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HOLIDAY GIFT
GUIDE ISSUE!**

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**Surviving the Holidays
with Toddler Twins!**

**5 Tips on Making
Holiday Memories
with Your Twins**

**Toys they
Want or Need?**



TWINS Holiday 2016

COMING NEXT ISSUE...

It's Our 33rd Birthday Issue!

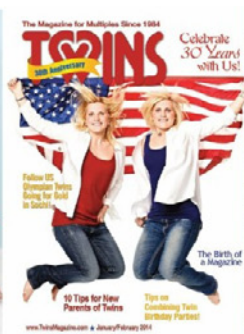
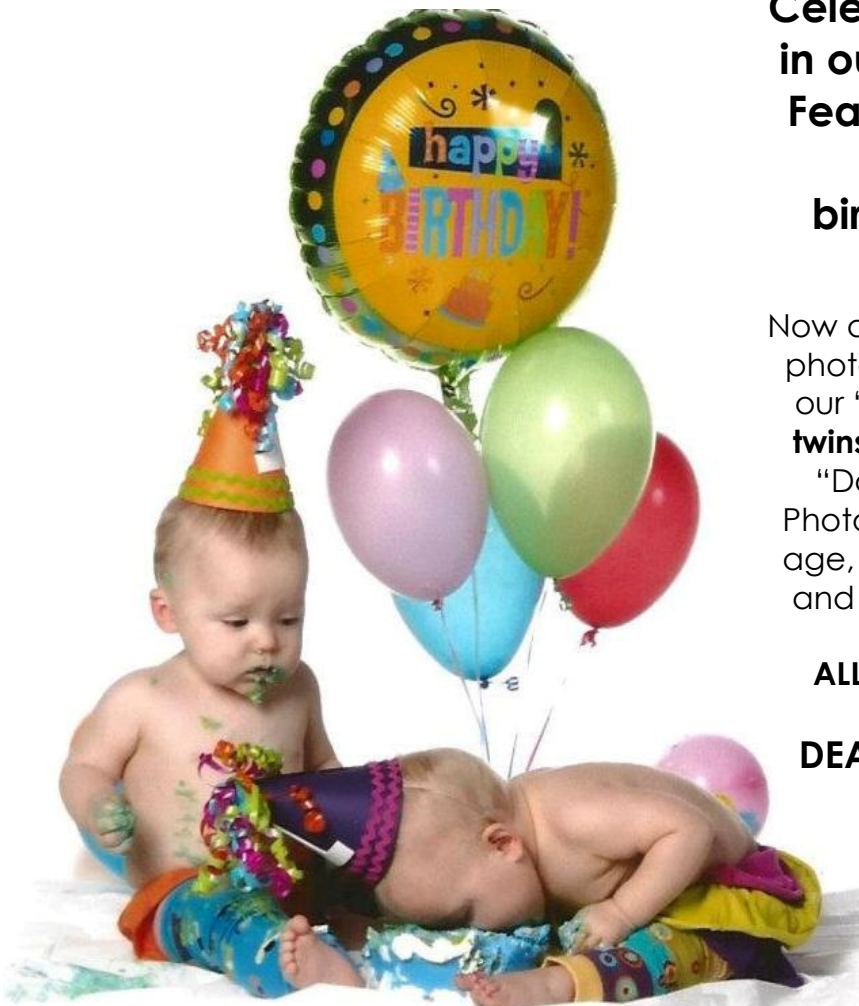
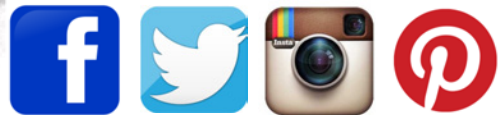
Celebrate 33 Years with TWINS
in our Jan/Feb 2017 edition...
Featuring insightful articles &
information all about
birthdays...plus lots more!!

Now accepting your "Birthday-Themed"
photos of your twins/multiples to run in
our "Double-Takes" section! **Email to:**
twinseditor@twinsmagazine.com with
"Double-Takes" in the subject line.
Photos must include names, twin-type,
age, city/state/country where you live
and be at a high resolution (300+dpi)

ALL AGES & TWIN-TYPES WELCOME!

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT PHOTOS IS
January 15, 2017**

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On the Cover:



Meet Mason and Madelyn, fraternal twins from Bowling Green, Kentucky. They were age one in their cover photo but now they will soon be three this month. They were born at 31 weeks and spent five weeks in the NICU, but they are now happy & healthy. They attend preschool together two days a week and keep their parents very busy! They do fight over toys, but love each other very much. They always look out for one another and make sure the other has what they need. For example, when mom gives Madelyn a sippy cup and she doesn't see one for Mason, she will say "Where's bubby's? He needs a sippy too!". Mason loves to play with cars and trucks, and Madelyn loves to play with baby dolls and pretend to be a little mommy. They also love to play outside and with their big brother Carson. Proud mom Lindsey is so thankful for these sweet blessings!

COVER PHOTO TAKEN BY:
Rachel Morrison from Smiths Grove, Kentucky.
www.photographybyrachel.blogspot.com

7 10 Ways to Preserve Your Twins Very First Christmas



10 Pregnant with Twins—Chair Yoga Poses for Pre-natal & Post-natal Moms with Twins



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Time has a funny way of creeping up on you and grabbing you by the neck... at least this is how I typically feel around this time of year. This is when time tends to speed up and take us on a seasonal roller coaster ride with all the ups and downs and hustle and bustle of the holidays. Recently, I saw something on TV that started to change my mind on how I look at time.

I am not sure if you have been able to watch this wonderful new show on NBC called "This Is Us?" If you haven't seen it yet, it's not too late to catch up! The show revolves around a couple that was pregnant with triplets, lost a son during childbirth but in a serious twist of fate, another newborn baby boy was dropped off on the steps of a fire station and the young couple felt like it was fate and chose to take him home with them to raise three babies—the Big 3. Meanwhile, they raise the children as triplets (twins plus their adopted son) and I know you will most certainly be able to relate to all their challenges they face parenting multiples.

Jump to the present day and the adopted son found his biological father, who happens to be dying of cancer, and now is staying at his home to live out his final days. When asked by another character "What does it feel like to be dying?" His response was so eloquent and insightful and his words danced out of his mouth with the greatest response, *"It feels... like all these beautiful pieces of life are flying around me and... I'm trying to catch them. When my granddaughter falls asleep in my lap, I try to catch the feeling of her breathing against me. And when I make my son laugh, I try to catch the sound of him laughing. How it rolls up from his chest. But the pieces are moving faster now, and I can't catch them all. I can feel them slipping through my fingertips. And soon where there used to be my granddaughter breathing and my son laughing, there will be... nothing. Oh. I know it feels like you have all the time in the world. But you don't. So, stop playing it so cool. Catch the moments of your life. Catch them while you're young and quick. Because sooner than you know it, you'll be old. And slow. And there'll be no more of them to catch."*

This is advice we should all follow... It seems so hard to do when you are busy raising twins (or more) and life is so hectic and stressful but we should all catch our beautiful pieces of life while we can and this is the perfect time of year to take this advice to heart.

Here at TWINS Magazine, 2016 has brought some new and exciting changes to our company. We are thrilled to announce that we have been acquired by Panoptic Media and will be launching some fantastic new offerings and programs for all of you moving into our 33rd year of publishing the only national/international parenting magazine for twins/multiples!

Now is an outstanding time to take advantage of our special **Holiday Subscription Special** where you can get **1-year of TWINS for only \$8.98!** That's 50% off our regular rate so be sure to go to our website now at www.TwinsMagazine.com/Subscribe and use the special coupon code: **HOLIDAY2016** and join thousands of other families with twins/multiples that LOVE TWINS Magazine!

We hope you enjoy our annual Holiday Gift Guide issue that is filled with a ton of great gift ideas for everyone on your list! Be sure to check out these fantastic products we know you are going to love... From our home to yours, here's wishing all of you a wonderful, memorable and happiest of holidays this year!!



Sincerely,

Christa D Reed

Christa Reed,, Editor-in-Chief
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Volume 33 Number 6 | Holiday 2016 | Founded in 1984

TWINS™

PUBLISHED BY

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Brooksville, FL, 34613

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www.TwinsMagazine.com

Owned and Published by:

Panoptic Media dba:
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TwinGo Carrier Announces the Release of New Colors for their Popular TwinGo Carrier!

You asked for it and they listened! We are excited to announce the release of the new colors for the TwinGo Carrier! The exterior of both pouches is a sleek grey and the interior coordinating colors are mint green and sunshine yellow. These fabulous new hues are also available for each of the unique baby wearing accessories. TwinGo is continuously working hard to bring the best in tandem baby wearing to families with multiples around the world. If you are in the US, Canada, Australia or many countries in Europe, you can find a local retailer here: <https://twingocarrier.com/pages/authorized-sellers> ♥



TWINS Magazine is now under new Ownership!

After five years of publishing TWINS Magazine, Sterling Investments I, LLC., has sold the company to America's Media Marketing a division of Panoptic Media Marketing.

Panoptic Media Marketing is a strategic leader in digital innovative advertising and marketing solutions. With extensive marketing and advertising experience they offer customers a solid network of resources in print and digital media platforms across the globe. They offer a vast array of services ranging from advertisement sales and design, press release services, search engine optimization and copywriting.

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"We are very excited about what is coming up for TWINS Magazine starting our 33rd year," says Christa Reed, Editor-in-Chief. "This acquisition will offer our customers a lot

more resources and our advertisers many more options to reach our ever-expanding market so we are thrilled to be the newest division at Panoptic Media Marketing."

Updates to customer service and the TWINS website will be some of the first improvements people will soon see. For more information, contact Christa Reed at: twinseditor@twinsmagazine.com. ♥

NEW—Here's Your Chance to Join the TWINS Family for Half the Price!

Right now, with this very special offer you can subscribe to TWINS for 1-year and save 50% off our regular rate so you pay only \$8.98! Did you know that 2017 will be our 33rd year as the world-leading magazine for parents with twins, triplets and higher order multiples? Thousands of families enjoy reading all the fantastic feature articles all about twins/multiples, personal stories, all the latest and greatest parenting products, research findings and of course looking at all the adorable pictures of twins! We deliver a fantastic magazine at your fingertips and we know you won't want to miss a single issue! No matter what the age or stage you are living through... TWINS is here for YOU! Go to www.TwinsMagazine.com/Subscribe and use the coupon code: HOLIDAY2016 at checkout for your 50% savings! ♥



10 Ways to Preserve Your Twins Very First Christmas



by Karin A Bilich from American Baby

Creative ideas for recording your first Christmas together...

