

Advent

Advent is a Christian festival that happens in the four weeks before Christmas every year. It is observed in many Christian churches as a time of waiting and preparation for the celebration of Christmas.

What Is Advent?

The word 'advent' means 'an important person or thing arriving'. At Advent, Christians look forward to the time when Jesus was born and when the Wise Men visited Jesus.

At Advent, Christians look forward to Christmas and Epiphany. Christmas is when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus. Epiphany is the celebration of the Wise Men's visit to Jesus, which was on the 6th January.

How Do Christians Celebrate Advent?

Christians celebrate Advent in many ways. Many choose the time leading up to Christmas to do nice things with their families. Others also choose to go to church and pray. Hymns and Christmas carols are sung in church at this time and Advent crowns may be made

As well as this, Christians may choose to have an Advent calendar with doors to open each day of Advent to count down the remaining days to Christmas. There are also Advent candles which are marked with days and are burnt a little each day to count down to Christmas.

Advent Colours

Different festivals in the Christian calendar have different colours that are used for church decorations and the clothing to be worn by the clergy.

In many churches, Advent is represented with purple colours. Other churches may choose to instead use blue to represent Advent. At certain times during Advent, other colours may be used, such as pink candles for the third Sunday in Advent.

Advent Crowns

An Advent crown, also known as an Advent wreath, is a special candleholder that has four candles, representing the four Sundays before Christmas. One candle is lit each week. Most crowns have an extra white candle in the middle to represent Jesus which is lit on Christmas Day.

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Advent Questions

1. What does the word 'Advent' mean?

2. Which of these events is the celebration of when the Wise Men visited Jesus? Tick **one**.

- ☐ Christmas Day
- ☐ Epiphany
- ☐ New Year's Day
- ☐ Easter

3. Which of these colours are used for Advent in the church? Tick **two**.

- ☐ yellow
- ☐ purple
- ☐ blue
- ☐ green

4. Match the Advent item to how it is used.

Advent candle

A window is opened each day to reveal a picture and sometimes a treat, such as chocolate.

Advent crown

This is lit for a short time every day to count down the days until Christmas Day.

Advent calendar

This has four candles representing the four Sundays in Advent. It also sometimes has a white candle in the middle.

5. What is the other name that an Advent crown is sometimes called?

Advent Questions

6. What does the white candle in the middle of an Advent crown represent? Tick **one**.

- ☐ snow
- ☐ Christmas Day
- ☐ Jesus
- ☐ the Sunday before Christmas

What is the other name that an Advent crown is sometimes called?

Advent Answers

1. What does the word 'Advent' mean?
The word 'advent' means an important person or thing arriving.
2. Which of these events is the celebration of when the Wise Men visited Jesus? Tick **one**.
 - o Christmas Day
 - o **Epiphany**
 - o New Year's Day
 - o Easter
3. How might people who are not Christians count down to Christmas?
People who are not Christians can use an Advent calendar to countdown to Christmas.
4. On what day of the week does Advent start?
Advent always starts on a Sunday.
5. Name something that Christians do during Advent.
Things Christians do during Advent are: (any one or more from)
 - **Pray**
 - **Go to church**
 - **Spend time with family**
 - **Sing hymns or carols**
 - **Make an Advent crown or wreath**
 - **Light Advent crown candles**
 - **Light Advent candles**
 - **Use Advent calendars**
6. When are the four corner candles lit on an Advent crown?
The four corner candles are lit on an Advent crown on the four Sundays leading up to Christmas.
7. When is the middle "Jesus" candle lit on an Advent crown?
The middle "Jesus" candle is lit on Christmas Day.
8. How does an Advent candle work?
An Advent candle has numbers down the side and a small bit of the candle is burned each day until the candle is burned fully down by Christmas Day.
9. In which country did Advent calendars begin?
Advent calendars began in Germany.

10. In England and Wales between 1647 and 1660 Christmas was a serious time. What is like today?

Today, Christmas is now a happy and joyful celebration time.

