

Ways To Honor Your Departed Loved Ones During The Holidays

1. **Make a charitable donation in their honor.** Identify a cause that was important to your loved one. Giving a gift in their name is a wonderful way to honor their memory and spread kindness.
2. **Light a candle.** An ember shining brightly provides warmth and light, emulating your loved one's spirit. Orchestrate a candle lighting ceremony with your whole family or simply place a candle in your window. Accompanying it with a portrait of your loved one is always a nice touch.
3. **Watch their favorite holiday movie.**
4. **Make a special ornament.** Whether the ornament represents something they loved or has their name etched on it, hanging it in a prominent place on the tree can spark positive memories of them.
5. **Write a letter to your loved one.** Writing can be a very powerful form of therapy. It gives structure and organization to your thoughts, and is a wonderful way to not only express emotions, but reflect on the positive impact your loved one has had on your life.
6. **Build a playlist.** Making a playlist is a great way to include your departed loved one's memory.
7. **Carry on their favorite holiday tradition.** Perhaps your loved one was all about decorating sugar cookies, or building gingerbread houses. Maybe they always dressed up like Santa Claus or insisted everyone take a family photo in front of the fireplace. Whatever tradition they loved, keep it going or add a new twist to it.
8. **Make a wreath for them.** You can make a wreath from scratch, or many craft stores have pre-made wreaths that you can decorate yourself. Ornament yours with your loved one's favorite colors, trinkets that represent them, and an angel.
9. **Do an act of kindness in their honor.** Acts of kindness—even small ones—go a long way in brightening someone's day, including your own. Did your loved one enjoy Starbucks? Set up shop and buy a cup of coffee for everyone one morning. Or, perhaps they were an animal lover. Volunteer at your local animal shelter and know your loved one is proud of you.

10. **Visit their favorite spot.** Spending time somewhere that held significance to your loved one is a great way to feel connected to them. You can talk to them here or simply sit quietly and reminisce.

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12. **Set a place at the table for them.** Arranging a table setting for your loved one at Thanksgiving, Christmas dinner, or other meals is a wonderful way to acknowledge how much their presence meant to you. You might also consider adding a photograph and a card with their name on it.

13. **Make an advent calendar.** Count down to Christmas with your loved one. Starting on December 1, take turns writing down a positive memory of your loved one each night until December 25. On Christmas Day, read out loud what everyone wrote so you can share stories of your loved one.

14. **Holiday Letters/Cards** – Instead of just sending out holiday cards, perhaps insert a short story or letter about your loved one, along with a photo of them?

15. **Story Sharing Party in person or remote** – Hold a in person party with your loved ones favorite snacks or even a skype/zoom party where friends and family gather to share stories about your loved one from holidays past

16. **Remember to buy yourself a gift-** You can give someone who was close to your loved one some money to surprise you with something they think your loved one would've gotten you, or you can just treat yourself with something like a shirt in your loved ones favorite color or a new comforter that reminds you of them. If you have little ones, remember, Santa needs to leave you something too.

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