

The Printable Christmas Quiz

Twenty-four questions in four rounds, written to be read out loud. Print the host sheet, print an answer sheet per team, and you are ready.

4 rounds · 24 questions · about 40 min

How to run it

1. Print one host sheet for yourself and one team answer sheet per team. The host sheet has the answers on it — keep it face down.
2. Read each question out loud twice. Give teams about forty seconds, a little longer on the open questions.
3. At the end of each round, teams swap sheets and you read out the answers. They tick the box on the right for each correct one.
4. One point per correct answer, twenty-four in total. If you want a tiebreaker, ask how many gifts are given in total in The Twelve Days of Christmas — the answer is in round three.

ROUND 1 — Christmas classics

Warm-up round. Nothing here needs specialist knowledge.

1. In A Christmas Carol, how many ghosts visit Scrooge in total?

- ☐ A Three
- ☒ B Four
- ☐ C Five
- ☐ D Two

Answer: B — Four

Worth adding: Most teams say three. There are four: Jacob Marley comes first, and only then the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come.

2. What was traditionally hidden inside a British Christmas pudding?

- ☒ A A silver coin
- ☐ B A gold ring
- ☐ C A wishbone
- ☐ D A sprig of holly

Answer: A — A silver coin

Worth adding: A silver sixpence, and whoever found it was due a year of good luck. The custom faded partly because people kept nearly swallowing it.

3. Santa Claus takes his name from which saint?

- ☐ A Saint Stephen
- ☐ B Saint Christopher
- ☒ C Saint Nicholas
- ☐ D Saint Lucy

Answer: C — Saint Nicholas

Worth adding: Through the Dutch Sinterklaas, which is how the name reached English.

4. How many arms does a classic snowflake crystal have?

- ☐ A Five
- ☒ B Six
- ☐ C Eight
- ☐ D It varies

Answer: B — Six

Worth adding: Six, and that is not decoration — it follows from the way water molecules bond as ice forms.

5. In which decade was the first commercial Christmas card sent?

- ☐ A The 1790s
- ☒ B The 1840s
- ☐ C The 1880s
- ☐ D The 1900s

Answer: B — The 1840s

Worth adding: 1843, commissioned by Henry Cole in London. The same year Dickens published A Christmas Carol.

6. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer was invented in 1939 for what purpose?

Answer: Advertising — he was created for a department store giveaway booklet

Worth adding: Montgomery Ward, a chain of American department stores, which handed the booklet out to shoppers.

ROUND 2 — Christmas on screen

7. In It's a Wonderful Life, what happens every time a bell rings?

Answer: An angel gets its wings

8. In Die Hard, what is the name of the building under siege?

- ☒ A Nakatomi Plaza
- ☐ B Century Tower
- ☐ C The Fox Building
- ☐ D Gruber Tower

Answer: A — Nakatomi Plaza

Worth adding: Good round to settle the argument about whether it is a Christmas film. It is set at an office Christmas party, so the quiz has taken a side.

9. In The Muppet Christmas Carol, which Muppet plays Bob Cratchit?

- ☐ A Fozzie Bear
- ☐ B Gonzo
- ☒ C Kermit the Frog
- ☐ D Rowlf the Dog

Answer: C — Kermit the Frog

Worth adding: Gonzo plays Charles Dickens, narrating, with Rizzo the Rat alongside him.

10. What is the name of the Grinch's dog?

- ☐ A Rex
- ☒ B Max
- ☐ C Buster
- ☐ D Scrap

Answer: B — Max

11. In Home Alone, what is Kevin's surname?

- ☒ A McCallister
- ☐ B McAllister
- ☐ C MacAllan
- ☐ D McCarthy

Answer: A — McCallister

Worth adding: Spelling counts if you are feeling strict — it is McCallister, with two Ls and no A in the middle.

12. In Elf, what are the four main food groups according to Buddy?

Answer: Candy, candy canes, candy corns and syrup

ROUND 3 — Songs and carols

13. Silent Night was originally written in which language?

- ☐ A Latin
- ☐ B English
- ☒ C German
- ☐ D Italian

Answer: C — German

Worth adding: Stille Nacht, first performed in Austria on Christmas Eve 1818.

14. Which Christmas song was the first ever broadcast from space?

- ☒ A Jingle Bells
- ☐ B Silent Night
- ☐ C White Christmas
- ☐ D O Holy Night

Answer: A — Jingle Bells

Worth adding: The Gemini 6 crew played it on a smuggled harmonica and sleigh bells in December 1965, after reporting a sighting of an object in a red suit.

15. If you received every gift in The Twelve Days of Christmas, how many presents would you have in total?

- ☐ A 78
- ☐ B 144
- ☒ C 364
- ☐ D 500

Answer: C — 364

Worth adding: 364 — one short of a gift a day for the year, which is the sort of detail that ruins a nice song.

16. Who wrote White Christmas?

- ☐ A Cole Porter
- ☒ B **Irving Berlin**
- ☐ C George Gershwin
- ☐ D Hoagy Carmichael

Answer: B — Irving Berlin

17. The tune of Hark! The Herald Angels Sing was adapted from a work by which composer?

- ☐ A Handel
- ☐ B Bach
- ☒ C **Mendelssohn**
- ☐ D Haydn

Answer: C — Mendelssohn

Worth adding: Mendelssohn wrote it in 1840 for a festival marking four hundred years of the printing press. The carol was set to it fifteen years later, by an organist named William Cummings.

18. Fairytale of New York was recorded by The Pogues with which singer?

Answer: Kirsty MacColl

ROUND 4 — Christmas elsewhere

The harder round. Good one to play for double points.

19. In which country is the Christmas Eve supper traditionally made up of twelve dishes?

- ☐ A Portugal
- ☒ B **Poland**
- ☐ C Greece
- ☐ D Ireland

Answer: B — Poland

Worth adding: Wigilia. An extra place is laid at the table for an unexpected guest.

20. In Catalonia, children look after a decorated log in the run-up to Christmas. What are they expecting it to do?

Answer: Produce presents when they hit it with sticks

Worth adding: The Caga Tió. It is fed for a fortnight, covered with a blanket, then beaten while the children sing at it.

21. Which country sends the Christmas tree that stands in London's Trafalgar Square each year?

- ☐ A Sweden
- ☐ B Finland
- ☒ C **Norway**
- ☐ D Denmark

Answer: C — Norway

Worth adding: A gift from the city of Oslo every year since 1947, in thanks for British support during the Second World War.

22. In Japan, which meal has become a widespread Christmas tradition?

- ☐ A Roast duck
- ☒ B **Fried chicken**
- ☐ C Sushi
- ☐ D Hotpot

Answer: B — Fried chicken

Worth adding: KFC specifically, off the back of a 1974 campaign. People now order it weeks ahead.

23. Churches that still use the Julian calendar celebrate Christmas on which date?

- ☐ A 25 December
- ☐ B 1 January
- ☐ C 6 January
- ☒ D **7 January**

Answer: D — 7 January

Worth adding: The Julian calendar currently runs thirteen days behind the Gregorian one, so their 25 December falls on our 7 January.

24. On what date is Boxing Day?

Answer: 26 December