

An Autistic Guide to Christmas

Routine

- create a plan/schedule/timetable
- use visual aids like calendars, whiteboards & lists
- create and share the plan with your loved ones
- incorporate normal routines where possible
- time to decompress in your routine
- adjust expectations - you don't have to do everything

Sensory overwhelm

- think about sensory needs in different environments
- use noise cancelling headphones/earplugs if needed
- utilise fidget toys or calming techniques
- adjust expectations - it's ok to say no
- stick to safe foods if needed
- take regular breaks in quiet spaces



Increased social expectations and demands

- identify and discuss triggers with a safe person beforehand
- say no to things you don't feel comfortable with
- plan time to engage with special interests before/after events & take time out during
- leave early if you need (or want) to or adjust expectations
- if present receiving is overwhelming adapt how these are received e.g. not wrapped, able to open them away from other people

Supporting at Christmas

Ella shares what has worked for them and their children when it comes to managing those social expectations, adapting cultural traditions, and coping with the additional sensory stimulation.