A Baby's very first Christmas is certainly an event to be treasured, especially a twin babies' first Christmas. Here are some creative ways to record your first holiday together.

- 1. Make or buy a personalized ornament.** Hang an ornament painted with each baby's name and their birthdate. Every year you can take out this ornament and remember your twins' first Christmas.
- 2. Create your first annual photo ornament.** Place each baby's picture in a tiny frame and hang from your Christmas tree. Then do the same thing next year and hang the two ornaments next to each other. As the years go by, you'll have pictures of each baby from each Christmas.
- 3. Make a Christmas stocking from each baby's sock.** Hang an adorable miniature Christmas stocking for each baby next to yours. Decorate it with their names and the year of their first Christmas.
- 4. Save your twins' first Christmas outfit.** Dress them in adorable green and red Christmas clothes. These can get stored away and revisited whenever you feel like reminiscing. When you come across it again next year, you'll realize just how much they have grown.
- 5. Give them each a Christmas-themed stuffed animal.** There are miniature Santa's, reindeers, angels, and elves. As they grow,

you'll always have it around reminding you of their first Christmas. It might even become their favorite stuffed friend for a while.

- 6. Make or buy a personalized Christmas blanket.** You can store this with each of your child's first Christmas clothes and or hang it on the wall in their room — assuming you can persuade them to let go of it.
- 7. Give your twins a Christmas music box.** These are treasures that can last a lifetime. They'll want to fall asleep every night to peaceful Christmas music.
- 8. Take plenty of pictures.** Get pictures of each of your child's faces when they first see the Christmas lights or when they get their first present. Make sure to also get pictures of your newly formed family.
- 9. Write a letter to each child.** Even though it'll be a while before your twins can read it, this letter can mean a lot to you for years to come. In your letter, tell them how happy you are to be celebrating your first Christmas with each of them. Thank them for their first Christmas present to you — being born!
- 10. Start a Christmas scrapbook.** Decorate the cover with each child's name and birthdate. Fill it with some of your Christmas pictures and any Christmas cards to your twins. You can also write a short description of their first Christmas — what you gave them, what they ate, or what they found scary — and add it to your scrapbook. ♥

That 'TWIN THING'

Sally Campbell is a 36-year-old identical twin from the UK. Mom to a very active one year old boy, she wonders how her own mom ever coped with two!

by Sally Campbell



What's it like being a twin? It's predictable that's what. Being asked the same set of questions over and over for the last 30-odd years is beginning to bore me. While smiling sweetly and pretending I've never heard their question before, I dream up the answers I'd secretly like to give.

Firstly, let's address that most obvious question. "What's it like being a twin?"

Well, that's a tough one. Difficult to answer because (a) I've never been anything else and (b) I haven't asked all the twins in the world, I just know what it's like to be me. Let me throw it back at you: what's it like not being a twin? I've always wondered. Oddly enough, I never ask anyone, because it would make me look a bit stupid, wouldn't it?

And then comes... "Are you identical?"

It's fair enough that you ask this question. Unless we're both standing there right in front of you, in which case I'd suggest that you might like to work on your powers of observation, Sherlock.

As soon as you tell them that yes, you are in fact identical, they're itching to know: "Did your mom dress you the same as kids?"

No, she didn't. That's because she's an intelligent and sensitive soul, who realized that she'd given birth to two individual human beings with their own identities, not a set of performing monkeys all cutesy-tutesy in their matching ickle outfits. (Note to any parents who do this. Start saving your money; start saving it now, because your little treasures will be in therapy sooner than you can say 'Sigmund Freud' and it's only fair that you foot the bill).

They want to know about the fun side of being a twin. "Have you ever pretended to be the other one to confuse your teachers?" they ask.

No twin I know has ever done this; it only happens in the movies. Also, please see above – we were wearing different clothes – this made impersonation a bit more difficult. I've often pondered why people think we would have wanted to do this. At school we spent half our lives being called the wrong name. A regular blow to our self-esteem. Why then would we volunteer for more of the same by pretending to be the person whose name we definitely didn't want to be called?

So then they go on to try and find some differences between you. They want to know who was born first?

I was. That is all.

They are dying to hear about the special connection you have with your twin, asking "Do you get 'that twin thing'. You know - when you can read each other's minds?"

I hate to disappoint you, because it sounds like you place great faith in the capabilities of the human mind, but it's not actually possible for one person to read another's thoughts. Even when those two people originated from the same egg. That's what I keep repeating to her in my head, anyway.

Disappointed with the unexciting reply to their previous question, they ask instead "Do the two of you feel each other's pain?"

We've suffered the indignity of being called the wrong name, spent our whole lives being compared with one another, been dealt the humiliation of weighing more since birth (oh ok then, that was just me) and you ask if we feel each other's pain? What kind of cruel, sadistic creator would do that to twinkind? Of course I don't feel her pain. I have enough of my own to deal with, thank you very much.

By this point, having struggled to find anything exciting about being a twin, they want to know "What's your favorite thing about being a twin?"

Being asked all these questions. Really, it is.

As if being a twin hasn't made me feel special enough, they think it'd be great if I could have twins myself. "I wonder if you'll give birth to twins?", they ponder.

It's possible I guess, but luckily for me as an identical twin, it's not hereditary. That means you're just as likely to have twins as I am. Ha! Bet you wished you'd never asked, don't you?

Finally, as they've not yet had the chance to meet her, they are dying to know "What's she like? You must be pretty similar, right?"

Have you heard the one about the chalk and the cheese? Despite being brought up in exactly the same environment as me, by exactly the same parents, she developed her very own personality, tastes and interests. Amazing, huh? And that's the most incredible thing about being a twin – knowing that I share 99.99% the same DNA as someone, but that she's a completely different person, not me at all. ♡

Tips ON TWIN PLAY AND TOYS



by Marianne Szymanski
from www.ToyTips.com

Marianne Szymanski, toy expert and founder of Toys Tips, Inc., an international child development research group she founded in 1991 has this to share about toys and twin play from her professional and personal observations:

- Don't buy two of each toy every time; however, buying two of a favorite doll, animal or licensed character makes sense.
- Check that skill levels and interest required, as well as age, is appropriate for each child since even twins can develop at different levels.
- Keep in mind how each child will feel if he or she does not receive the same toy as his or her twin.
- Think about safety of toys when used by children at the same developmental stage.
- Look for toys that allow individuality of play—decreases conflict.
- Watch how twins do play together more often than other children (dependent upon age).
- Discover how toys for multiple users foster social interaction and develop sharing and taking turns.
- Observe any gender differences when buying one toy for boy/girl twins; many gravitate toward traditional gender play patterns.

You can check out more tips by visiting www.toytips.com for reviews and more advice from Marianne Szymanski.

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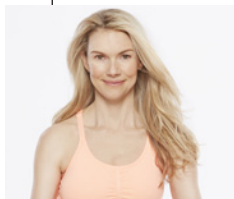


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PREGNANCY

CHAIR *Yoga Poses* for Pre-natal and Post-Natal MOMS with TWINS



Kristin McGee is a celebrity yoga instructor and author of *Chair Yoga: Sit, Stretch, and Strengthen Your Way to a Happier, Healthier You* (HarperCollins January 17, 2017) and will soon be a mom to twins!

by Kristin McGee

I'm expecting twin boys at the end of November or early December. I am already a mama to an incredible three-year-old boy, and I can't wait for two more. I have to admit being pregnant with twins is a whole different process than carrying just one. The first trimester nausea with the additional hormones was pretty intense. Second trimester I felt great but definitely not as active as I had been when I was pregnant with Timothy. Now that I'm nearing the end, it's hard to tie my shoes, walk up stairs without getting totally out of breath, find something to eat that doesn't give me heartburn and do all of my favorite yoga poses without my belly getting in the way.

I have been practicing yoga for almost 20 years now and teaching for about 17 years. My yoga practice is my Linus blanket, without it, I'm lost. Yoga for me is about connecting to my body and my growing babies, clearing my mind, moving my body, stretching and strengthening my muscles and tapping in to my breath. When carrying two babies, it's difficult to do all of the poses I'm used to; and yet I still want to open up my tight hips and shoulders, strengthen my core and pelvic floor, and move my body in a way that feels good.

My first book, *Chair Yoga: Sit, Stretch, and Strengthen Your Way to a Happier, Healthier You*, is coming out in January and I have to admit this is the perfect guide for pregnant mamas and especially mamas carrying multiples. I can do almost all of my

favorite poses now supported with a chair. I like having a seat underneath me when I'm doing certain warrior poses, or something to hold on to when I'm practicing balancing poses. It's easy to stretch the hips and thighs, shoulders and back when



Extended Side Angle



Warrior 2

Cat/Cow



seated in a chair once the bump gets to big; and it's also useful to use throughout the pregnancy when fatigue sets in.

Here are some chair moves you can practice now. Grab a chair that's sturdy enough and feels comfortable to sit on. Clear a little space around you, take deep full breaths in each pose, and allow your body to open up and get strong for your pregnancy journey, labor and delivery. These moves are also great post natal when you're building your stamina back up.

Cat/Cow—Sit tall at the edge of your seat with feet hip width apart. Place your hands on your knees and on an inhalation arch your back as you look up to the ceiling. On an exhalation round the spine and curl your chin towards your chest. Repeat 5-8 times. This move is great for strengthening pelvic floor and lower abs as well as releasing the back.

Cat/Cow 2



High Altar Leans—Sit tall with your feet hip width apart. Lift your arms overhead, interlace your hands and invert your palms up to the ceiling. Lean over to the right and hold 3-5 breaths come up to center and then lean to the left for 3-5 breaths. I love this posture for taking pressure off of the back and shoulders and lengthening the waist, which gets compressed carrying around babies!

