

I love Christmas. I am not religious, but I enjoy celebrating Christmas. For me, Christmas is a time of peace, a time to rest, spend time with friends and family, have a hot drink like tea, watch lots of movies and buy nice things for my loved ones. I also love the decorations: the trees, the toys and the wreaths. I enjoy experiencing different customs, especially in places where it snows. I like seeing luminarias in New Mexico and I enjoy the British enthusiasm for Christmas, with cosy parties and streets full of lights.

Why use the present tense to talk about Christmas

The present tense in Spanish does more than describe what is happening right now. It is the natural choice when you want to talk about:

- **Habits and routines:** what you usually do at Christmas
- **Likes and dislikes:** how you feel about the season
- **Descriptions:** what Christmas looks or feels like in different places

Using the present tense helps you describe traditions, routines and personal tastes in a simple, natural way.

Key verbs and expressions with explanations

- **encantar** — to love (used like gustar). Example: Me encanta la Navidad. Translation: I love Christmas.
- **gustar** — to like. Remember the pattern: indirect object pronoun + gusta(n). Example: Me gusta celebrar la Navidad. Translation: I like to celebrate Christmas.
- **ser / estar** — both mean to be. Use **ser** for permanent descriptions and **estar** for states and locations. Example: La Navidad es bonita. Estoy feliz en Navidad.
- **descansar** — to rest. Example: Descanso en Navidad.
- **pasar tiempo** — to spend time. Example: Paso tiempo con mi familia.
- **tomar** — to have (a drink). Example: Tomo té caliente.
- **ver** — to watch. Example: Vemos muchas películas.
- **comprar** — to buy. Example: Compró regalos.
- **decorar** — to decorate. Example: Decoramos el árbol.
- **nevar** — to snow. Example: Me gusta cuando nieva.

- **experimentar** — to experience. Example: Experimento costumbres diferentes.
- **llevar** — to wear. Example: Llevan suéteres feos.
- **celebrar** — to celebrate. Example: Celebramos con fiestas.

Important note about gustar and encantar

Gustar and encantar use an indirect object pronoun: me, te, le, nos, os, les. The verb agrees with the thing liked, not the person. For example:

- Me gusta la Navidad. (La Navidad is singular)
- Me gustan las luces. (Las luces is plural)
- Me encantan las luces de las calles. (I love the street lights)

Useful example sentences in Spanish with translations

- Me encanta la Navidad. — I love Christmas.
- No soy religiosa, pero me gusta celebrar la Navidad. — I am not religious, but I like to celebrate Christmas.
- La Navidad es un tiempo de paz y descanso. — Christmas is a time of peace and rest.
- Paso tiempo con amigos y familia. — I spend time with friends and family.
- Tomo una bebida caliente como té. — I have a hot drink like tea.
- Veo muchas películas y compro regalos para mis seres queridos. — I watch lots of movies and buy gifts for my loved ones.
- Me encantan los adornos: el árbol, los juguetes y las coronas. — I love the decorations: the tree, the toys and the wreaths.
- Me gusta experimentar las costumbres en diferentes lugares. — I like to experience customs in different places.
- Me encanta cuando nieva. — I love when it snows.
- Veo las luminarias en los jardines y en las calles. — I see the luminarias in gardens and in the streets.
- Me gusta pasar la Navidad en Inglaterra porque la gente está muy enamorada de la Navidad. — I like spending Christmas in England because people are very in love with Christmas.
- Llevan suéteres navideños, y las calles tienen muchas luces. — They wear Christmas sweaters, and the streets have many lights.

Quick grammar reminders

- Regular present tense endings: **-ar**: o, as, a, amos, áis, an. **-er**: o, es, e, emos, éis, en. **-ir**: o, es, e, imos, ís, en.
- Use **estar + present participle** for ongoing actions: Estoy decorando el árbol. — I am decorating the tree.
- Use present to describe habitual actions: Cada Navidad decoramos la casa. — Every Christmas we decorate the house.

Practice tasks

Complete these exercises to practise present tense and the vocabulary above.

1. Translate into Spanish (use present tense):
 1. I love Christmas.
 2. I like to spend time with my family.
 3. I have a hot drink and watch movies.
 4. They wear ugly sweaters.
2. Conjugate the verbs in brackets in the present tense for the subject given:
 1. Yo (decorar) _____ el árbol.
 2. Nosotros (comprar) _____ regalos.
 3. Él (ver) _____ muchas películas.
3. Write a short paragraph (6 to 8 sentences) about your Christmas routine using at least five verbs from the key list. Use the present tense.
4. Change perspective: Take one sentence from your paragraph and rewrite it in the third person singular and third person plural. For example: Yo decoro el árbol — Él decora el árbol — Ellos decoran el árbol.
5. Ask and answer two questions in Spanish about Christmas using the present tense. For example:
 1. ¿Qué haces en Navidad? — En Navidad, paso tiempo con mi familia.
 2. ¿Te encanta la Navidad? — Sí, me encanta.

Answer key for the example translations and conjugations

- 1. Translations:
 - I love Christmas. — Me encanta la Navidad.
 - I like to spend time with my family. — Me gusta pasar tiempo con mi familia.

- I have a hot drink and watch movies. — Tomo una bebida caliente y veo películas.
- They wear ugly sweaters. — Llevan suéteres feos.
- 2. Conjugations:
 - Yo decoro el árbol.
 - Nosotros compramos regalos.
 - Él ve muchas películas.

Use these sentences and tasks to build confidence with the present tense. Describe your traditions, compare customs from different places and practise forming questions. The present tense will help you talk naturally about what you do and how you feel during Christmas.

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