

Put the happy in the holidays

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ENGLISH

The holidays are supposed to be our big break from school. Three weeks of no class, so no stress? Yeah right. Unfortunately, the holidays can overwhelm us just as much as school. Have gifts to buy, family and friends to see, food to prepare and a part-time job to manage too? It's understandable why you can't find time to rest and relax over the break. Here's a list of ways to keep stress to the minimum during the holiday season.

Make a gift list.

Don't "shop around" for gifts for particular people. Decide what you want to get for your friends and family before you go shopping so you don't waste hours wandering around the mall. If you haven't already, start brainstorming!

Shop Online

Shopping online is easy, fast and sometimes cheaper than going to the store. You can use websites like Groupon.com to find the best deals. Even get a head start in between studying for exams since this can be done from your dorm. Ship items home so you don't have to worry about traveling with gifts.

Decorate.

'Tis the season. It might be time-consuming, but take the time to hang up a few lights or decorate a tree. It's worth the effort to come home to a dorm, apartment or house decked out in holiday spirit. The warm, cheery atmosphere should help you stay grounded and remember the joy of the season.

Exercise.

Winter blues got you down? Go for a run. If it's too cold outside, go to the gym. Or just turn on some music and dance around. Whatever you do, get moving. Even ten minutes will increase your mood and keep those winter blues away and seasonal pounds off.

Share the (cookie) love.

No winter is complete without sugar cookies, but if you're trying not to gain weight, those cookies can be all too tempting. After you make and decorate your cookies, keep a few for yourself and your family, and then give the rest away to neighbors and friends.

Stay healthy & active.

It's easy to get sick this time of year and being stuck in bed is definitely not how you want to spend your break. Keep nasty colds away by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables and getting enough rest. Stay active by going out and doing activities that you can't do over the summer, like ice skating, caroling or going for a drive to look at holiday lights.

Keep in Touch.

Don't forget to stay in contact with your Elon friends while you're home. It's hard not to get wrapped up in your life back home, but something as simple as sending a "Happy Holidays!" text can go a long way and let your friends at school know that you are thinking about them.