Warrior 2—As your belly gets bigger and bigger, it's nice to do the warrior poses supported by a chair. Sit at the edge of your seat, turn your right toes out ninety degrees and your left toes slightly in. Bend the right knee and lengthen the left leg straight. Lift your arms out to your sides and look over the right hand. Hold for 5 breaths then switch to the other side. In addition to strengthening the thighs, arms and core and opening up the hips, warrior 2 builds confidence.

Extended Side Angle—From the same position as warrior 2 prop your right elbow on your right knee and extend your left arm overhead 45 degrees. Lengthen from the outer left foot through the fingers. Hold 5 breaths and switch sides. I love this pose while pregnant, it seems to open up the entire body and it feels so good.

Goddess Squat—Squats are great for preparing for labor and delivery. Sit tall at the edge of your seat and turn both knees and toes out about 45 degrees. Engage your pelvic floor and inner thighs and sit up tall as you bring your hands together in prayer. Hold 5-8 breaths. ♥

**Join the conversation
with twins!**



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INFANTS

How to Safely Clean Your BABY TOYS

by Emma Mills

Emma Mills is a freelance writer and mother, who loves spreading the word about natural products, oh and dog walking too!



Parenting sites get asked all the time about cleaning baby products and toys. The most common questions are how often to do it and how. It is an uncertain balance between keeping your twin babies safe, but not overdoing it and leaving them open to a weaker immune system or allergies. However, one thing is for certain, everyday cleaning products are best minimized or not used at all. Baby toys need to be cleaned on a regular basis – how often depends on how they are used and how often. When your baby is going through the sticking things in the mouth phase, it's good to wipe those things down often before and after use to keep them clean. Same goes for anything that gets dirtied up a lot. This guide explains some of the ill effects of modern cleaning products and gives you some broad advice on how best to clean your child's toys using safe and non-toxic materials.

AVOIDING TOXINS FOUND IN EVERYDAY CLEANING PRODUCTS

Over the half century or longer, the number of artificial cleaning products has multiplied a hundredfold if not more. Each country regulates what chemicals can and cannot be used, some like the EU are stricter than others – like the U.S., but as a parent, it's key to know as much as possible about what each product contains and the harm it may cause you, your family, and pets, but especially your babies.

DANGERS INCLUDE:

Poisoning – According to recent statistics over 1,000,000 children under the age of 5, swallow poisons each year and this includes household cleaners. Many children die.

Allergies – The Hygiene Hypothesis determines that an under exposure to germs due to the over effectiveness of cleaning products means a child may develop allergies to harmless allergens like dander or pollen or even dust.

Eczema – The harsh nature of the chemicals involved can lead to skin irritation in babies. Some cleaning products have also been linked to asthma.

Eye Damage – Sprays can irritate the eyes and cause watering, and worse if the liquid gets directly into the baby's eye.

Other Health Effects – Many products contain toxic materials and substances where the long-term effects are unknown. Studies are mixed and confused, with claims and counterclaims. However, some are linking phthalates with hormonal disruptions.

BABY SAFE ALTERNATIVES

Products such as bleach should be avoided at all costs, so it is important to find safer alternatives for that and for other disinfectants, polishes, and more.

The Bleach Alternative: Bleach is an effective poison, but it is a poison nevertheless. The exact recipe varies from person to person, site to site, but the basic formula is mixing 1 cup of water with dis-

tilled white vinegar. You may also add a little tea tree oil too which has natural antiseptic qualities to it.

The Surface Cleaner Alternative: A bit like the bleach alternative, mix water, but this time mix it with lemon juice. Again, it's edible, so it's safe, but it's also effective.

The Soap Question: Antibacterial soaps are not needed, and if they contain plastic microbeads, they are bad for the environment too.

To use these homemade products, the best idea is to put them in a spray bottle which you can buy new to avoid possible toxins from the previous spray. Spray some on a clean cloth and use that to wipe down surfaces and toys.

CLEANING GUIDE FOR BABY TOYS

Each toy is different and needs its own cleaning routine. These can be divided into large and small toys, and between hard and soft ones. Small toys may be machine washable, as will some fabric toys but not all. However, larger toys may need to be hand washed with soap or with a baby safe alternative as laid out above.

HERE'S SOME BASIC TIPS:

Fabric Toys: The stuffed animal or fabric doll, is the ubiquitous baby toy. It is hugged, kissed, slobbered over, dragged, dirtied up, and sometimes vomited on. It's all too tempting to use a cleaning product but it's unnecessary. For visible dirtiness, stick the teddy in the washing machine with a normal wash. If you just want to make sure the toy is dust mite and bug free, stick it in an airtight bag and put it in the freezer for a few hours.

This is not recommended if your baby toy is made from wool or felt though. If it is just felted, wash it in the machine, but put it inside a pillowcase first. For wool, Waldorf dolls, and knitted materials it is ok to spot clean them or hand wash using soap, then leave them in a sunny window to dry out – definitely do not tumble dry.

Plastic and Wood Toys: These range from teething to wooden blocks, child safe toys which are durable and hard. These toys can end up in the mouth during that phase of a baby's development, so need cleaning more often. Luckily, you can use the vinegar and water solution mentioned above as a quick and easy cleaning product. Spray some on a cloth and wipe down the toys in question.

Keeping White Toys White: Do not use bleach, no matter how tempting it might be. This is the most toxic of toxic cleaning products. Maybe use a little lemon juice on tough stains, but otherwise just leave the item out in the sun for a few hours.

Taking This Approach to Your Whole House: As mentioned above, your babies are not interacting with just toys. They are lying in a crib, being held, and as they grow up, they will interact with all kinds of surfaces and objects. Look for healthier, less toxic cleaning products like the one's we've mentioned above. Many can be applied to other surfaces too so they remain clean without posing a risk to your babies! ♥



TODDLERS

Jodie Richelle, a freelance writer who resides in Monroeville, New Jersey, made it through the toddler years and the holidays with her boy/girl twins.



by Jodie Richelle

Tips to SURVIVE THE SEASON WITH TODDLER TWINS

What plans have you made for the coming holiday season? Will you fill your house with elaborate decorations? Do you look forward to wandering through quaint village shops, searching for that perfect gift? Maybe you just want to sit back and relax at parties given by family and friends?

I'm pretty sure I won't be doing any of those things this year. I am the mother of toddler twins. Decorations are a waste of time. My toddlers would pull them down and stuff them into the Blue Ray. Quaint village shops lock their doors when they see our double stroller and 20 sticky fingers coming. I do go to parties, but I don't sit and I certainly don't relax.

If you're parenting toddlers this season, keep their needs and abilities in mind as you make your holiday plans. Don't frustrate yourself by expecting too much from them.

Keep your needs in mind as well. Caring for young twins can be demanding. It won't take many extra holiday chores before you're feeling overwhelmed. Cut back on your activities before that happens. No one will enjoy your homemade cookies and beautiful decorations if you're grouchy because you're doing too much.

Keep decorations simple

If you have a Christmas tree, decorate only the top half. Otherwise, your toddlers will remove whatever they can reach. They'll chew on the Christmas lights, break the glass ornaments and spread those metal hooks everywhere. Don't use tinsel

this year. It finds its way to the floor and could be dangerous if your twins swallowed it.

If you can't get into the holiday spirit without a sleigh load of decorations, take your efforts outdoors. Decorate your bushes or fences with outdoor lights. Put a big wreath on your door. These things will give you the feeling of the holidays without sacrificing your toddlers' safety or your sanity.

If you must decorate an indoor tree with your finest glass ornaments, complete with presents under the branches, enclose the tree with indoor play yard fencing to keep your little ones out.

Be smart about shopping

We all know that we should start shopping in August. We also know to leave our twins at home when we shop. Unfortunately, most of us don't—or are unable—to follow this excellent advice. Here's what to do when you must venture into the holiday crowds with your toddlers.

Make a list...before you leave the house. List all the stores you want to visit and beside each store list things you must buy there. Next, prioritize your list. When you shop, go to the most important store first and make your way down the list. Don't expect to get to every store.

Head for the mall. One stop shopping when you have twins in tow is the way to go. You must load them into and unload them from the car and strap them into their stroller only once. That's much easier than loading and unloading twins, stroller and supplies at every store. Plan to arrive at the mall when it opens. Crowds are thinner and you and your twins will be well rested.

Be Prepared. Bring along plenty of supplies. Cups of juice and some snacks will keep your toddlers from getting hungry and crabby. Animal crackers, graham crackers and Cheerios travel well. Or you might stop for a soft-pretzel break. Bring along some toys that your twins haven't seen for some time. One desperate mom I know bought new toys to keep her kids busy while she finished her shopping. (But I only did it once.)

Shop from home. Are you unable to face another outing with your twins? This time of year my mailbox and email in-box are filled with catalogs and special online offers for shopping from the comfort of your own computer. Just be sure to leave plenty of time for deliveries and returns.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR HOLIDAY VISITS

Accept all invitations to parties given by parents of toddlers. Their houses likely will contain a room that's safe, unbreakable and filled with toys. That's the main ingredient for a good party these days.

Toddler-proof other homes. When you enter a party with your twins, quickly scan for dangers. Depending on the occasion and your relationship with the hostess, decide what you can ask to change. Few people will object to keeping the bathroom door

closed, if it's nearby. If your twins are attacking the cheese tray on the coffee table, ask if you can move it to a higher location.

If you are going to stay with family members for a few days, call ahead and ask your relatives to stash the crystal, hard candies and delicate decorations up high, or forego them altogether this year. Your twins probably will be starving before the turkey is ready, so plan to keep them on their regular meal schedule. (Visiting another home filled with people who fuss over them and give them, more gifts than you or they can handle will be disruptive enough; they don't need to have lunch delayed for turkey and dressing that probably won't appeal to them anyway.)

Protect Fido. Pets are tricky. Most owners believe that their pet would never harm anyone. Of course, the pet never had two 18-month-olds try to ride him like a pony. Small children simply do not know how to treat animals. Do the pet and your twins a favor and keep them separated.

Be prepared. Carry a bottle of syrup of ipecac with you when you travel. The American Association of Poison Control Centers reports that many poisonings occur when daily routines are disrupted. Be on your guard this holiday season. (By the way, poinsettias are not poisonous, but mistletoe and holly berries are.)