Advent

Advent is a Christian festival that happens in the four weeks before Christmas every year. It is observed in many Christian churches as a time of waiting and preparation for the celebration of Christmas.

What Is Advent?

The word 'advent' means 'an important person or thing arriving'. In this case, Jesus is the important person and whose birth is being celebrated by Christians at Christmas. Advent also includes Epiphany: the celebration of when the Wise Men (the Magi) met Jesus. Epiphany is on the 6th January, at the end of the 12 days of Christmas.

Just as many people count down to Christmas using an Advent calendar, Christians celebrate the coming of Christmas from the fourth Sunday before Christmas Eve.

How Do Christians Celebrate Advent?

The time leading up to Christmas for Christians is often spent with friends and family. Many Christians also choose this time for prayer. Christmas carols and hymns are sung at this time and Advent crowns and candles are lit. An Advent crown, also known as an Advent wreath, is a special candleholder that has four candles, representing the four Sundays before Christmas. One candle is lit each week. Most crowns have an extra white candle in the centre which is lit on Christmas Day to represent Jesus. Advent candles are marked with numbers and are burnt a little each day to count down to Christmas Day.

Advent Colours

Different festivals in the Christian calendar have different colours that are used for church decorations and the clothing to be worn by the clergy.

In many churches, Advent is represented with purple colours. Other churches may choose to instead use blue to represent Advent. At certain times during Advent, other colours may be used, such as pink candles for the third Sunday in Advent.

Did You Know...?

Advent calendars originated in Germany in the late 1800s when chalk marks were made on doors and candles were lit to count down the days leading up to Christmas.

The first printed Advent calendar was made in the early 1900s.



Advent Questions

1. How often does Advent happen? Tick one.

- ☐ every four weeks
- ☐ every year
- ☐ every month
- ☐ every four years

2. When is Epiphany? Tick one.

- ☐ 6th January
- ☐ 6th December
- ☐ 12th December
- ☐ 25th December

3. Name **two** items Christians may use to count down the days until Christmas Day.

4. Tick to show whether each statement is true or false.

	True	False
Epiphany is at the start of the 12 days of Christmas.		
The white candle on an Advent crown represents Jesus.		
Churches are decorated in violet, blue or pink for Advent.		
The second Sunday in Advent is known as Gaudete.		

5. Where did Advent calendars originally come from? Tick one.

- ☐ England
- ☐ France
- ☐ America
- ☐ Germany

Advent Questions

6. Find and copy one word which refers to the people who hold services at church.

7. How are Advent calendars different now to when they were invented?

8. Why do you think the candles on an Advent crown are lit on a Sunday?

Advent Answers

1. How often does Advent happen? Tick one.

- ☐ every four weeks
☒ every year
☐ every month
☐ every four years

2. When is Epiphany? Tick one.

- ☒ 6th January
☐ 6th December
☐ 12th December
☐ 25th December

3. Name two items Christians may use to count down the days until Christmas Day.

Accept the two following answers: Advent calendar; Advent candle

4. Tick to show whether each statement is true or false.

	True	False
Epiphany is at the start of the 12 days of Christmas.		☒
The white candle on an Advent crown represents Jesus.	☒	
Churches are decorated in violet, blue or pink for Advent.	☒	
The second Sunday in Advent is known as Gaudete.		☒

5. Where did Advent calendars originally come from? Tick one.

England

- ☐ France
☐ America
☐ Germany
☒

Advent Answers

6. Find and copy one word which refers to the people who hold services at church.
clergy
7. How are Advent calendars different now to when they were invented?
Pupils' own responses, such as: When they were first invented, Advent calendars were chalk marks on doors counting down the days until Christmas Day. Today, people have printed calendars or calendars that have treats inside.
8. Why do you think the candles on an Advent crown are lit on a Sunday?
Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the candles are lit on a Sunday because that is the holy day for Christians and when Christians go to church.

