

How to Get Holiday Photo Cards Out This Year

A STEP-BY-STEP CHECKLIST

✓ **Plan a photo shoot for early November.**

Ask a friend or neighbor to take the photo, use a self-timer on the camera, hire a photographer, or go to one of those photography places at the mall.

Coordinate outfits. You don't need to be matchy-matchy or wear holiday colors, but at least make sure your family's clothes don't clash.

Put some thought into the backdrop. Do you want nature in the background? An interesting wall? One of my favorite holiday photos has our large chalkboard (with the kids' Christmas drawings) behind us.

Good lighting is key. If you're not a pro, aim for an outdoor shoot in bright shade (not bright sunlight) or an indoor shoot near a window.

✓ **Select your favorite photo (or a few faves)**

Edit the photo (if you hired a photographer, they will edit it). When I do my own photos for cards, I like to use the free PicMonkey website to crop and adjust the exposure, clarity, and saturation.

✓ **Choose & order your holiday card by Thanksgiving. Mixbook has a great selection.**

Personalize the card with your photo and names.

Tip :: If you're having trouble deciding between two or three different cards, personalize each and place them in your cart. You can then compare them side by side and delete the one you don't want. (Or order some of each.)

Add some address labels to your order if you don't already have some. They are relatively cheap and save time.

✓ **Buy stamps.**

While you're waiting for the cards to arrive, pick up holiday stamps at the post office, find or print your address book, and get some fun holiday washi tape.

Tip :: Sealing the envelopes with washi tape is festive and means you don't need to lick them.

✓ **Set up a card-writing station.**

When the cards arrive, set up a place to work on the cards with pens, stamps, washi tape, address labels, and anything else that makes the work fun for you. Music? Tea? A glass of wine?

Work on a few here and there as you have time. If you're like me, you'll mail a small stack a day for a week or so.

✓ **Prepare a card display area.**

Once the cards are sent, prepare a welcome mat for the cards you'll receive in the mail.

If you don't already have a place to display cards, try this holiday card wreath display.

Holiday Card Wreath Display

- Use a utility knife to cut a large, round wreath shape from sturdy cardboard.
- Paint. Let dry.
- Glue wooden clothespins all around the perimeter, with the clip part facing outward. I use a hot glue gun.
- Hang.
- As the cards arrive, clip them to the wreath with the clothespins.