Toddler twins need a lot of attention. Don't expect too much of them or yourself. Cut back on your commitments this holiday season so you will have plenty of time to enjoy your little angels and don't forget to take lots of pictures! ♥

HEY TWINS FANS...

You can WIN 2 Pairs of Squeaker Sneakers for your twins!



Go to our Facebook page and share with us why you want to WIN a pair for your twins... the best answer will win 2 pairs of amazing shoes compliments of Squeaker Sneakers!



www.facebook.com/TwinsMagazine



Toys they Want or Need

Which Would Your Children Choose?

by Patricia Edmister

As the holidays approach, many parents of multiples begin to agonize over gift giving options.

- Do I have to give each child the same thing?
- Do I have to spend the same amount of money on each child?
- Does each child need to receive the same number of gifts?
- Do I give them things they want or things they need? What if only one of my children needs certain things---will the other one(s) feel unfairly treated?
- What should I tell relatives and friends to do?

Patricia Edmister, Ph.D. resides in Sherman Oaks, California is the mother of fraternal twins and was the director of developmental psychology and children's study at the California Family Study Center.

These questions aren't very different from the same ones asked by parents who have children of differing ages. Although most parents try to be as fair as possible, in the process they sometimes lose sight of what gift-giving is all about—showing other people that they are cared about by demonstrating sensitivity to their wants and needs.

The first step, then, in choosing gifts for children is to determine, with input from them, what they want and need. Parents might start by trying to see each of their children's desires from their respective perspectives. Why does each of my children want a certain gift on their list? Is it because a friend or co-twin has or wants one? Or has the desire been created through media hype, something that happens a lot around holiday time?

Then parents are advised to evaluate the desired item from their own perspectives, starting by looking at its health and safety factors and moving

on to its appropriateness for their child's developmental level. To determine appropriateness, the parent should ask:

- 1 Is my child ready (in terms of her cognitive and motor abilities) to use this gift appropriately?
- 2 Is this item something that will stimulate her creativity and imagination, or does it serve only one function, which will bore her after just a short period?
- 3 Is it worth the asking price? Many toys featured in the media or that are about a holiday movie promotion are greatly overpriced, may be of poor quality and are one function-only items.

THE "WISH LIST" SECRET

One way to handle this problem of children constantly barraging parents as the holidays near with "I want this," and "I want that" is to develop wish lists, one for each child, which parents can start either at holiday time or maintain throughout the year.

To begin this special list, parents need to first explain the concept to their children, saying that it is a list of the various items they've mentioned throughout the time prior to the holiday (or birthday, for that matter) that they really want you, relatives, friends and Santa (if appropriate) to think about when it comes time to give gifts. Parents should emphasize that putting an item on a wish list doesn't ensure that the child will receive it, but that it will be considered by others.

Then, when a child says, "I want..." in a store, while watching television or while looking through catalogs or magazines, ask him whether he wants that to go on the wish list. If so, add it to the list. Shortly before the actual holiday, parents need to sit down with each of their



children and his list and go over it, scratching off whatever the child no longer wants. Everyone will be surprised by the number of items requested early in the year that don't make the final cut at the end of the year.

By keeping an individual list for each child, parents are better able to purchase individual gifts for each child. And children are better able to understand that they don't necessarily want the same things, nor are they likely to get the same things. This way, parents are demonstrating respect for their children's individual preferences and desires.

MONEY MATTERS

Children at the preschool age don't have a good sense of monetary values, so it isn't critical that parents spend the same amount on each child. If they compare gifts, it is much more likely to be in terms of the number of gifts received or the size of the gifts. These concepts are much more within their developmental level.

Thus, if co-twins are into such comparisons, and one child wants a lot of small things, like several Barbie outfits, and the other wants a certain Lego set, it might be wise to package the Barbie outfits into a big box, to be counted as one gift.

Again, parents' goal is to try to give each child what he or she wants, while trying to keep comparisons to a minimum.

If they observe Christmas in their household and hang stockings, parents may want to wrap small items as stocking stuffers, ensuring that each child has lots of presents to unwrap.

FAMILY RITUALS

Some families have established family practices around gift-giving that make it more fun. For example, a family might give each child at least one gift to fit each of several standard categories, such as: Something to Read; Something to Wear; Something They Need; Something to Listen To; and Something to Eat. That way, over the year, it becomes a ritual to try to guess what each person will receive by category, and at the same time, makes giving them something they need more pleasurable.

It is important to begin differentiating gift-giving early so that children do not develop unreasonable expectations as they get older. If two children have the same item on their wish list as a priority, it's okay to give it to each of them, if they realize why—that they didn't get the same thing just because they are twins.

There may be times as they get older when they want an expensive gift, such as an a video game console or TV that they must share. Parents will make their learning to share more difficult if they've always given each his own. Parents may even want to start a family practice of giving twins one gift a year to be shared between them, provided a common item can be found on both their wish lists.

When it comes to helping family and friends with their gift-giving; pass on ideas from the wish lists. Rather than saying, "Oh, they'll be happy with anything you want to give." Too often, the latter sets everyone up for unhappiness—the children, who receive gifts they

don't want, you, if the gift is not appropriate for the children developmentally or in terms of safety, and the relative, who does not feel appreciated when the children "turn up their noses" at it.

It's much better for parents to take a pro-active role by making concrete suggestions for successful gift-giving. And, if you have specific toy-buying guidelines you'd like relatives to respect, now is the time to mention them—not after the buyer is embarrassed by the children's response to their gifts or when tears and tantrums follow the children's being unable to play with the toys. ♥

WATCHWORDS TO "BUY" BY!

- Does the toy you are purchasing reflect your values—for example, is it educational, non-violent and cooperative in nature?
- Is this toy appropriate to your child's cognitive and motor skills?
- Will it stimulate your child's imagination and creativity, or is it a single-use toy?
- Does the toy promote sex-role stereotyping and is that a message you want to convey?
- Are you buying the toy based on your child's wishes and/or needs?
- Is the toy safe?
- Is the toy a good value and worth what it costs?
- Is your child going to maintain interest in this toy or might he be asking for it in response to media hype?
- Are you buying something for your children to share?
- What basis will the children be using for comparing gifts, and are you being responsive to that?

HOORAY!
I LOST MY TOOTH!

A New Tooth Fairy Tradition! Fun game and keepsake to encourage your kids to brush their teeth daily!

Tooth Fairy's Tale, LLC

TOOTHFAIRYSTALE.COM

When the Tooth Fairy comes to get your tooth, she'll give you a special gift. Help the girl get your tooth and find out what she'll give you!

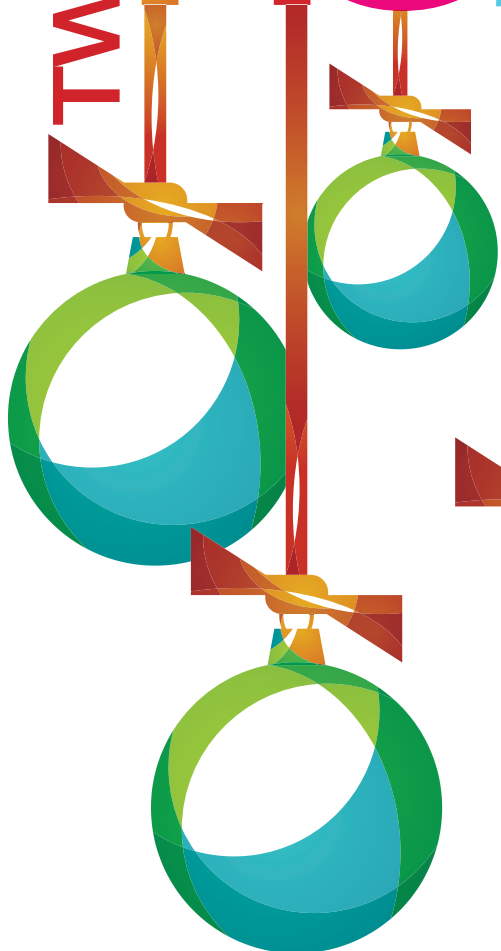
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MBA MOM'S BEST WINNER

TWINS HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



We are very excited to once again present to you our annual Holiday Gift Guide issue where we include the best gifts for every single person on your list! We have searched high and low for the greatest gifts to feature and our team even attended this year's ABC (All Baby Child) Kids Expo that was held in Las Vegas last October and is the largest juvenile industry trade show in the world! While there we met some great people, who have invented some fabulous products we know you will absolutely love! We also met up with some old friends and fellow twin-parents that have products specifically for families like you so be sure to check out every single item included in this year's guide and we hope you all enjoy the season and all that it brings!

Pregnancy & Newborn

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1 The Arm's Reach® Co-Sleeper® Mini Ezee™ 2 in 1

The Arm's Reach® Co-Sleeper® Mini Ezee™ 2 in 1 — The Mini Ezee™ 2 in 1 has simple assembly that saves time and it's portable. Side pockets and bottom compartment for storage, a 4-inch sleeping nest height, and an attachment strap and resistant plate to provide the safest sleep solution for you and your newborns. This product is fabulous for newborn twins! Modes: Bedside sleeper; Free-standing bassinet. \$175.99. https://www.armsreach.com/shop/co-sleeper_bassinets/featured-product/MINI-EZEE-2-IN-1-CO-SLEEPER

2 **LovePop Cards** is an intricate 3D paper sculpture designed by naval engineers and then hand-crafted in the Asian art form of slice form kirigami. Each card is beautifully sculpted to create touching moments that are truly appreciated and remembered. \$13.00. www.lovepopcards.com

3 **Baba Bandz 8-Pack** is a baby bottle timer device. You simply stretch the band and place it around a baby bottle, then you use the plastic indicator clip to mark the time that bottle was prepared. This takes the guesswork out of trying to remember whether the milk or formula in an unfinished bottle has exceeded the time for which it is deemed safe to consume. Comes in two different styles. One is the original which is simply a plastic indicator clip attached to the band. The other has a rewritable Name Block as part of the band. It can be erased by firmly rubbing with one's finger. \$25.13. <http://bababandz.com/products/8-pack>

4 **Kids Preferred Star Teether**, available in green and orange is perfect for teething babies who want to chew on everything. The star shape makes it easy to grasp, and the textures help to relieve aching little gums. Easy to clean – Dishwasher safe. Can be chilled in the refrigerator. \$8.00. <http://www.kidspreferred.com/>



