

The Countdown Calendar.

Growing up we had one of those chocolate advent calendars that you opened a little door every day and you got a little chocolate surprise. It was such a treat to be allowed to eat chocolate before breakfast! Mum also had a handmade advent calendar for the 12 days before Christmas which set out festive activities to do.

Sarah and I have recreated this and whether you're in it for the long haul (all 24 days) or just a few days before Christmas this will suit you. It's something you can make with your little too!

What you will need:

- as many little muslin cloth bags as you wish (24 for a traditional calendar, we used 10)
- pegs (one for each bag)
- wooden numbers (alternatively iron on numbers, paint, or fabric pen)
- ribbon (3 meters does about 10 bags)
- hot glue (sets fast for excited kiddies)
- any embellishments you desire (optional)
- presents and/or tags to write on for each bag



Instructions:

We chose to use 10 bags for our project because the anticipation of a two- and four-year-old can get so intense that 10 days of surprises seemed more than enough. We can add more as they get bigger.

Paint your numbers, glitter them up, make them pretty!

Lay out each bag and attach the wooden numbers to the bags with hot glue.

Lay out your ribbon (this is what you hang the bags from) and attach each bag using a peg. Easy peasy!

And now to the fun part, creating the contents - activity (A) or gift (G) - for each. If the idea is for an activity, write

it on the tag then place in the bag. These activities have an Australian Summer flair.

1. Cut and decorate the Christmas tree, with a special decoration in the bag. (A, G of decoration)
2. Christmas Carols, with a candle in the bag (A, G of candle)
3. Cut Christmas shapes from watermelon: just like biscuits but refreshing! (A)
4. Write Santa a letter and post letter (special outing to Myer Santa Post Box) (A)
5. Christmas baking (A)
6. Watch a Christmas movie or read a Christmas book (A)
7. Make a sandman at the beach - There's no snow, but we have sand! (A)
8. Buy a present for the giving tree (A)
9. Go for a drive to see the Christmas lights (A)
10. Make Christmas decorations (A)
11. Chocolate and Candy Canes for those days when getting creative is too much (G)
12. Make Christmas cards for treasured friends (A)
13. Have a "snowy" bath or make it snow outside despite the heat with lots and lots bubbles. We love this one! (A, G of bubbles)
14. Make a mess with some mangoes (A)
15. Choose outgrown toys and donate to a local charity. (A)
16. Make a silly video with www.elfyourself.com (A)
17. Hunt for native orchids (A)
18. Make a wreath of eucalyptus leaves (A)
19. Craft a pompom garland (A, plus G of loome and pompom guide)
20. Watch a personalised video message from Santa from www.portablenorthpole.com (A)

We hope you and your littles enjoy making your Christmas Advent Countdown Calendar and we'd love to see your finished result! make sure you tag us @sewknitlove so we don't miss it.



Suki & Sarah
PP