|  |
| --- |
| **Activity title** |
| **Make an advent calendar** |
| **Stay safe** |
| Whether you are a scientist researching a new medicine or an engineer solving climate change, safety always comes first. An adult must always be around and supervising when doing this activity. You are responsible for:    • ensuring that any equipment used for this activity is in good working condition  • behaving sensibly and following any safety instructions so as not to hurt or injure yourself or others.    Please note that in the absence of any negligence or other breach of duty by us, this activity is carried out at your own risk. It is important to take extra care at the stages marked with this symbol:⚠ |
| **Time required** |
| 30 minutes to 1 hour |
| **Activity summary** |
| A step-by-step guide to making your own advent calendar |
| **Let the Christmas countdown begin…** |
| Do you get super-excited in the run-up to Christmas? An advent calendar can help you count the number of sleeps you’ll have before the big day. In this activity, you’ll learn how to make your very own advent calendar. On each day there’s a door to open. And behind every door is a picture or surprise. |
| **Let’s get started…** |
| You’re going to be using a ‘net’ to make your very own advent calendar. There’s no need to rush out to the shed to get your fishing net. It’s not that sort of net. What we’re talking about here is a paper template – in industry, it’s called a net. |
| **What equipment will you need?** |
| * Computer (to watch the presentation and download the templates) * Printer (to print out the templates for the doors and icons) * A4 paper * A4 card (you could use an empty cereal box) * Scissors (and an adult to supervise) * Glue stick * Ruler * Coloured pencils, pens or felt tips * Decorations, like sparkles, pompoms, stars, stickers… or whatever you’d like to add!   You might like to put on some jolly Christmas songs while you’re making your calendar, to get you in the festive mood. If you don’t have any to hand, simply choose your favourite and sing along as you go! |
| **How to do it** |
| Watch our video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6eXURF4apk>  **Step 1: Get creative!**  The first thing you need to do is to choose the door style for the front of your calendar. Which do you prefer: single doors or double doors? There’s a template for each, so choose the one you like best.  There should be 25 doors, dotted around the page. Each one is numbered. Just in case a pesky elf has rubbed one out, look for each number in turn – you need to check that all 25 are present and correct.  How you decorate the front of your calendar is entirely up to you. Let your imagination run wild!  **Step 2: Make the door openings** ⚠  The next thing you need to do is to cut out the doors. Plan where you’re going to make the cuts. Then cut carefully and safely. You can ask an adult for help if you need to.  If your calendar has single doors, cut around the bold line for each door. Don’t cut along the dotted line because that’s where the fold will be, to allow your door to open. Once you’ve finished cutting, open your 25 doors and fold them back.  If your calendar has double doors, the process is slightly different. Choose a door, then pinch it so that you can cut along the dotted line. Next cut along the top and bottom of the door, (but definitely not the sides). Do this for all 25 doors, then fold them back.  **Step 3: Choose your back page**  You’ve got three options.  **Option 1**   * Download the ‘ready-made calendar’ template onto an A4 sheet. * Use pens or pencils to colour the 25 images.   **Option 2**   * Download the ‘calendar images template’. * Choose your favourite 25 images and colour them in. * Use scissors to cut out your 25 coloured images very carefully. ⚠   **Option 3**   * If you’d prefer, design your own 25 surprises on an A4 sheet. * Use pens or pencils to colour the 25 images.   **Step 4: Strengthen the back page**  Add glue to the edges and middle of your A4 card.   * **Option 1** – lay your ready-made calendar template on top (make sure it is the right way up) and press it down firmly. * **Options 2 and 3** – lay your blank piece of paper on top and press it down firmly.   **Step 5: Attach the front page**   * Turn over your front page (the one with the doors) so that it’s face down. * Add glue to the edges only. Be extra careful with this step – if you glue the whole page, your doors won’t open! * Pick up your back page and make sure that you have the card side facing upwards. * Carefully lay the back page on top of the glued edges so that the two A4 sheets line up perfectly. * Press around the edges.   **Step 6: Hide the 25 surprises!**   * **Option 1 –** check that there’s a surprise hidden behind each door. * **Option 2 –** open Door 1 and carefully glue your coloured icon to the blank ‘wall’. Repeat the process until you’ve done all 25 doors. * **Option 3 –** open Door 1. Add your own design to the blank ‘wall’ – draw, add a sticker or cut out an image from an old magazine and carefully glue it in place. Repeat the process until you’ve done all 25 doors. * Wait around three hours for the glue to dry and check that there are no sticky areas.   **Step 7: Keep the doors closed until December**   * Close all the doors. * Place a heavy book on top. * Leave the book there for a few hours at least, to help the doors to stay shut.   Your advent calendar is now complete, so keep it safe – with the doors closed – until December. You can then use it to help you count the number of days to go until Christmas. Or you might like to give it to someone special at the start of the month! |
| **Three Christmas kisses and a wish** |
| It’s always great to reflect on a job well done. Show your calendar creation to a friend or family member and ask them to tell you three good things about it, and one thing that could be improved.  You can use their feedback to make another advent calendar that’s even better than the first.  Practice makes perfect, as they say… |
| **Festive fun** |
| After all that hard work, here are some Christmas crackers to make you smile!   * **Did Rudolph get a glowing school report?**   No. He went down in history!   * **Did you hear about the mouse that nibbled the Christmas decorations?**   It got tinsel-itis!   * **What happened to the thief who stole an advent calendar**?   He got 25 days!   * **Why didn’t the skeleton go to the Christmas party?**   Because he had no body to go with! |
| **Did you know?** |
| * The first Christmas song to be played in space was ‘Jingle Bells’. That was on 16 December 1965, during NASA’s Gemini 6A space flight. * Christmas pudding is often called ‘plum pudding’, even though it contains no plums. That’s because the Victorians used the word ‘plum’ to describe dried fruit of any kind, like raisins, sultanas, currants, dates and prunes. * Mistletoe can’t survive on its own. It’s a parasite that grows on other trees, taking nutrients and water from them. |
|  |