5 Kids Preferred Dumbbell Rattle with a bell at each end, and bright contrasting colors will help very young babies' developing eyesight. You can shake the rattle to help baby track the sound and help develop their auditory skills, too. Perfect balance. Easy to clean – Dishwasher safe. \$13.00. <http://www.kidspreferred.com/>

6 Kids Preferred Round Rattle has high contrast colors, with balls inside to shake and make a noise. The shape makes it easy for even very young babies to grasp. Easy to clean – Dishwasher safe. \$13.00. <http://www.kidspreferred.com/>

7 Kids Preferred 2-in-1 Stacker has lots of ways to stack, sort and learn colors. The rounded base rocks back and forth, to give toddlers motor skills a workout! 8 pieces, 5 vibrant colors, countless stacking options! Easy to clean – Dishwasher safe. \$20.00. <http://www.kidspreferred.com/>

8 Kids Preferred Shape Sorting and Stacking Cube offers your baby multiple ways play: baby can stack the pieces on top of each other, sort, or match the shape to the correct hole and put it into the cube. It also helps your child discover shape and size concepts. Easy to clean – Dishwasher safe. \$22.00. <http://www.kidspreferred.com/>

9 Table for Two -- a must-have product for all parents of twins! Designed to easily bottle feed two infants at the same time while safe and secure. Cuts feeding time in half, saves time and hassle! Features a bottle holder on each side so you won't mix up your babies' bottles again! \$269.00. www.buytablefortwo.com

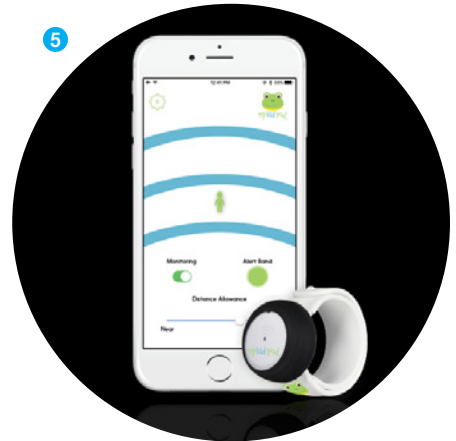
10 Baby Glow Video Monitor & Projection Camera Summer Infant recently announced a brand-new video monitor, available only at Walmart! What differentiates it from the rest? It has a pretty cool projection feature whereas the camera projects a starry night sky onto the ceiling of the baby's room. It's a 3-color night sky and plays soothing lullabies and nature sounds – all able to be controlled through the parent unit. \$124.99. <https://www.summerinfant.com/monitoring/video/baby-glow-video-monitor-projection-camera>

11 RaZ-Buddy — a great way to soothe a newborn. It has a soft plush bunny or penguin attached to one end so it keeps baby's pacifier close by and prevents the pacifier from getting lost or dropped. Made of medical grade silicone, the RaZ-Buddy JollyPop Pacifier will not crack, break or peel. \$12.99. <https://myrazbaby.com/collections/plush>



TWINS HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Infants & Toddlers



1 Baby Elephant Ears — You can get this adorable Foxy Gift Set from Baby Elephant Ears that includes the Foxy Design and Large Coordinating Blanket approx. 27" x 29." Baby Elephant Ears is a multi-use headrest providing spinal/neck alignment and comfort – offered in diverse prints and organics, ethically manufactured and made with sustainable materials. Perfect for a gift. \$49.95. <http://babyelephantears.com/foxy-gift-set/>

2 Twin Z Pillow 6 in 1 Nursing Pillow — This Waterproof pillow is perfect following a C- Section and when breastfeeding your twins. The Twin Z Pillow helps alleviate pressure put on your stomach while nursing! This is the most versatile Twin Pillow on the market! 6 uses, 1 Pillow—Breastfeed -Bottle Feed -Tummy Time -Support -Infant Reflux -Toddler Time! \$99.99. www.twinznursingpillow.com

3 Baby A & Baby B Clothing — Perfect Gift for Twins! The perfect baby shower gift or present for the new parents or soon to be parents of twins! It includes two twin feeding sets and two bibs. A must have for twins! \$35.00. <https://babya-babyb.com/>

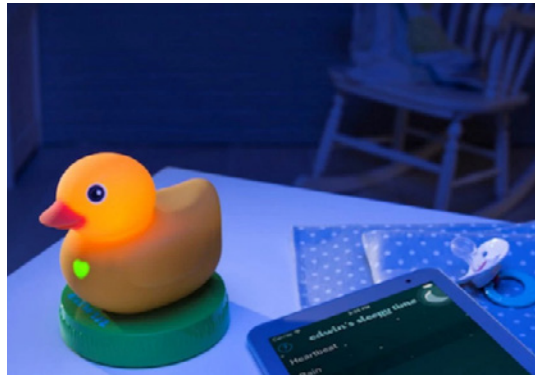
4 TwinGo Carrier — The TwinGo Lite is the same great quality as their Original model but this is lighter weight and sports a minimalistic pocketless design. Tandem with twins! The Lite model easily converts into one single-child carrier AND you can purchase an extra set of shoulder straps to create two single-child carriers (just like the Original). You have options! \$189.99. <https://twingocarrier.com/products/twingo-lite>

5 My Kid Pod with Slap Band — Never worry about taking your twins in busy public places again with this fabulous new kid tracker. MyKid Pod is a Wander Alert System featuring L.O.S.T.™ (Line Of Site Tracking) Technology. Connect MyKid Pod with your smartphone and you and your child will be alerted if you ever lose sight of each other. MyKid Pod is compatible with iOS and Android smartphones. \$49.95. <https://mykidpod.com/store/mykid-pod/>

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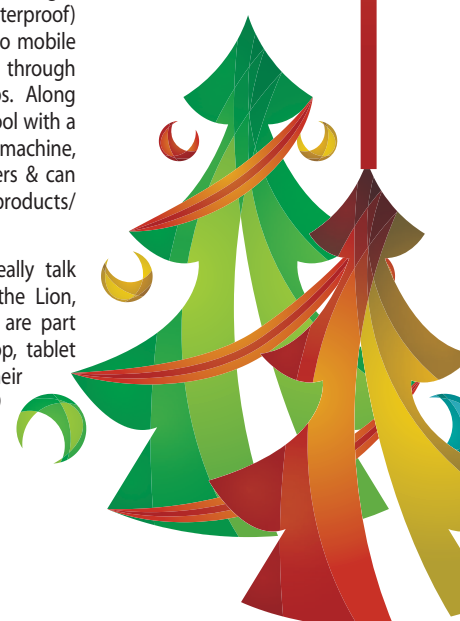
6 Twinneroo Twin Diaper Bag from Stuff 4 Multiples

— This diaper bag is functional, practical, and easy to use. Constructed of a durable material that maintains its form and is easy to clean! Has a total of six pockets on the outside, including two insulated pouches for bottles, baby food, or other perishables! The Twinneroo also includes two individual insert bags of different colors to allow easy sorting of each baby's belongings (additional insert for a third baby sold separately). The diaper bag also ships with a handy changing pad for added convenience! The interior of the bag is lined with a washable material to easily clean everyday spills and is lined with a total of six mesh pockets for even more storage! The Twinneroo is the perfect diaper bag for parents of multiples on the go! \$89.99. <http://stuff4multiples.com/twineroo-twin-diaper-bag/>

7 Hugaboo Baby Seat offers 360 degrees of cozy support to provide babies with the leg and back support they need to correctly stay propped up. Designed to protect infants from 3 to 8 months, parents will never have to worry about their little one slipping out of their Hugaboo. Infants can comfortably watch their surroundings as they learn how to sit up independently while also developing sensory and motor skills. \$59.99. www.myhugaboo.com

8 Edwin The Duck is the first ever smart duck and is a gift the whole family will love! It has all the classic (and waterproof) charm of the traditional bath toy, but also connects to mobile devices to offer games, songs, and interactive stories through a continuously updating library on its companion apps. Along with being a tech toy, Edwin is a fantastic parenting tool with a built-in water thermometer, night light, sleep sound machine, and Bluetooth speaker. Great for infants and toddlers & can be purchased for \$99.00. www.edwintheduck.com/products/edwin-the-duck

9 Bluebee Pals are stuffed animals that can really talk (technically lip synch) to tots in the form of Leo the Lion, Hudson the Puppy or Riley the Zebra. These three are part of a collection called Bluebee Pals Prop up a laptop, tablet or smart phone onto their laps and tuck into their plush arms. Then watch the magic begin! \$64.99 www.bluebeepals.com



TWINS HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

TWINS

Pre-School & School-Age



1 Personalized "My Christmas Sing-Along Book by I See Me." and they are currently accepting sample requests! This delightful, personalized lyric book comes with a music CD filled with classic holiday songs, customized with a child's name throughout! Songs include "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," "Toyland," and "Here Comes Santa Claus," and an MP3 digital download is included in every order. \$39.99. <http://www.iseeme.com/en-us/personalized-storybooks/my-christmas-sing-along-book-and-songs.html>

2 Tooth Fairy's Tale's Baby Teeth Keepsake Book and Chenille Tooth Pillow Gift Set — When a young child loses a tooth, it is a tremendously exciting event—visible proof of growing up! Baby Teeth contain DNA and Stem Cells! Save your child's baby teeth in a safe place, they can be lifesaving! \$29.99. <http://www.toothfairystale.com/home>

3 Animal Toy Storage Bins are perfect for storing lots of toys inside and are fun to play with when they are all filled up! The Bins are offered in three fun designs including an elephant, rhinoceros and a hippopotamus and will complement the decor of any kids' room or playroom. Crafted from durable felt polyester with faux leather detailing and a double zipper closure, these Bins

are lightweight and durable. Large enough to hold a variety of toys, including full-sized basketballs and soccer balls. Measures approximately 16" tall by 15" deep and 23" wide. \$39.99. <http://www.greatusefulstuff.com/home-organization/noahs-ark-toy-chests/>

4 Rollers — The fun and challenging game combines the familiar with a new and exciting twist. Incorporating the skill sets of Bocci Ball and the scoring system of Horseshoes, Rollers will add fresh new entertainment to any holiday party, corporate event, or weekend outing. The game accommodates 2-6 people, with an expansion pack available to extend the fun to even more players. \$49.95 <https://rollers.com/>

