

MY FIRST CHRISTMAS ON MY OWN

Shape your day, handle invitations
& get through the lonely moments

An In Good Company Christmas Planner

Because life is better in good company.

START HERE ★

A Note From Jen

Christmas has a way of shining a light on everything that has changed. If this is your first one on your own, it can feel like everyone else has somewhere to be and someone to be with.

This planner won't pretend it's easy. But it will help you choose how you spend it, instead of letting the day simply happen to you.



How to use it
1. Start 4–6 weeks before Christmas, so you're choosing rather than scrambling.
2. Work through the sections in order. Each one ends with one small task. Do it before you move on.
3. Keep it somewhere you'll see it. You'll come back to it during Christmas week.

You don't need to feel festive to begin. You just need a pen, a cuppa and about 20 minutes.

Before you move on: Choose the day you'll start Section 1 and put it in your calendar now.

I'm so glad you're here.

Jen x

Founder, In Good Company

SECTION ONE



Check In

What Am I Facing?

Before you plan anything, get honest about what you're facing. Naming it takes away some of its power, and it shows you where you need a plan.

Rate how hard each moment feels, from 1 (I'll be fine) to 10 (I'm dreading it). Be specific. "Waking up to a quiet house" is something you can plan for.

Christmas Eve ____/10

Waking up ____/10

Lunch ____/10

Afternoon slump ____/10

Evening ____/10

Boxing Day ____/10

Family questions ____/10

Photos online ____/10

Keep, let go, try

One tradition to keep, one thing you're allowed to skip, and one new thing just for you.

Keep: _____

Let go: _____

Try: _____

BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Circle your social energy for Christmas week:
1 2 3 4 5
(1 = need lots of quiet, 5 = want to be busy)



SECTION TWO: DESIGN YOUR DAY

An empty Christmas Day feels endless. A planned one feels manageable. You're not filling every minute, just giving it a shape.

My Christmas Day plan

Morning:

Afternoon:

Evening:

Pick your shape (tick any)

- ☐ With company
- ☐ Quiet and solo
- ☐ A new tradition
- ☐ Helping others
- ☐ A beach or park walk
- ☐ A community lunch
- ☐ Volunteering
- ☐ A Christmas movie marathon
- ☐ A picnic or barbecue
- ☐ A long drive
- ☐ A video call with family
- ☐ Carols by Candlelight on TV
- ☐ A new recipe just for me
- ☐ Something else: _____

Before you move on: fill in your Christmas Day plan with all three essentials.

The three essentials

One thing I'll look forward to:

One reason I'll leave the house:

One person I'll connect with:

SECTION THREE: HANDLE INVITATIONS

Track every invitation, then ask three questions: Will I feel better or worse afterwards? Can I leave when I want to? Am I going for me, or for them? Then reply using a script below.

- Who: _____ When: _____ Yes / No / Maybe
- Who: _____ When: _____ Yes / No / Maybe
- Who: _____ When: _____ Yes / No / Maybe
- **Accept with a limit:**
- “I'd love to come. I'll pop in for lunch and head off around three.”
- **Decline kindly:**
- “Thank you for thinking of me. I'm keeping it quiet this year.”
- **Suggest another plan:**
- “Christmas Day is a lot for me. Could I come on Boxing Day?”
- **Ask to be included:**
- “It's my first Christmas on my own. Could I join you for a while?”
- **When they ask “How are you really?”:**
- “Some days are harder, but I've got a plan and I'm okay.”
- **When they ask what happened:**
- “I'd rather not get into that today. What have you been up to?”



BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Reply to one invitation today, or send the “ask to be included” message to one person.

SECTION FOUR

Your Loneliness Plan



Know When It Hits

Loneliness usually arrives at predictable times. If you know when it's coming, you can have something ready instead of sitting in it.
Tick when it tends to hit you, then tick what helps in 10 minutes or less.

- ☐ When: late afternoon, when the day goes quiet
- ☐ When: waking up to a quiet house
- ☐ When: scrolling other people's family photos
- ☐ When: a song, smell or place brings it back
- ☐ When: eating dinner alone
- ☐ When: hearing about everyone else's plans
- ☐ When: New Year's Eve
- ☐ When: _____
- ☐ Help: a walk around the block or a swim
- ☐ Help: calling or texting someone
- ☐ Help: a favourite song or podcast
- ☐ Help: making a cup of tea properly
- ☐ Help: my phone in another room
- ☐ Help: a local community lunch or event
- ☐ Help: volunteering for a few hours
- ☐ Help: writing in this planner
- ☐ Help: stepping outside for fresh air
- ☐ Help: _____

BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Write one if then plan: “If I feel low after lunch, then I'll _____.”
Then text three people: “Christmas might be tough this year. Could I send you a message on the day?”

SECTION FIVE: DAILY CHECK-IN



Feelings check-in: two minutes each morning, 22–28 December.
Sad, relieved, angry, even happy: all of it is normal.

How do I feel right now? (One or two words is enough)

What do I need today? Rest, company, fresh air, a distraction...

One small thing I'll do about it is...

I'm allowed to leave early, skip it, cry, and still enjoy the day. I'm also allowed to...

BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Write two permissions of your own below, then save Lifeline (13 11 14) in your phone.

MY CHRISTMAS PROMISE ★

My Permission List

I don't have to make this Christmas perfect.
I don't have to feel festive.
I don't have to explain my choices.
And I don't have to do it the way
it's always been done.



I'm allowed to...
Leave early.
Skip it.
Say no without a long reason.
Cry, and then have a nice afternoon.
Ask for company.
Start a brand new tradition.
Enjoy this Christmas, too.

I will remember that one day is just one day.
I will reach out when it gets heavy.
I will be kind to myself.
Most importantly...

I will do this Christmas my way.

And whatever it looks like,
it's a first chapter, not forever.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

SECTION SIX: AFTER CHRISTMAS



You did it: your first Christmas on your own is behind you.
Take ten minutes to note what you learned, so next year is easier.

LOOKING BACK...

More of _____ next year.

Less of _____ next year.

What worked, and why...

What I'd change...

The one new tradition I'm keeping...

New Year's Eve: company, quiet, or something new?

New Year's Eve: one thing to look forward to, and one person I'll contact...

BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Tell someone about your new tradition. Who will you tell?

When will you tell them?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE

When It's More Than Loneliness

If you feel hopeless, can't stop crying, or a low mood lasts for weeks, please reach out for support. It isn't a failure. It's part of your plan.

Lifeline: 13 11 14 (24/7)
Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636
Your GP, who can help you make a mental health plan

And when you're ready for some company, In Good Company is here. Our events are relaxed and low-pressure, and you don't need to arrive knowing anyone. One conversation can lead to another, and sometimes one small step opens up a whole new chapter.



READY FOR YOUR NEXT STEP?

Explore Upcoming Events

WEBSITE - EVENTS

Join the In Good Company Community

FACEBOOK

Visit In Good Company Online

WEBSITE

IN GOOD COMPANY

Connecting People, Creating Possibilities

IN GOOD COMPANY

Connection • Friendship • Community • Growth • Adventure

Creating opportunities for meaningful connection, genuine friendship, personal growth and shared experiences. Helping people find their people.

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