**CHRISTMAS CHECKLIST: HOLIDAY CARDS**

**TIPS TO WRITE, MAKE, AND SEND**

* ***Update your mailing list:*** Write a list of people to whom you intend to send holiday cards and update any addresses that have changed over the past year.
* ***Stock up early:*** Avoid a last-minute hustle to the post office for stamps, envelopes, and supplies (if you're making cards).
* ***Know when to mail your cards:*** Allow at least four days for all domestic cards, no matter how close the destination.

**TAKE THE PICTURE PERFECT HOLIDAY PHOTO**

* ***Use the right digital camera:*** We recommend a camera with at least 8 megapixels: This will ensure that the photos, whether 4 by 6 inches or 5 by 7 inches, are sufficiently crisp.
* ***Clear the background:*** Position your subjects against a clear, uncluttered background.
* ***Wear solid colors:*** They should complement each other but don't match exactly.
* ***Put yourself in a good light:*** Indirect light is the most flattering; the prime hours are in the early morning or at sunset.
* ***Get a timeless look:*** Experiment with black-and-white and sepia-toned prints.
* ***Keep the kids and pets happy:*** Enlist a helper to make distractions or keep their attention.
* ***Pick your theme:*** Choose a visual idea for your photo that everyone loves (browse some of our fun-filled ideas), and have fun with props and the snowy weather outside!

**PICK YOUR CARD**

* ***Make it pop:*** A 3-D Christmas tree card uses pleated rectangular strips of paper -- folded accordion-style -- to unfurl a spectacular display.
* ***Tie it snugly with a bow:*** A gift-wrapped card prove that presents aren't the only things made prettier with a bow at Christmas time.
* ***Forage for inspiration:*** These nature-inspired cards are adorned with sparkly sprigs of evergreen.
* ***Add some seasonal sparkle:*** Using a fine-tip brush, add some dusty snow to a wonderful winter landscape.

**DISPLAY YOUR CARDS**

* ***Hang them as ornaments:*** Line them along the mantel or, more traditionally, dangle them from your tree.
* ***Bedazzle them with jewelry:*** Poke a pair (or several pairs) of stud earrings into a Christmas tree card so they look like twinkling ornaments.
* ***String them into a garland:*** They can dress a along the mantel or descending flight of stairs.
* ***Pin them into a wreath:*** Encircle your cards into a festive paper decoration.