Grown-up guide

Twenty minutes of prep

1. Print the kit once (plain paper is fine; the poster and sign look best on cardstock).
2. Cut out the seven envelope labels and glue each onto a standard envelope; any size works.
3. Put each hour's two activity cards and its "midnight in..." card inside; add a chocolate coin if you like.
4. Keep pages 11–15 (time capsule, chain strips, fortune cards, wish stars, photo sign) in a folder; the cards tell you when to fetch them.
5. Hang the poster at kid height, pin the envelopes under it in order, hide the scissors.

Timing for every family

- **Toddlers:** open envelopes every 30 minutes from 2 p.m. and hold "midnight" at 5 p.m.
- **School age:** as printed, 6 p.m. to midnight, with the quiet options after 10.
- **Teens and grandparents:** skip a card or two, keep the time capsule and the awards of the family photo.

Midnight around the world

Each hour card names cities where it is already midnight, calculated for US Eastern Time. In Central Time everything shifts one hour (your 6 p.m. is midnight in London); Mountain two, Pacific three. Keep a globe or a map nearby and let the children find the cities.

HOUR	THEME	ACTIVITY A	OPTION B	FROM THE FOLDER
6 p.m.	Dress the party	Make the room look like a party	Quiet option · Table talk	chain strips, wish stars
7 p.m.	Time capsule	Interview each other	Quiet option · Height check	time capsule sheet
8 p.m.	Dance and freeze	2026 playlist dance-off	Quiet option · Shadow show	—
9 p.m.	Snacks and fortunes	Build a snack tower	Quiet option · Hot cocoa bar	fortune cards
10 p.m.	Minute games	Three sixty-second games	Quiet option · Blanket fort	—
11 p.m.	Wishes and noise	Wish stars and noisemakers	Quiet option · Letter to yourself	wish stars
Midnight	Happy New Year 2027	The countdown	For early sleepers	photo sign

6 p.m. • Dress the party

OPEN AT

6 p.m.

Dress the party

envelope 1 of 7 · countdown to 2027

6 P.M. · ACTIVITY

Make the room look like a party

Cut the memory chain strips (page 12), write one 2026 memory on each, loop them into a paper chain and hang it where everyone can read it. Then make a crown from a strip of paper and decorate it with stars from page 14.

Done? Tick the poster.

6 P.M. · OPTION B

Quiet option • Table talk

Over dinner, go round the table twice: the best thing that happened in 2026, then the silliest. Grown-ups go first so the kids hear it is safe to be silly.

RIGHT NOW IT IS MIDNIGHT IN…

Berlin, Paris, Rome, Madrid and Lagos

Shout "Frohes neues Jahr! Bonne année!" out of the window, then back to the party. (Times for US Eastern Time; Central is one hour behind, so your 6 p.m. is London's midnight.)