
1	Food/Gaining weight/too much food
1	Remembering loss
5	Other
8	Don't know/Refused

ASK ALL:

Q.84 Please tell me whether or not you plan to do each of the following this year over Christmas or the holiday season. Do you plan to **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE, A SHOULD ALWAYS PRECEDE C, THOUGH IT NEED NOT IMMEDIATELY PRECEDE C]** over Christmas or the holiday season this year, or not? And do you plan to **[INSERT NEXT ITEM]**, or not? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[READ AS NECESSARY: Do you plan to do this over Christmas or the holiday season this year, or not?]**

		<u>Yes</u> ¹	<u>No</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Give homemade gifts, such as baked goods or crafts Dec 3-8, 2013	58	41	1
b.	Put up a Christmas tree Dec 3-8, 2013	79	20	1
	TREND FOR COMPARISON: <i>Do you, or does your family, do each of the following as part of its celebration of Christmas, or not? How about put up a Christmas tree? USA Today/Gallup: December, 2010²</i>	88	12	*
c.	Buy gifts for friends or family Dec 3-8, 2013	86	13	1
d.	Go caroling Dec 3-8, 2013	16	82	2
e.	Send Christmas or holiday cards Dec 3-8, 2013	65	34	1

ASK ALL:

Now, thinking specifically about what you'll be doing on Christmas Eve and Christmas day...

Q.85 Do you plan to **[INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE]** on Christmas Eve or Christmas day this year, or not? And do you plan to **[INSERT NEXT ITEM]** on Christmas Eve or Christmas day this year, or not? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Do you plan to do this on Christmas Eve or Christmas day this year, or not?]**

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	(VOL.) <u>Plan to do this, but on a different day</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Attend a gathering with extended family or friends Dec 3-8, 2013	86	12	*	1
b.	Attend religious services Dec 3-8, 2013	54	43	1	3
	TREND FOR COMPARISON: <i>Do you, or does your family, do each of the following as part of its celebration of Christmas, or not? How about attend religious services on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day USA Today/Gallup: December, 2010³</i>	62	39	--	*
c.	Pretend Santa Claus visits your home Dec 3-8, 2013	31	68	*	1

¹ Includes those who volunteer that they have already done this.

² Those who answered in a previous question that they did not celebrate Christmas were not asked this question and recorded as "no."

³ Those who answered in a previous question that they did not celebrate Christmas were not asked this question and recorded as "no." "Plan to do this, but on a different day" was not a volunteered option.

ASK ALL:

Now, thinking about your childhood...

Q.86 When you were growing up, did you or your family typically **[INSERT ITEM; READ IN SAME ORDER AS Q84]** over Christmas or the holiday season, or not? And when you were growing up, did you or your family typically **[INSERT NEXT ITEM]** over Christmas or the holiday season, or not? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[READ AS NECESSARY: When you were growing up, did you or your family typically do this over Christmas or the holiday season, or not?]**

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Give homemade gifts, such as baked goods or crafts Dec 3-8, 2013	66	33	1
b.	Put up a Christmas tree Dec 3-8, 2013	92	8	*
c.	Buy gifts for friends or family Dec 3-8, 2013	89	10	1
d.	Go caroling Dec 3-8, 2013	36	63	1
e.	Send Christmas or holiday cards Dec 3-8, 2013	81	18	1

ASK ALL:

And thinking specifically about Christmas Eve and Christmas Day...

Q.87 When you were growing up, did you typically **[INSERT ITEM; READ IN SAME ORDER AS Q85]** on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, or not? And when you were growing up, did you typically **[INSERT NEXT ITEM]** on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, or not? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[REPEAT AS NECESSARY: When you were growing up did you typically do this on Christmas Eve or Christmas day, or not?]**

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	(VOL.) <u>Did this, but on a different day</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Attend a gathering with extended family or friends Dec 3-8, 2013	91	9	*	*
b.	Attend religious services Dec 3-8, 2013	69	30	1	1
c.	Pretend Santa Claus visited your home Dec 3-8, 2013	72	27	*	1

ASK ALL:

Q.88 Do you believe that Jesus Christ was born to a virgin, or don't you believe this?

Dec 3-8

2013

73	Believe
19	Don't believe
7	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

NO QUESTIONS 89-93

ASK ALL:

PARENT Are you the parent or guardian of any children under 18 now living in your household?

ASK IF R IS A PARENT (PARENT=1) [N=540]:

SANTA As far as you know, do any of these children currently believe in Santa Claus?

BASED ON TOTAL:

Dec 3-8

2013

19	Parent, has child who believes in Santa
13	Parent, no children believe in Santa
1	Parent, not sure if child believes in Santa (VOL.)
*	Parent, don't know/refused if child believes in Santa (VOL.)
67	<i>Not a parent or guardian of any children under 18 now living in household (PARENT=2, 9)</i>

ASK ALL:

RELIG What is your present religion, if any? Are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox such as Greek or Russian Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, atheist, agnostic, something else, or nothing in particular? {QID:relig}

[INTERVIEWER: IF R VOLUNTEERS "nothing in particular, none, no religion, etc." BEFORE REACHING END OF LIST, PROMPT WITH: And would you say that's atheist, agnostic, or just nothing in particular?]

Dec 3-8

2013

39	Protestant (Baptist, Methodist, Non-denominational, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Episcopalian, Reformed, Church of Christ, Jehovah's Witness, etc.)
23	Roman Catholic (Catholic)
1	Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints/LDS)
1	Orthodox (Greek, Russian, or some other orthodox church)
1	Jewish (Judaism)
1	Muslim (Islam)
1	Buddhist
1	Hindu
2	Atheist (do not believe in God)
3	Agnostic (not sure if there is a God)
1	Something else
14	Nothing in particular
12	Christian (VOL.)
*	Unitarian (Universalist) (VOL.)
1	Don't Know/Refused (VOL.)