

Baby & Toddler Christmas Picture Ideas

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There's nothing as cute as a baby with rosy cheeks or the way a toddler views the world with wide eyed wonder. Expect perhaps when you catch those images on film. You may have a baby or a toddler in your life right now but they don't small for long.

In the blink of an eye, they're heading to college, then graduating to begin the rest of their life. You can't hold on to their younger years. But you can preserve special moments with them such as the Christmas holidays.

One of the ways you can preserve your baby or toddler's special moments is through portraits. You can have professional portraits made through a photography studio when you set an appointment session.

For this session at some photography studios, you can expect to pay two hundred dollars or more per half hour. It's true that the portraits are stunning and very skillfully done but you do not have to take your baby or toddler in to a studio to end up with exquisite portraits. With a few tips and some practice, you can take good quality photos at home.

How many crying, nearly hysterical babies and toddlers have you heard at studios? The reason they act that way is because they're in a strange place, being situated by a strange person and told to 'pay attention, look at the camera.' When it comes to saying *cheese*, kids don't like the unknown.

Put a Child at Ease When Taking a Picture

Taking photographs at home is easier on both the subject and the photographer because when kids are in familiar surroundings like their home, they feel at ease and will behave in a more natural manner. You'll be able to get that spontaneous exuberance on camera without it being a forced posed.

It's okay to have their attention otherwise engaged. Another family member can wave a toy over the photo taker's head. Often, antics going on behind the photographer will elicit bursts of laughter from babies and toddlers alike.

Also remember that a baby or toddler does not have to look directly at the camera in order for it to be a good shot. The key to getting a good photo is to gently engage the baby or toddler and make the experience as stress free for the little one as you can. You never want picture taking to be something he or she learns to associate with anxiety or they'll dread it every time they see the camera out.

Instead of saying to a toddler, “Sit down here and I’m going to take your picture” say, “Here’s a little stool (or chair or whatever) I’ll bet I can sit down on that. Can you? How would you sit?”



Kids like to show off what they can do and will happily oblige but not if they think they have to do it. Once they become toddlers, they hit that independent stage and they want to be able to have a choice when it comes to their actions. So give them a choice when you take photos.

Don’t attempt to take photographs when a child is overly tired. Right around bedtime is never a good time. When the holidays roll around, kids’ schedules are often out of whack and that can make them cranky due to all the additional stimuli.

New clothes chosen just for a Christmas shoot tend to be stiff and scratchy so make sure that’s not going to be a problem. Give the new clothes a wash first. If you plan to spend a few minutes taking photos (with as little interruption as possible), make sure your toddler or baby has been fed, changed or taken to the potty first.

Some fidgeting is okay because with a fast shutter speed, you can still get good pictures even when they move.

How to Dress Babies & Toddlers for Christmas Pictures

How to dress babies for Christmas pictures depends on what you’re looking for from the photo. It also depends on the age of the baby. Newborns to about three months aren’t able to support themselves in a sitting position. So if you want a

formal Christmas picture with your baby in that age range and you want one of the baby sitting, here's how to do it.

For baby girls in a more formal picture, dress her in a fluffy dress with plenty of billowing material. Position the baby in front of the backdrop-a sheet or muslin fabric-whatever you use. Reach through a slit in the backdrop and have someone hold the baby up. The person's hands holding the baby will be hidden beneath the layers of dress material.



You can hold an infant boy up the same way as long as you keep your fingers tucked from camera view. What specifically can you dress a baby in? Any age can wear cute candy cane striped pajamas or the footed suits.

For taking pictures that include both a baby and a toddler in the same shot, you can dress the older child in a blue sweater with a red shirt peeking out from the collar. Then dress the baby in a red sleeper.

Or you can dress the toddler in a red sweater with a white shirt peeking out of the collar and dress the baby in a white sleeper or dress. You can use any two colors that you like that way and the colors don't necessarily have to be Christmas colors.

If you're a large family and have a group of children for the photo and you'd like to coordinate their clothing to blend and reflect the season, here's how to do that. Sit the smallest child in the center on a slightly elevated black velvet throw. Group the other children around the youngest in a circle formation. Have the girls dress in green, red, silver or gold clothing. Have the boys wear complementing cummerbunds.

Small babies can wear stocking caps in solid colors and can also wear extra long Santa caps and little Santa suits. You can dress a baby or toddler in Christmas costumes as well such as a snowflake or angel. For added cuteness, dress the wee one like a little elf complete with little green tights. You can buy or make a Christmas costume for your baby or toddler.

Christmas suspenders over a white shirt always look cute on infants or toddlers.

When dressing either a baby or a toddler for a Christmas picture keep this rule of thumb in mind. The busier the background, the simpler the clothes. If you have a background that features the tree, the fireplace, presents, etc. that's a pretty busy background.

You don't want to dress your child in an equally busy outfit-lots of designs or multi colors. You can do that, however, if the background is simple or if you deliberately place the background out of focus.

Some Ideas for Cute Christmas Pictures



One of the biggest mistakes people make when taking photos of babies or toddlers is to place or make the child always face forward. A lot of great picture ideas come from stepping away from the 'this is how we've always done it' routine.

For example, if you want to get a Christmas shot where your baby or toddler is in front of the Christmas tree, place the child in a direct line beside the tree and have them face it. They'll be fascinated by the tree itself-the decorations, the sparkling lights.

You'll catch the rapture on their faces and if you zoom in, you'll be able to see their total absorption in what they're seeing. Another idea is to set the picture up the same way but give the toddler a large Christmas toy to hold. Have the toddler sit on the floor so that he or she is even with the item.

