

# Remote Office Holiday Ideas

How to make your  
2020 virtual holiday  
party fun



There's no denying that the 2020 holiday season is going to look and feel different than years past for companies across the board. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to businesses globally limiting employees from working in offices and brick-and-mortar shopping locations to protect their staff's health and slow the spread of the virus.

When it comes to holiday celebrations this year, less than a quarter (23%) of companies are planning holiday celebrations. Of those planning a celebration, nearly 3/4 will host events virtually.

Even though most companies aren't hosting in-person celebrations, that doesn't mean you can't have holiday fun remotely. You can customize your virtual holiday events in ways that make sense for your unique workplace. With the festive season being different this year, it's important to help your employees stay engaged and keep their spirits up.

Follow these tips at your company to boost employee morale, strengthen team bonding, and ensure positive employee well-being this holiday season.



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01

# Transform the traditional

# Start planning your holiday events this year by taking traditional holiday party activities and making them virtual.

## DRESS UP

The annual company holiday party is often known as the event where everyone dresses up. There's no reason why you can't continue that tradition in a remote environment. Pick a theme and have employees come up with outfits, or have everyone wear their best ugly sweater — make it a contest with a prize for an extra layer of fun.


## PLAN INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

Make things interactive, but be careful to not exacerbate Zoom fatigue. It's important to have a plan instead of depending on employees to carry the conversation. Designate someone to be a moderator or party organizer.

### Virtual activity ideas

- Employee recognition [awards](#) (create certificates easily with [Canva](#))
- [Karaoke](#)
- [Secret Santa](#)

Even a holiday tradition like a White Elephant gift exchange can be done remotely. Have your employees choose and steal gifts through Zoom, then take care of shipping costs so they can send each item to the appropriate person.



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## HOST FRIENDLY COMPETITIONS

A little friendly competition never hurt anyone. Plan engaging team building events by creating ones based on your staff's interests.

Virtual games:

- Trivia
- Charades
- Pictionary
- [Scavenger hunt](#)
- [Escape room](#)

If you want some tech help when it comes to hosting games, you can use a website like [Jackbox Games](#), which provides drawing, writing, and trivia games for multiple participants — all easily played through a videoconference call.

There are ways to tailor each game to the specific interests of your employees. For example, you can host a trivia game where each question is based on something that relates to individual staff members. If you have a worker that's obsessed with pizza, create a trivia question based on pizza!

Have each of your departments be separate teams, or randomly select teams through a generator. Games always feel more fun with prizes, so consider offering them for winners.

## Prize ideas:

- Company swag
- Gift cards
- Virtual education or coaching sessions
- Virtual fitness or mental health resources

## Free prize ideas

- A Zoom background with a custom design that says “Winner”
- Putting a crown emoji next to the winner’s display name on Slack for a week
- A fun certificate
- A shoutout at the next company meeting





## SHARE FOOD AND DRINKS VIRTUALLY — HAVE THEM DELIVERED

For many, sharing food and drinks at a holiday party is tradition. Thanks to food delivery services, you can recreate that same activity in a remote setting. Employers have a range of food delivery services to choose from to cater food to employees' homes. Many companies — like [DoorDash](#) and [Uber Eats](#) — have specific business plans you can sign up for to customize meal programs for your employees.

Perhaps you choose to send individual meals from one restaurant or caterer, or give employees an individual budget to order their own meal and get it delivered right to their doorstep. Or you can even send ingredients to make a delicious gourmet meal and hire a chef to guide your staff through a virtual cooking class. Whatever way you choose, you'll give your employees the opportunity to still partake in a holiday meal tradition.

For holiday drinks, send out a mix of cocktail kits for those who drink and mocktail kits for those who don't. Or take it to the next level and provide virtual tastings or mixology classes:

- [Sommelier Company](#): Organizes wine, beer, whiskey, or tequila tastings
- [The Crafty Cask](#): Offers winery, distillery, brewery, and cider house tastings
- [Open Door Tea](#): Hosts tea tastings
- [Cozymeal](#): Provides mixology classes (including holiday cocktails)

## SEND GIFTS TO DOORSTEPS

If you're used to distributing physical gifts to your staff during the holidays, you can still send items to your employees' doorsteps. Consider creating your own custom holiday care package, or use cost-effective websites that simplify the process.

