IMAGES OF CHRISTMAS
A compilation of informative resources for understanding Christmas symbols and customs
Complied by Michael Knapp, Lovin’ English

Christmas tree
From Thanksgiving Day through New Year’s Day, we see Christmas trees everywhere, even in China! Find out the origin and meaning of the Christmas tree at these sites:

http://www.history.com/topics/christmas/history-of-christmas-trees

Christmas ornaments
Ornaments are the decorations we hang on Christmas trees, also known as decorations. They come in many shapes, including balls, bells, nativities, stars, etc.

Stockings
Families hang Christmas stockings (never called “Christmas socks”) on Christmas Eve, expecting them to be filled with snacks and/or small gifts on Christmas morning. Parents fill the stockings. In some families, children are told that Santa Claus filled them. Some adult couples also fill each other’s stockings. To learn about the history of the Christmas stocking tradition, try this website:

http://altogetherchristmas.com/traditions/stockings.html
Mistletoe

This romantic tradition is less known in China than the Christmas tree and stocking traditions. As the tradition goes, people hang the mistletoe in a spot where people are likely to walk under, such as the top of a doorway. When someone walks under the mistletoe, intentionally or accidentally, whoever sees them may kiss them. Check out this website to learn about the mistletoe:

http://www.worldofchristmas.net/christmas-mistletoe/index.html

Poinsettia

It’s popular to display this beautiful flower in homes, offices, stores and other public places during Christmas season. Learn more about this tradition at the website below:

http://www.whychristmas.com/customs/poinsettia.shtml

Wreath

People usually hang Christmas wreaths on their doors, but wreaths can also be seen on walls and other noticeable places. The following website describes the meaning of the Christmas wreath:

http://www.wilsonevergreens.com/christmas-wreath-history
Holly

Not only is Holly a very beautiful girl’s name, it’s also the name of a plant seen during the Christmas season. See the interesting tradition of the holly on this website:


Santa Claus (also called Santa, Saint [St.] Nicholas, Saint Nick and sometimes Father Christmas in Europe)

Learn more about Santa Claus at the following websites:

http://www.whychristmas.com/customs/fatherchristmas.shtml
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santa_Claus

Nativity

Nativity refers to the scene at the birth of Jesus Christ, which is actually what Christmas is all about. The photo on the far right is a Nativity set, used as a Christmas decoration. Read the Nativity story, as it occurred in history, on the following websites:

http://christianity.about.com/od/glossary/qt/JZ-Nativity-Of-Jesus.htm
http://www.allaboutjesuschrist.org/the-nativity.htm
**Christmas gifts** (also called presents)

Giving and receiving gifts is definitely one of the most exciting features of the Christmas season. Christmas shopping usually begins the day after Thanksgiving Day and continues till Christmas Eve (December 24). Some people celebrate the holiday on Christmas Eve, but for most families, Christmas morning is the time for getting together and exchanging gifts. We also give gifts on birthdays and other special days; so why Christmas? One simple reason is that we love our friends and family members. But, why is Christmas such a special time of gift giving? You’ll find some answers to this question on these websites:

- [http://christmas.lovetoknow.com/Why_Do_We_Give_Presents_at_Christmas](http://christmas.lovetoknow.com/Why_Do_We_Give_Presents_at_Christmas)
- [https://fhelessons.wordpress.com/2013/10/16/why-we-give-gifts-for-christmas/](https://fhelessons.wordpress.com/2013/10/16/why-we-give-gifts-for-christmas/)

**Candy canes**

Check out these websites to learn about the origin and meaning of the candy cane:

- [http://www.kidtokid.org/candycanestory.html](http://www.kidtokid.org/candycanestory.html)

Here’s a beautiful poem about candy canes:

We hope these references have been helpful and useful to you in your quest to understand the meaning of these Christmas images and in your search for answers to your questions about this exciting holiday. Lovin’ English wishes you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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