Many of the best Christmas photos are also the ones with the most simple props. For this one, you'll need a chef's hat in a Christmas color and a holiday theme apron. On a low table, set out the ingredients to make cookies.

Also have some goodies already made like a Christmas cake, decorated Christmas cookies and a gingerbread Christmas house. Have a cookie sheet out half filled with cookies ready to pop in the oven.

Put some cookie dough already flattened on the table. Give toddler a rolling pin and show her or him how to roll out the flour. You'll get a wonderful photo of your child 'baking' for the holidays.

Another cute Christmas idea is a Christmas tea party shot. Set a small child's table with Christmas saucers and child sized teacups. This idea works for either a toddler or an infant six to nine months old.

Dress the toddler or the baby in Christmas finery, complete with pearls and elaborate hats for the girls and little fedoras for the boys. At the center of the table, set a small pile of wrapped gifts. You'll want to situate the baby's chair in front of a backdrop where an adult's hands can be hidden as he or she holds the baby securely in place.

If your baby is still an infant, you can place the baby in a woven basket filled with white tulle material. Have a small pillow beneath the upper half of the tulle to support the baby. Lay the infant in the middle.

The tulle can be any color as long as it doesn't clash with your infant's outfit. You can also use white tulle and scatter the large sized Christmas balls in the basket. If you dress the infant in a cream colored outfit, choose the burgundy or brown Christmas balls.

This idea also works well as long as your infant is too young to reach and grab things if you use a plain white material in the basket, dress the infant in a color that matches the tree décor and place the basket slightly under the tree.

If you happen to have a little red wagon handy, you can make a cute Christmas photo with that if you have toddlers. Have the child sit in the back end of the wagon and fill the front with yards of Christmas ribbon.

For infants that can sit up on their own, set them on the floor in front of a white backdrop. Dress the infant in red pants and a white shirt. Beside him or her, place a set of stacked Christmas gifts wrapped in a variety of colors that are the same height as the child. Tie all three 'gifts' together with a wide red ribbon. For a toddler, wrap a large wooden box and have toddler lean toward the camera with his elbows on the box.

If you have boy toddlers, build a fort out of presents (cardboard boxes wrapped in Christmas paper) and have the toddlers peaking out of it. To the boys, this will seem more like play than having to sit for a picture.

A beautiful Christmas shot is one of your toddler sitting in front of the Christmas tree or in front of the fireplace (for safety use an electric fire) 'reading' a Christmas classic. This will also work well if you have both a toddler and a baby as the toddler can 'read' the story to the infant.

For a different kind of background for your Christmas photos, take it outside. If you're going to take your Christmas photo outside, you can sit toddlers in a porch swing that's decorated in Christmas lights and silk poinsettias.

If you have a lighted outdoor display and a fairly decent camera, you can get great pictures using the outdoor decorations as a backdrop. Think your camera can't get good shots at night? Wrong. You can get decent photos simply by adjusting your shutter speed.

This idea will take a little work ahead of time, but you can buy wooden letters that spell out Christmas sayings like 'Joy,' 'Noel' or 'Merry Christmas' and set them out in the yard. Have your toddler or toddlers sit behind the letters.

One of the still widely popular outdoor shots is to decorate a tree outside like you would an indoor tree. Use lights and strings of cranberry and popcorn. Use the decorated tree as the background but again, zoom in to get a better shot.

Using Lights in Christmas Photos



An adorable way to film a child is by using Christmas lights as a prop or in the setting. With toddlers, you can give them a strand of the fat bulb multi-colored Christmas lights (don't plug the lights in!) and as they sit in a child sized rocker and delight over the bulbs, you can take a series of photos.

It's a little trickier to photograph small infants with Christmas lights but it can be done. Around the top of an infant's crib railing, decorate it with plain green garland and Christmas lights. You can set a bouncy seat in the crib. Cover the bouncy seat with Christmas fabric and set the infant in it. The crib becomes the background setting.

For babies that are able to sit and hold objects, give them a lighted (lightweight) basket filled with Christmas decorations. You fill the basket with things like pinecones, small wrapped boxes, Christmas ribbons etc. The lights are on the outside of the basket. This really catches a baby's attention and the light on the basket will cast a nice glow on the baby's face.

If you decide that you want to use lighted bulbs in a Christmas photo with a baby, never do it for long periods as the lights do heat up and never leave a child unattended with the lights.

Using Snow in your Christmas Portrait Ideas for Infants

A Christmas picture simply isn't complete without a little snow. If you get a professional portrait done, many photographers already have fake snow and know how to take photos of your children with a snow setting.



But you can do that yourself too. If you don't get snow, that won't present a problem. Make your own snow the same way the professional photographer did. You buy fake snow. It's also referred to as artificial snow and you can buy it by the pound. Buy a few pounds of it and you'll be all set. You can use artificial snow inside but you might have a mess to clean up, so just be forewarned.

Once you've got your snow, you can mound it up outside (use Styrofoam balls for snowballs-you can find those at a craft store) and in the middle of the snow, you can set an infant in a basket and pile the snow up to cover the basket.

Of course, if it the weather is chilly outside, you'll want to dress your infant warmly and you won't want to spend more than a few seconds at a time taking the photographs.

If you do this with toddlers, with an air pump, you can gently blow or swirl the snow to make it appear as if it's actively snowing. You can also use fake snow and have your toddler create 'snow' angels.

Remember too that when you use a digital camera, there are some photo software programs available that will allow you to enhance the photo and add elements like soft, muted light and Christmas detail.

And don't forget above all else... have fun!

Kind Regards

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