

Handy Hints for a Visit from Santa

Thank you for selecting Black Hills Santa for your Holiday Event. To help you in making Santa's visit a most enjoyable event, here is a list of suggestions.

1. Have camera(s) ready. Some of the best photos are un-staged so be ready.
2. Always address Santa as Santa! Even if you know his real name, call him Santa.
3. If Santa is delivering gifts you have purchased, please meet Santa 5 minutes prior to hand them to him. Presents should be well labeled with a large black marker directly on the gift.
4. Get everyone together before Santa enters. Timing is everything. You have scheduled Santa for a set amount of time, which begins the minute he arrives.
5. For large events intro music for Santa can really set the tone for the event.
6. Have a sturdy chair for Santa to sit in. Folding chairs and low chairs are not good. A good straight-back dining chair, with no arms, works well.
7. Place the Chair near your Christmas tree or in a holiday setting. Your photos will have more impact when the background has a festive look. Fireplaces look nice but putting Santa too close to a real fire is uncomfortable for the big guy.
8. Think about photos with everyone. Yes, some teenagers might think it is too childish to have a photo with Santa but don't worry. Santa can do a "buddy" photo. What about grandma and grandpa? And Santa loves "Selfies!"
9. For corporate events, reserve a special parking place for Santa. It should be as close as possible to where he is visiting.
10. At large corporate events a host should meet Santa when he arrives to brief him on any last-minute changes.
11. If the event will feature many children, please have a couple of helpers for Santa. Santa's magic can quickly dissipate if he must control children. Stanchions or railings are good for controlling large lines. A simple barrier can be made by a row of chairs.
12. At Breakfast with Santa events, it is often best for Santa to walk around greeting everyone at the beginning, while they are eating. This allows for faster picture time later.

Also, this is a great time for parents to take those non-staged photos.

13. If possible, a fan on low-speed assists Santa. His suit is very warm, and he can get overheated if the temperature in the room gets too high.

14. If the event is over an hour, a bottle of water with a straw is a big help for Santa.

15. Also, if the event is over an hour, Santa will need a break to stretch his legs for about 10 minutes.

16. The best photos are taken in the first five seconds. Children in strange situations can often be afraid. At large events, parents should stay with their children as they go up to Santa to help reinforce support to the child. Helpers should inform the parents to take their child or children up to Santa and then quickly move out of the photo area.

If children are scared and screaming, Santa will advise the parents not to force the child for a photo. Visiting Santa should not be traumatic.

17. If there is a balance or payment due to Santa, place it inside a Christmas card or envelope. Never give Santa money in front of the Children.