5 Ghostbusters Plush Toys by Underground Toys. The stuffed collection includes talking, non-talking and mini versions of some of movie fans' all-time favorite ghosts, Slimer, Stay Puft Marshmallow Man and No Ghost. Slimer, Happy Stay Puft, Angry Stay Puft and Toasted Stay Puft emit either movie-related sounds or the theme song from the movie when their tummies are pressed. available at Target and Macy's stores nationwide. \$19.99. <http://www.underground-toys.com/licenses/ghostbusters.html>



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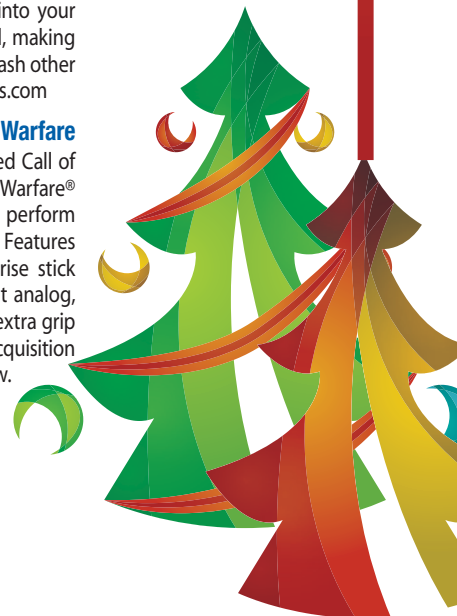
6 Really Big Coloring Posters What A Colorful World — it will take you on a globe-trotting adventure that charts every continent in great detail and celebrates cultural diversity from historical landmarks to food. Measures 63" by 36" so no one will fight over finding a space to color or elbow each other for a spot. Printed with vegetable ink on recycled content paper, you can use markers, gel pens, colored pencils and crayons. Spread it on the floor or hang it on the wall with painter's tape and start coloring. Other coloring options include: Let's Color America, The Big Apple, Food Fight and Funny Farm. \$32 at <http://www.pirastanyc.com>.

7 IKOS are a modular, spherical, construction toy for inventors of all ages. IKOS allows you to design anything you can dream up by adding other items or painting the sphere to create a unique and customizable 3D puzzle. It's unique shape, icosahedron, composed of 20 triangular pieces, is perfect for teaching mathematics in the classroom, while also enticing creativity both in the classroom or at home. <https://www.ikotoys.com/>

8 Magic: Gold Edition — Master the magical arts! With this extensive collection of magic props, you can easily learn, practice, and perform 150 incredible magic tricks and illusions to astonish spectators. Many tricks use food and household objects: Water levitates, citrus fruits transform, and toothpicks mystify. Tricks with sugar and salt stupefy the audience. AND MORE. Ages 8+ \$39.95. <http://www.thamesandkosmos.com>

9 Buddy Balls is an incredibly cute two-in-one, must have toy made for boys and girls of every age! Made by Creative Toy Company, Buddy Balls came from a 6-year old's idea to have his favorite stuffed friend turned into another most cherished toy, a ball! These cozy characters easily unzip and tuck into your favorite beach ball, football, soccer ball and basketball, making play-time as versatile as it is fun. There's also room to stash other favorite toys inside Buddy Balls \$19.99. www.buddyballs.com

10 KontrolFreek FPS Freek Call of Duty Modern Warfare Thumbstick — A tribute to the newly remastered Call of Duty 4, KontrolFreek® FPS Freek® Call of Duty® Modern Warfare® offers an exceptionally rugged grip and was built to perform in the fast-paced world of competitive online play. Features two different height sticks. With one concave high-rise stick (10.1mm) designed for aim and accuracy on your right analog, and one extra wide, low-rise domed stick (6.1mm) for extra grip and comfort on your left, you'll get quicker target acquisition and ultimate control and precision. \$17.99 <http://www.kontrolfreek.com/thumbsticks/fps-freek-call-of-duty-modern-warfare.html>



TWINS HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

TWINS

His & Hers



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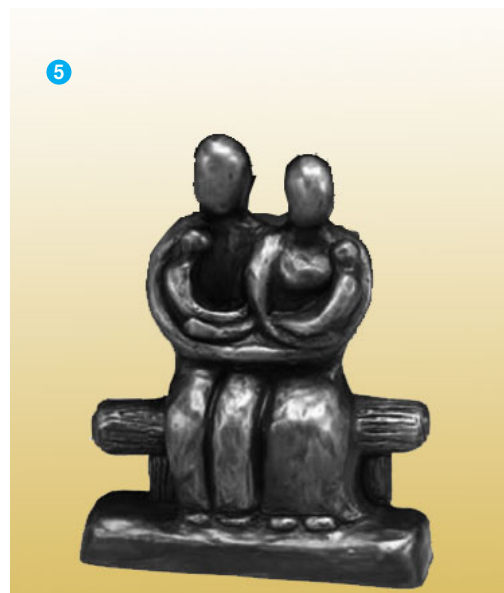
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1 I Am Fragrance has a scent for every unique woman and every special occasion. I Am Fragrance aims to embody the power of women everywhere in a way no perfume brand has done before: by inspiring a connection to our higher selves through uplifting scents, encouraging women to unlock their own spiritual and healing powers, and providing a revolutionary line of custom fragrances meant to channel our innermost authenticity. <http://iamfragrance.com/>

2 Personalized keychain from Jessie Girl Jewelry — For the dad that is truly a super HERO, this key chain in the shape of a dog tag with a bat cutout is the perfect gift! Comes with the quote, “Daddy, you’re my super hero” or “Daddy, you’re our Super Hero” with a small heart followed by his children’s names. Date can also be included at the very bottom, either the year, or up to 6 characters. Made from aluminum - strong yet super lightweight, it’s perfect for a keychain as it won’t weigh down your key ring: \$20.99. <http://jessiegirljewelry.com/father-gift-personalized-keychain-aluminum/>

3 J&T Mix Immersion Blender — A powerful blender and mixer immersion blender features five interchangeable attachments. In addition to mixing and blending, it minces,

purees, beats, whisks and chops, making it possible to create everything from smoothies, to cookie dough, to pico de gallo with one compact appliance. The product is available in a red and cream color combination or matte black. \$199.95. www.SwissDiamond.com

4 Yourself Expresion—Angel Lockets — Create a sense of protection or remember a loved one with an angel locket necklace. Instead of a picture inside, these unique lockets hold a chime ball. It makes a subtle chime that serves as a gentle reminder of the spirit of someone special. Customize the locket by choosing the color of the ball. Stainless steel chain. MSRP: \$20.00. www.thegrommet.com

5 JMR Sculptures TWINS Sculpture — Honor the special bond between brothers and sisters—together forever—with Jay Rotberg’s images of friendship and familial love. About twins, about love. I do not know any other way in which love can better be expressed. Each sculpture is special. Each twin is special. Many have written about it. Let me tell you about them. \$65.00 <http://www.jmrsculptures.com/simple-love-gifts-for-twins.html>



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6 Dopp Kits — they make the perfect holiday gift for guys who travel! Each design has custom sport specific artwork, custom printed interior liner fabric that relates to each sport and soft leather detailing, with plenty of interior room to store all your personal grooming essentials. Rule #5 is a new lifestyle brand offering a super cool line of backpacks, messenger bags, dopp kits and wallets, each with sport-specific design details for guys who are into Skiing, Surfing, Sailing, Running, Cycling or Triathlon. \$70.00. <http://rulenumberfive.com/shop/shop-by-product/shaving-kits.html>

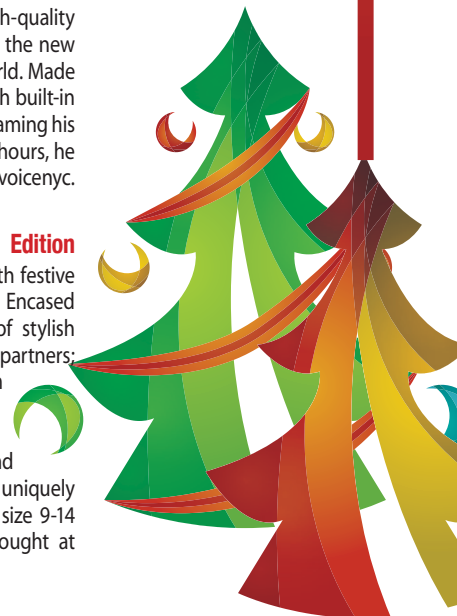
7 The Big Minky blanket is available in white, chocolate and silver, created by Liz and Roo. They can simplify your holiday gift shopping by gift wrapping your Big Minky blanket in a beautiful gift box. Made from the finest faux fur material, this ultra-soft blanket is the perfect last-minute gift for anyone on your holiday list. \$129.00. <https://lizandroo.com/collections/minky-blankets/products/big-minky-lush-chocolate-brown?variant=20274528259>

8 Exuvius Upper Hand Playing Cards men everywhere can learn the skills and charm they need to gain the upper hand in life. This black and white combo 2-deck set features the classic card suits, but has paired them with corresponding categories of knowledge every gentleman should master. The cards have a poker hand border, matte finish, and smooth gliding feel for luxury at its finest. Its durable plastic construction ensures a fresh look. \$20.00. www.exuvius.com

9 Samantha Leibowitz's Kody Bow Tie — Pair the deck of playing cards with a new bow tie! New York fashion designer Samantha Leibowitz offers fashionable and luxurious bow ties for men that are perfect to top off his stocking stuffer needs. Coming in four different designs, the Kody Bow Tie is one accessory he will love this holiday season. \$74.00. samanthaleibowitz.net

10 1 Voice Bluetooth Beanie — Add to his winter wardrobe with 1 Voice. The 1 Voice Bluetooth Beanie lets him listen to music or talk on the phone wirelessly. Built to provide high-quality audio and superior functionality, the 1 Voice Beanie is the new tech tool ready to make its mark on the tech-savvy world. Made from top quality knitted fabric, 1 Voice is equipped with built-in headphones that allow him to be hands-free, while streaming his favorite tunes. With a battery life that lasts up to 10-12 hours, he will have long-lasting warmth all winter season. \$69 at 1voiceinc.com

