

Elf Arrival Ideas

Big entrances for the first morning of the season. 24 ideas, no-mess ones first: tick each one you use.

- ☐ **#1 Brought a Friend** no mess funny
The elf arrives with a plush sidekick wearing a name tag that says "My best friend from the North Pole." **You need:** stuffed animal, paper name tag.
- ☐ **#2 Chilling in the Freezer** 5 min no mess funny
The elf is found in the freezer door with a sign: "Still cold from the trip. Give me five minutes." **You need:** sticky note.
- ☐ **#3 Snow Globe Jar** no mess easy
The elf sits in a large clear jar lined with cotton balls, with a tag that says "Just landed." **You need:** large clear jar or vase, cotton balls, paper tag.
- ☐ **#4 Special Delivery Box** no mess easy
The elf arrives inside a shoebox wrapped in brown paper and stamped "North Pole Express." **You need:** shoebox, brown paper or a paper bag, marker, tape.
- ☐ **#5 Tree Trimming Helper** 5 min no mess
The elf sits on a low branch of the tree holding an ornament, the ornament box open beneath it. **You need:** an ornament.
- ☐ **#6 Elf Passport** no mess funny
The elf holds a folded-paper passport stamped "North Pole to Our House" with a doodled photo. **You need:** paper, markers, stickers.
- ☐ **#7 Mailbox Delivery** 5 min no mess outdoors
The elf is waiting in the mailbox or on the doorstep with a tag: "Handle with care. Elf inside." Check together. **You need:** paper tag, string.
- ☐ **#8 Jet-Lag Nap** 5 min no mess funny
The elf naps in an ornament box tucked under a dish towel, with a sign: "Jet lag. Do not disturb." **You need:** small box, dish towel, sticky note.
- ☐ **#9 Treasure Map Arrival** no mess easy
A hand-drawn map is left on the table. X marks the spot where the elf is hiding. **You need:** paper, markers.
- ☐ **#10 Unpacking Day** no mess funny
The elf is caught unpacking a tiny suitcase of doll clothes, a paper toothbrush and a North Pole map. **You need:** small box, doll clothes or fabric scraps, paper, marker.
- ☐ **#11 Pajama Party Arrival** 5 min no mess
The elf sits on a stack of Christmas pajamas with a note: "For tonight's welcome party." **You need:** pajamas.
- ☐ **#12 Arrival Letter Drop** 5 min no mess printable
The elf sits on top of a printed arrival letter that explains the rules of the season. **You need:** printed elf arrival letter.

Elf Arrival Ideas, continued

- ☐ **#13** **Christmas Story Basket** no mess easy

The elf arrives with a basket of the family's Christmas books: one story a night until the big day. **You need:** basket, Christmas books.
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- ☐ **#14** **Hot Cocoa Welcome** 5 min no mess

The elf sits beside a mug of mini marshmallows with a sign: "Cocoa for everyone tonight. I asked!" **You need:** mug, mini marshmallows, sticky note.
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- ☐ **#15** **Welcome Back Banner** no mess easy

The elf has hung a hand-lettered "I'm Back!" banner across a doorway at kid height. **You need:** paper, markers, string, tape.
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- ☐ **#16** **Road Trip Arrival** no mess funny

The elf drives in on a toy car with a doodled map and a little bag strapped to the roof. **You need:** toy car or truck, paper, tape.
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- ☐ **#17** **Movie Night Kickoff** no mess easy

The elf arrives holding the title of a Christmas movie on a card: family movie night starts tonight. **You need:** index card, marker, popcorn bowl.
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- ☐ **#18** **Tiny Elf Door** no mess funny

A small paper door is taped to the baseboard, slightly open, and the elf is just stepping out. **You need:** cardstock or paper, marker, tape.
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- ☐ **#19** **The Rules Poster** 5 min no mess printable

The elf stands next to a printed poster of the rules: no touching, report the nice, magic recharges at night. **You need:** printed rules sheet or note strip, tape.
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- ☐ **#20** **Snowball Fight Arrival** funny

The elf arrives mid-battle with the stuffed animals, cotton-ball snowballs everywhere. **You need:** cotton balls, stuffed animals.
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- ☐ **#21** **Countdown Chain** easy

The elf brings a paper chain with one link for every night until Christmas. Tear one off each morning. **You need:** colored paper strips, tape or stapler.
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- ☐ **#22** **Welcome Snack Board** breakfast easy

The elf set out crackers arranged to spell HI on a plate. **You need:** crackers or cereal, plate.
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- ☐ **#23** **Snowflake Trail** easy

A trail of paper snowflakes leads from the front door to the spot where the elf is waiting. **You need:** printer paper, scissors.
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- ☐ **#24** **Snowman Breakfast Arrival** breakfast

The elf waits at the table beside three waffles stacked into a snowman with chocolate-chip buttons. **You need:** frozen waffles, a few chocolate chips, plate.

Elf supplies checklist

Gather these into one "elf box" before the season starts, and the late nights run themselves

☐ stuffed animal	#1	☐ printed elf arrival letter	#12
☐ paper name tag	#1	☐ basket	#13
☐ sticky note	#2, 8, 14	☐ Christmas books	#13
☐ large clear jar or vase	#3	☐ mug	#14
☐ cotton balls	#3, 20	☐ mini marshmallows	#14
☐ paper tag	#3, 7	☐ toy car or truck	#16
☐ shoebox	#4	☐ index card	#17
☐ brown paper or a paper bag	#4	☐ popcorn bowl	#17
☐ marker	#4, 10, 17, 18	☐ cardstock or paper	#18
☐ tape	#4, 15, 16, 18, 19	☐ printed rules sheet or note strip	#19
☐ an ornament	#5	☐ stuffed animals	#20
☐ paper	#6, 9, 10, 15, 16	☐ colored paper strips	#21
☐ markers	#6, 9, 15	☐ tape or stapler	#21
☐ stickers	#6	☐ crackers or cereal	#22
☐ string	#7, 15	☐ plate	#22, 24
☐ small box	#8, 10	☐ printer paper	#23
☐ dish towel	#8	☐ scissors	#23
☐ doll clothes or fabric scraps	#10	☐ frozen waffles	#24
☐ pajamas	#11	☐ a few chocolate chips	#24

Elf tip: 5 of these 24 ideas need a little tidy-up; the rest leave no mess at all. Nothing here needs anything hot, sharp or high up. Pick the night before, not the week before: a surprise found at 7 a.m. beats a plan made on Sunday.

Notes from the elf

Cut along the dashed lines and leave one beside the elf. The last one is for your own words.

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR ELF · NORTH POLE

Hello again! I have one job: tell the North Pole all the kind things I see. I already have notebooks ready.

Your elf

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR ELF · NORTH POLE

Rules of the season: 1) No touching. 2) Talk to me anytime. 3) Look for me every morning. I'll handle the rest!

Your elf

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR ELF · NORTH POLE

I'm back! The sleigh dropped me off at midnight and I picked this spot myself. Remember: no touching, or my magic fizzles.

Your elf

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR ELF · NORTH POLE

Surprise! I'm here until Christmas Eve. Every night I'll find a new spot. Can you find me every morning?

Your elf

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR ELF · NORTH POLE

Guess who's back from the North Pole? Me! The reindeer say hi. Comet sends an extra-big hi.

Your elf

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR ELF · NORTH POLE

I flew 3,000 miles and only got lost twice. Please say good morning to me each day. I can't talk back, but I hear everything.

Your elf

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR ELF · NORTH POLE
