



*Christmas is on its way and the arrival of trees, guests and fancy food will all have an impact on your cat.*

**Cats Protection** suggests the following tips to make sure your pet's festive season is a safe and happy one

### Twelve gifts a-giving

Make sure that any toys you buy your cat for Christmas are feline-friendly. Choose ones with embroidered features as opposed to plastic and glass ones which can come off. If you get your cat edible gifts, only buy special pet treats.

### Eleven things a-choking

Avoid using tinsel and 'angel hair' as these can get stuck in cats' throats. If your tree is real, vacuum around it frequently – as well as being a choking hazard, pine needles can hurt cats' feet and cause infections.

### Ten cords a-shocking

Electrical cords for fairy lights could be mistaken for toys or prey, so keep them covered up to avoid disaster.

### Nine candles burning

They look pretty, but a fire won't! Keep them out of your cat's reach to avoid them being knocked over or causing him an injury.

### Eight gifts a-miaowing

Never give cats as presents unless this has already been agreed with the recipient. It goes without saying that cats are a commitment beyond the festive season and are not to be treated as novelty gifts.



### Several toxic plants

A number of festive plants are potentially fatal to cats, including mistletoe, holly, ivy and Christmas roses so choose carefully and keep them out of the reach of moggies. For more information on which plants may be harmful to your cat visit the International Cat Care website at [www.icatcare.org](http://www.icatcare.org).

### Six baubles swinging

Your cat may well be tempted to biff dangling decorations, so it's best to avoid glass baubles as they could shatter.

### Five dressed-up cats

Do not be tempted to dress your cat up. You may think it makes him look 'cute', but he'll only feel stressed and demeaned.

### Four calling guests

Having friends and relatives to visit is part and parcel of the Christmas period, but your cat may not wish to join in with the festivities. Ensure that he has a quiet room to himself with his food, water and litter tray easily accessible.

### Tree water hazards

If you have a real tree, the base should be a no-go area for puss. The water may contain preservatives applied to the tree that are poisonous to cats. Cover up the base so he can't get at it.

### Two turkey bones

You may be tempted to share some tasty morsels with puss, but restrict this to a small amount of boneless turkey for his Christmas dinner. Some rich foods – like chocolate – are toxic to cats and should definitely be off the menu.

### A kitten stuck up a tree

To kittens in particular, the Christmas tree is a toy-toting gift in itself. Discourage your feline friend from climbing it, but also ensure that its base is as sturdy as possible in case he sneaks off on a festive mountaineering adventure!