Advent

Advent is an annual Christian festival occurring in the four weeks prior to Christmas.

What Does It Mean?

The definition of the word 'advent' is 'the arrival of an important person or thing'. In this particular case, the important person is Jesus, whose birth is celebrated by Christians, on Christmas Day. However, it is not just this day that Advent anticipates; it encompasses the whole of Christmastime up until the celebration of when the Wise Men (the Magi) met Jesus at Epiphany, which falls on January 6th.



Just as many people count down to Christmas using an 'Advent' calendar, Christians celebrate the coming of Christmas from the fourth Sunday prior to Christmas Eve too.

How Do Christians Celebrate Advent?

The celebration of the coming of Christmas, for Christians, is spent with family and in prayer. Hymns and Christmas carols are sung at this time and Advent wreaths are made. An Advent crown has four candles on it to represent the four Sundays before Christmas and one is lit each week. Most Christians believe that each of the four candles represents people who were looking forward to Jesus' birth. Beliefs differ, but most include his mother, Mary, represented by the fourth candle. Many Advent crowns have an extra, white candle in the middle to represent Christ. Many people – both Christians and non-Christians - have Advent calendars and some have Advent candles with numbers up the side, with a small part of the candle burned down each day.

Advent Facts:

In some churches, red or white candles are used, but in Catholic churches purple and pink are the most common colours.

Rose is the colour associated with the third Sunday in Advent which is also known as 'Gaudete' (pronounced: gow-day-tay).

Advent calendars originated in Germany in the late 1800s.

During Oliver Cromwell's time as Lord Protector, Christmas Carols were banned between 1647 and 1660 as it was thought Christmas should be a solemn time. In the early 19th century, the church also took a dim view of certain carols so people sang them elsewhere. The tradition still exists in some places around the UK, where they are sung in local pubs during Advent.

Advent Questions

1. What is celebrated at Epiphany and what date does it fall on?

2. What does the word 'encompass' mean?

3. What is another name for the Wise Men?

4. Does Advent always last the same number of days? Explain your answer.

5. Name three things that Christians do during Advent.

6. What does the candle in the middle of an Advent crown mean and what colour is it usually?

7. How does an Advent candle work?

8. In which century did Advent calendars begin in Germany?

9. 'What does the author say some people do in pubs in the UK during Advent?

10. Compare the feeling of Christmas today with Christmas in Oliver Cromwell's time.

Advent Answers

1. 'What is celebrated at Epiphany and what date does it fall on?'
Epiphany falls on January 6th and Christians celebrate when the Wise Men visited to Jesus.
2. What does the word 'encompass' mean?
The word 'encompass' means surround/circle/includes.
3. What is another name for the Wise Men?
Another name for the Wise Men is 'the Magi'.
4. Does Advent always last the same number of days? Explain your answer.
Advent does not last the same number of days because it is counted from the fourth Sunday before Christmas. Christmas does not always fall on the same day of the week, so the number of days can change.
5. Name three things that Christians do during Advent.
Things Christians do during Advent are: (any three from)
 - Pray
 - Go to church
 - Spend time with family
 - Sing hymns or carols
 - Make an Advent crown or wreath
 - Light Advent crown candles
 - Light Advent candles
 - Use Advent calendars
6. What does the candle in the middle of an Advent crown mean and what colour is it usually?
The candle in the middle of an Advent crown is usually white and represents Jesus (Christ).
7. How does an Advent candle work?
An Advent candle has numbers down the side and a small bit of the candle is burned each day until the candle is burned fully down by Christmas Day.
8. In which century did Advent calendars originate in Germany?
Advent calendars originated in Germany in the 19th century.
9. 'What does the author say some people do in pubs in the UK during Advent?'
Some people sing Christmas carols in local pubs during Advent.
10. Compare the feeling of Christmas today with Christmas in Oliver Cromwell's time.
In Oliver Cromwell's time, Christmas was thought to be a serious and solemn time, whereas now it is seen as a happy and joyful time.