11 Conscious Step Collection Boxes Limited Edition Holiday Socks — Step into the holiday spirit with festive socks that plant 20 trees with Trees for the Future. Encased in beautiful packaging, each box contains 3 pairs of stylish socks that will support Conscious Step's amazing partners: Water.org, UNAIDS, Action Against Hunger, Room to Read, Trees for the Future, and Global Citizen. Purchasing these boxes will contribute to HIV therapy, feed malnourished kids, provide schoolbooks and more! Each pair is individually embroidered and uniquely designed. Fits men's US shoe size 8-13 and women's size 9-14 \$44.95 and single pairs for \$14.95. Socks can be bought at www.ConsciousStep.com



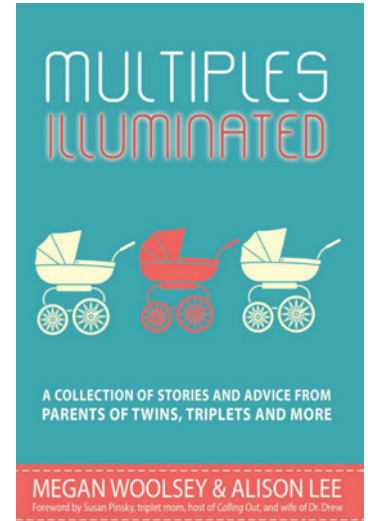
TWINS HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

TWINS

Books for and about twins/multiples

Multiples Illuminated: A Collection of Stories And Advice From Parents of Twins, Triplets and More—

Did you just discover that you are pregnant . . . with twins, triplets or more? *Multiples Illuminated* dives deep into the world of raising multiples with beautiful stories and helpful advice. Topics covered: Infertility help and hope; Finding out and coping with a multiples pregnancy; Stories of labor and delivery; Stories from the NICU; Breastfeeding best practices for multiples; Surviving the infant and toddler stages. The book is a compelling collection of stories from writers and parents of multiples, as well as expert advice that is a must-have for all parents and grandparents of multiples. <http://multiplesilluminated.com/>



TWINS TALK

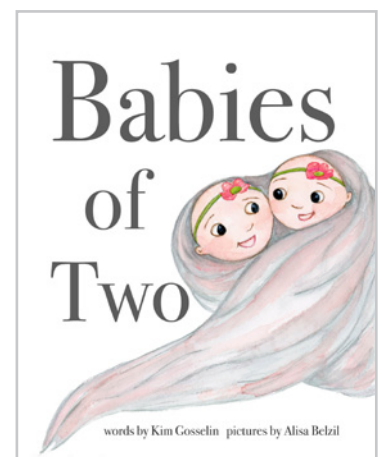


Twins Talk...What Twins Tell Us about Person, Self, and Society —

Twins Talk is an ethnographic study of identical twins in the United States, a study unique in that it considers what twins say about themselves, instead of what researchers have written about them. It presents, in the first person, the grounded and practical experiences of twins as they engage, both individually and together, the “who am I” and “who are we” questions of life. Here, the twins themselves are the stars. <http://ohioswallow.com/book/twins+talk>

Babies of Two —

A heartwarming story filled with love and humor told from the perspective of adorable baby twins shortly before birth. The secret is out! What do they see? What do they do? So much fun for me and YOU! Sneak a peek into Mollie and Maddie's warm and wonderful 'Bubble of Blue' as they journey into a brand-new world where Mama and Daddy wait for them with open arms and beating hearts. A special book for children and generations to share. 34 pages. <https://www.amazon.com/Babies-Two-Kim-Gosselin-ebook/dp/B015L8RK4Y>





1 Wine Glass Writers from Cork Pops. These pens are a creative and fun way to impress friends and family this holiday season, and make a great hostess gift or stocking stuffer. They can be used as a party ice breaker, to help guests keep track of their wine glass, write menus or even personalize gifts. They are available in Metallic and Pastel varieties. Metallic is only \$7.00. http://corkpops.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Store_Code=2000&Screen=PROD&Product_Code=20555

2 Coffee Scoop Clip—Clever two-in-one kitchen assistant is a tea and coffee scoop that doubles as a clip to keep the coffee bag airtight. Pairs perfectly with a bag of roasted beans for a host gift. \$5.95. <http://www.cb2.com/coffee-scoop-clip/s303522>

3 ThinkGeek Day and Night Mug— This heat-sensitive mug shows satellite images of earth between day and night. When you pour hot liquid (preferable caffeinated) into it, you'll watch it magically change to a bright teal color. It's a perfect gift for the world traveler or coffee-addict. \$10.00. www.thinkgeek.com

4 Fred & Friends Slow Brew Sloth Tea Infuser — If your Secret Santa is a tea lover, pair this adorable sloth infuser with some loose-leaf tea from the bulk section of your local market. Bonus points if you know what kind of tea they like! \$7.00. https://www.amazon.com/Fred-Friends-SLOW-Sloth-Infuser/dp/B00V6AJNSQ?tag=bp_links-20&ascsubtag=bestproducts.gallery94

5 Dustin Screen Cleaner -- Get rid of smudges on your screens with Dustin Screen Cleaner. There are two sides to each cleaner: one side wipes away bigger messes and the other erases fingerprints or smudges. \$9.99. <https://www.amazon.com/Dustin-Screen-Cleaner-3-Pack/dp/B00EARYTNS>

6 LightInTheBox LED Kitchen Sink Faucet Sprayer Nozzle —LED lights changing color with water temperature, Water saving and filter systems. Runs on 3-coin cell batteries and includes 1 spare set. Beautiful chrome finish, solid and firm brass body. \$6.36. https://www.amazon.com/LightInTheBox-Kitchen-Faucet-Sprayer-Nozzle/dp/B004W1SEYM/ref=pd_sim_hg_1

7 Barnacle — Now you can let your phone stand on an angle to the desk or stick it on the windscreen of your car for easy access. Barnacle is good at everything; hanging out on the desk, hanging on to your windshield, hanging off of a mirror. \$4.95 <http://ilovehandles.com/shop/barnacle-3/>

8 Star Wars The Force Awakens Playing Cards in Stormtrooper Helmet — This deck of playing cards comes in a case shaped like the helmet right off a First Order Stormtrooper, only smaller. The deck highlights this Trooper's compatriots - Snowtroopers, Flametroopers. Kylo Ren is both the King and the Ace in each suit, which we think is a little overkill, but since Captain Phasma is the Queen in each suit, we think that makes up for it. \$8.99. <http://www.thinkgeek.com/product/jjln/>

9 Wonder Woman Glitter 14oz Mug — Your Lasso of Warmth. Colorful mug includes sparkly WW Lasso of Truth on both sides. Easy to find in the cupboard. Not dishwasher or microwave safe. \$7.99. <http://www.thinkgeek.com/product/jigr/>

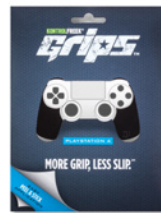
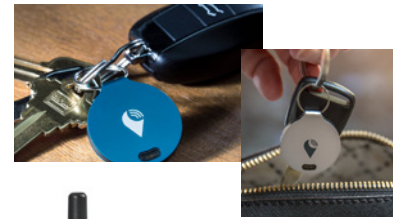
10 USB Plasma Ball — Powered by an included USB cable (42" long), this desktop Plasma Ball stands about 6 inches high and includes an on/off switch. While it emits a very low current, it does so at a relatively high-voltage and so it does produce some EMF. Respect your plasma ball and it will respect you! \$6.99. <http://www.thinkgeek.com/product/964e/#tabs>



TWINS HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

TWINS

Stocking Stuffers



1 Chatlight — Pro photographer Henry Geddes is here to help you put your best face forward. Chatlight is a portable selfie and video chat lighting—it uses a soft, flattering LED to enhance your FaceTime sessions, Skype meetings, and even selfies. MSRP \$29.95 Purchase: www.thegrommet.com

2 HABA's Little Friends Bendy Dolls are the new must-haves for little ones who crave mini-madness! These 4-inch-tall "bendy dolls" are made from flexible soft plastic, with metal wires inside which allow for them to be posable. \$7.49/ each. Accessories sold separately. Available online at www.HABAUSA.com

3 PlayTape sticks to any flat surface, tears easily to any length, and is repositionable to create roads and tracks anywhere. Available in multiple colors, lengths and widths, the creation possibilities are endless. \$8.99 and up. www.InRoadToys.com

4 BonBunz Hair Bands! These are the most comfortable and fashionable hair bands! BonBunz is a line of fun and colorful hair bands for girls, teens and women alike. They come in an assortment of over 15 cool, creative designs and colors and are super easy to use and comfortable for the busy life. Over 15 creative, colorful designs for girls, teens and women. \$15.95 or enjoy two for \$28.95. <https://daphdaph.com>

5 Wraps headphones are the must have accessory for anyone and everyone who enjoys music. Wraps won't slip out of your ears and they won't tangle up into a cluster of chaos. Wraps not only offer crystal-clear, high-quality sound but they also look good! When they're not in your ears, wrap them around your wrist for a fashion statement. Fashionable, Comfortable, delivers high-quality sound, tuned by world-renowned sound engineers, Tangle-free, Patented slider system, Lightweight, various colors and styles, Prices start at \$19.99. <http://mywraps.com>

6 TrackR bravo, is a coin-sized Bluetooth device that people can attach to all their important belongings — from wallets to purses to even pets — to make sure they never get lost. Once you pair your TrackR bravo with the free iPhone/Android app, you can

use your phone to locate any misplaced item in seconds. Finally, with custom printing options, you can choose any photo to print directly onto a TrackR, making it the perfect personalized, low-cost gift this holiday season! \$29.99. <https://www.thetrackr.com/bravo>

7 Motorola Talkabout T100 Series — is a two-way radio that is compact and easy-to-use. Ideal for elementary age children who aren't in the cell phone stage quite yet, but they do need to check in with mom and dad in the neighborhood. These radios are stylish and still provide reliable two-way communications when out of cell phone range. Perfect for giving kids independence without cell phone fees. The series come in blue and bright pink and easily fits into a pocket. These feature 22 channels and up to a 16-mile range. \$34.99. <https://www.walmart.com/ip/Motorola-T100-2-pack-16-Mile-Range-Aaa/51470190>