Companies that help you customize holiday care packages:

- [Small Packages](#)
- [Knack](#)
- [Boxfox](#)

Platforms like [Snappy](#) also curate gift collections for you to share with your teams — letting your workers choose from multiple options of gifts. Consider sending more meaningful gifts and also smaller items like a fun mug to toast with during your Zoom party or fun party props to wear on camera. You can even have a virtual photo booth through companies like [Misgif](#) and [OutSnapped](#).

## EXTEND THE INVITE BEYOND SOS TO THE WHOLE FAMILY

For many employees this year, working from home also means working with spouses and children — all within the same space. Many staff members would appreciate getting to share work holiday fun with their families.

Some virtual family-friendly activities you can host?

- A gingerbread house or cookie decorating contest
- A cooking class
- A movie night where the company rents a movie for everyone to watch. Create breakout rooms for different movie options and have it feel more relaxed and less like a formal Zoom meeting

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02

# HR checklist for your remote holiday party

## HR CHECKLIST FOR YOUR REMOTE HOLIDAY PARTY

- ☐ **Decide on a time and date for your virtual holiday party.**  
This is especially important if you have employees working in different time zones — you don't want some employees to have to celebrate too late into their evening.
- ☐ **Designate a virtual location.** Aside from Zoom and Skype, you can also use Google Hangouts, Houseparty, and FaceTime.
- ☐ **Create invites.** Decide how formal or simple you'd like them to be. Consider making them festive to spread the joy of the season. Then send them out through email or physical mail.
- ☐ **Set up a dress code.** Holiday parties are usually a time to dress up. Encourage everyone to participate in the dress code and provide details about your holiday costume contest, if you're hosting one.
- ☐ **Start planning activities.** Whether it's icebreakers, games, or competitions — it takes time to organize interactive activities and competitions, so make sure to prepare!
- ☐ **Curate what gifts you want to send and when.** Figure out what items you want to send and when you'd like your employees to receive them. If you want your employees to use festive props for your virtual holiday party photo booth, you need to make sure they receive the items before the day of the party!



03

# **Boost employee sentiment and morale with engagement surveys**

**Employee engagement affects employee productivity and retention — which directly impact your bottom line. Actively disengaged employees are 12 times more likely to quit than their engaged colleagues. On the other hand, a highly engaged workforce has been shown to decrease turnover by 25-59%.**

New HR solutions have engagement surveys you can use for your staff to see what's working and what can improve. Survey your employees about how to have fun remotely this holiday season by customizing your own questionnaire.

Create a happier, more productive workforce with Zenefits' employee engagement surveys.

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04

**Have employees  
discuss how they want  
to celebrate**

Letting employees chime in on ideas often leads to the best results. If you want to open the floor to employees regarding remote holiday party activities but don't know how to start, use modern HR software to streamline your approach to employee communication. Empower your employees to share their voice and interact with one another via your HR platform's mobile app or desktop. Create a post with a question or poll, and have employees participate.



Change the way your organization communicates for the better with the

[Zenefits platform](#)

05

**Ensure employee  
well-being during the  
holidays and beyond**

**The global pandemic and economic slowdown have added significant stress to many employees' daily lives. With the holidays approaching, it's crucial to ensure your staff is feeling engaged, optimistic, and energized for the new year.**

You may find it difficult to gauge employee sentiment, especially within a remote setting. Modern HR software can actually help you measure different dimensions of employee well-being through assessment surveys and track progress over time. Identifying problem areas is also critical. Be a proactive employer and commit to identifying changes in stress levels or locate specific pockets of workplace stress.



Start assessing your team's well-being

[HERE](#)



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