

# Love them or hate them - your kids love party bags!

Love them or hate them your kids love party bags. Comfort yourself with the fact that when they have children of their own and find themselves in your shoes, responsible for putting them together, as well as working through the mammoth list to get the birthday party show on the road - their sentiments will be more in tune with yours. In the meantime, just like with Christmas, children are inevitably going to get excited by them.



For a child, what isn't there to love about them? They get the goodies. And we aren't talking about the sort of things most of us used to get as kids: a piece of cake – and if we were really lucky a piece of cake and a soggy paper party blower. A survey by Tesco's last year revealed that the average spend on a child's party bag is now £7.48! No wonder they get excited.

## **Dont panic though. Some basic guidelines on putting them together can ease the process:**

- ★ Dont be intimidated (by the bags or the kids!)
- ★ Set your budget. It is all down to how much you are spending on the party. If you are doing it all yourself with a total budget of £150 then you aren't going to be spending more than a couple of pounds a bag. If you have an entertainer and/or caterers then your budget will grow accordingly. You don't however, have to go mad.
- ★ Throwing money at the bags isnt always the answer. Any money you do spend should be spent thoughtfully. If you are having a themed party, try and ensure the contents reflect the theme: this continues the party experience for the child when they get home
- ★ Try and avoid 'disposables'. Our kids are thankfully more environmentally aware than we ever were – and to be honest why waste

money (and send the wrong messages) on things that will go straight in the bin when the kids get home? One or two good quality items such as a finger puppet, or a little wooden puzzle will not break the bank

- ★ Avoid the plastic bags. Fabric bags are great as they provide a lasting reminder of your child's party and are great for storing small toys. If your budget won't stretch then paper bags are a great solution. Why not get your child to decorate them beforehand?
- ★ Getting your child involved in the process is a great way of building up to their big day. Ask your child for suggestions and make use of their imagination. Why be confined to traditional party bag ware? You can also use this opportunity to manage their expectations!

★ If there is a chance of what I call 'subversive education' – a product that is fun but also has educational merit than leap at it. Party bags are one occasion when you have a child's attention, so why waste it?

★ Try and tailor the bags to accommodate boys, girls and their various ages (and dont forget the babies)

★ It's up to you whether you opt to include sweets – but if you do try to avoid E numbers for the very obvious reason.

★ Finally, if it is all too much, sit back with a glass of wine and use the professionals. If you think that this is an expensive option – think again. It can work out cheaper as well as saving you the time, energy and stress levels



## **GOOD LUCK!**

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