8 ChargeHub — An innovative charging station that can charge up to seven USB devices simultaneously through one power supply. This means you can now charge your phone, iPad, tablet, computer, mP3, or other necessary devices all at once. SmartSpeed™ Technology ensures an optimal charge for virtually any USB device, based on the type and number of connected devices; Various safety features built-in to assist in the protection of all connected devices; Available in round or square models with 7 color options. \$60.00. www.TheChargeHub.com

9 KontrolFreek Grips — Grips utilize a moisture-wicking combination of advanced proprietary materials to achieve enhanced grip and comfort. Their proprietary, honeycomb-stamped polymer outer layer maximizes grip while optimizing airflow to keep hands cool. The foam cushioning layer creates a feel much like dense memory foam, conforming to your palm and providing more support and comfort the harder your game. \$14.99. http://www.kontrolfreak.com/kontrolfreak-grips.html?gclid=CjwKEAiA9s_BBRCCL3ZKwSfblgS8SJACbST7D-BM91MGLvmOqcoqwgEtmwBN48DTuyc2Ejv22zp4uBo-CaxTw_wcB

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The Holiday Gift of Time

5 Tips on Making Holiday Memories with your Twins

by Susan M. Quiring



During the winter holidays, it's easy to get so busy with the shopping, baking, cleaning, and decorating that you forget to spend quality time together with your whole family. Recently, a mother of twins slowed down her pace because of one of her son's comments. During her whirlwind of activities, he voiced an important need saying, "Mom, I wish you had more time so we could do things with you!"

This mother realized she had provided plenty of "time passers" for her children, but each left them out of her activities. It's very important to make this holiday season a family time, she decided.

Organization may be the key to doing that successfully. Make a list of what needs to be done, when it will be done, and who will do it. If you have 6-12 year olds, let them accept some of the responsibilities; they usually won't mind if it means you'll have more time together as a family.

Your preschoolers' part in the preparation can be trimming their own small tree. Let each twin wrap a gift for Grandma, make a card for Dad, and help stir the cookies, too.

If your twins are school age, organize your holiday activities so you can be available when they come home from school. Results from a research project show why. Two groups of children were examined. The group who came home from school to an empty house gave no reports when their mothers returned at the end of the day and asked what happened in school. The second group, whose mothers were home upon the twins' arrival, bubbled immediately about the day's events. Three hours later, school event is no longer important to retell.

Holiday Planning

Family togetherness, including being there when the twins come home from school, takes pre-planning. At the beginning of the holiday season, try making a list of activities on a large appointment calendar. Include shopping trips with smaller children, parties, holiday programs, the day for tree buying and trimming, and even gift wrapping, and cookie-baking sessions. Being able to see the holiday season at a glance will help coordinate family plans.

Your twins may want to help wrap packages more if they are allowed to be creative, each in their own way. Large, hard-to-wrap packages can be wrapped in plain newspapers and topped with a bright bow. For more colorful packaging, use the comics section of the newspaper with a matching or contrasting color bow.

Along with ribbons and bows, add candy canes, small toys, or holly to decorate your packages. Your twins can make their own wrapping paper by using white-out to make polka-dots on brown paper gift wrap, or they can wrap gifts in a old road map.

Let your twins delight in learning new skills and using their imaginations. **Try these 5 suggestions** to make holiday memories with your twins that last longer than the season itself:

1 Cooke Cutter Creativity.

Give your preschoolers a paper plate or plastic tray topped with a folded paper towel and a bowl with a few spoonfuls of tempera paint. Let them dip cookie cutters into the paint and make prints on a piece of paper to create wrapping paper or holiday cards.

Try a cookie cutter matching game. Trace around the cookie cutter on a heavy piece of paper with marking pens. Let your twins match the cutters to the shapes drawn.

2 Cookie Cutter Ornaments.

Your twins can make cookie cutter ornaments for your tree with you by mixing together 2 cups of flour, ½ cup salt and ¾ cup water. Stir and form into a ball. Knead dough 3 to 4 times. Roll the dough out flat on waxed paper. Cut out the shapes with the cookie cutters and place them on a baking sheet. Poke a hole in the top of each with a straw. Let the ornaments dry in a 300-degree oven for 1 hour (longer if the dough is thick). Paint the ornaments when they come out of the oven; before the paint dries; let each child sprinkle on some glitter. (To preserve the ornaments spray with a clear fixative.)

3 Holiday Books. A wonderful winter tradition is creating your own family holiday book in a large scrapbook. Each year, gather the whole family together to spend one evening placing photos and the description of holiday activities in a book. Save special letters, cards and other mementos to include. One mother of twins says that even her adult twins pull the scrapbook out each year and reminisce about their holiday memories as children.

A special help to family members all year round is a Wish book, which gives each twin a chance to individualize his/her desires. Prepare a medium-sized notebook with a section for each person in the family to list clothing sizes, items needed and wanted, as well as hobbies.

4 Holiday Placemats. Cut a piece of cardboard placemat size, cover with colorful red or green wrapping paper, select old Christmas cards and cut them into desired shapes. Paste the cards on the placemat and cover with contact paper, a heavy plastic bag that can be heat sealed or laminate them.

5 Snowman Centerpiece. Make sure you double the recipe and plan space to display two snowmen if both twins are involved in the creative process.

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- 1-16 oz package miniature marshmallows
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 20 cups of popped popcorn
- Black hat
- Candy for face and buttons

Melt butter or margarine in large saucepan over low heat, or in microwave. Add marshmallows and salt, stirring until completely melted, about three minutes. Remove from heat. Pour over popped corn and stir until well coated.

While mixture is still warm, shape with buttered fingers into large ball, medium ball and small ball. To secure balls on top of one another form small "bowl" in top of bottom ball and a bump on the bottom of middle ball. Do the same for two top balls. When balls are put together, the bumps fill the bowls and hold the balls in place. Decorate with top hat, candy face and buttons.

Make Christmas trees or wreaths by substituting puffed rice cereal for popcorn and adding green food coloring to the marshmallows and butter mixture.

Make a habit of making the most of each moment, not just at the holidays, but during the entire year. Look for fun, innovative ways to enjoy every activity. Spend time, not money, to make life more interesting and fun. Being the organized person that you are by now, effective use of time will become easier and easier. ♥

Susan M. Quiring, Ph.D., was formerly a home economist for the Johnson County Extension Council of Kansas State University.

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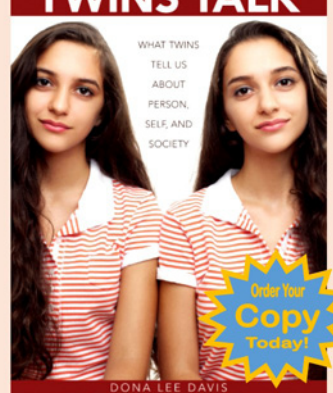


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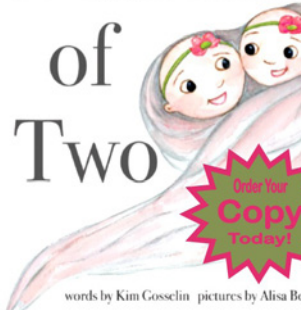
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1

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Age 2
Sedalia MO



2

Natalia & Kaelyn, FR
Age 11-months
Airdrie Alberta Canada



3

Madison & Makenzie, ID
Age 4
Newark, OH



4

Khristos & Khristopher with brother Luis, FR
Age 6-months
Woodlands, TX



5

Daquan & Karma, FR
Age 6
Madill, OK



6

Hayley & Chelsey, FR
Age 3
Ontario Canada



7

Cristiano & Anastacio, FR
Age 9-months
Ionia, MI



8

Kimber & Colt, FR
Age 3
Lisle, IL

Holiday 2016



9

Jacob & Joshua, FR
Age 4
Roosevelt, NY



10

Kennedy & Kellie, FR
Age 3
Grafton, MA



11

Ben & Brookie, FR
Age 16-months
Campbell, CA



12

Jayda & Brooklyn, ID
Age 1
Santa Fe, TN



13

Jordan & Brayden, FR,
Age 4
Romeo, MI



14

Michal & Emilia, FR
Age 6
Middle VillAge, NY



15

Violet & Leighton, ID
Age 4
Clayton, NC



16

Tazzar & Tripp, ID
Age 3-months
Cyril, OK



17

Timberly & Willow, ID
Age 7-months
Baxter Springs KS



18

Mackenna & Anna, FR
Age 7-months
Eaton, OH



19

Taylor & Alexander, FR
Age 13-months
Culver City, CA

Double Takes



20

Elijah & Titus, FR
Age 2
Louisville, KY



21

Avalon & Lexington, XX
Age 22-months
Seattle, WA



24

Addi & Britt, ID
Age 2
Belton, SC



22

Jordan & Jaxon, ID
Age 8-months
Hadley, NY



23

Logan & Alyssa, FR
Age 3
Wichita, KS



25

Roman & Damion, FR
Age 1
Indian Land, SC



26

Madison & Colin, FR
Age 10-months
San Diego, CA



27

Olivia & Penny with Tubby the dog,
FR, Age 8-months
Minneapolis, MN



28

Jaxon & Jordan, ID
Age 8-months
Hadley, NY



29

Luciana & Leon, FR
Age 7-months
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada



30

Raelyn & Jordyn, ID
Age 6
Pittsburgh, PA

Holiday 2016



31

Jensen & Josiah, FR
Age 1
London, KY



32

Brady & Chloe, FR
Age 5
Katy, TX



33

Tabitha & Corinne, FR
Age 2 1/2
Reinholds, PA



34

Miles and Mason, ID
Age 7-weeks
San Carlos, CA



35

Maddie & GAge, FR
Age 1
Dardenne Prairie, MO



36

Bozeman & Basin, FR
Age 9-months
Fort Smith, AR



37

Logan & Lukas, ID
Age 2
Camrose, Alberta Canada



38

Sawyer & Zoey, FR
Age 3-months
Newcastle, OK



39

Theo & Thomas, ID
Age 2
South West London, England, UK



40

Jaycee & Jayden, ID
Age 5
Atoka, OK



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