



## FACT SHEET

### What is Operation Christmas Child?

- The Samaritan's Purse project Operation Christmas Child collects shoebox gifts—filled with fun toys, school supplies and personal care items—and delivers them to children in need around the world to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way. For many of these children, the gift-filled shoebox is the first gift they have ever received.
- Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child, the world's largest Christmas project of its kind, has collected and delivered more than 220 million shoebox gifts to children in more than 160 countries and territories.
- Over 11.3 million shoebox gifts were collected globally in 2023, with 237,735 collected in the UK.

### Process

- Anyone can pack a shoebox. Individuals, families, churches and groups fill empty shoeboxes with school supplies, hygiene items and fun toys, such as dolls or footballs.
- During **National Collection Week (11-18 November, 2024)**, Samaritan's Purse will collect the gift-filled shoeboxes at over 1,000 Drop-off Locations across the UK.
- Learn how to pack a shoebox, view gift suggestions, get your Follow Your Box barcode and find the nearest drop-off location at [samaritans-purse.org.uk/occ](https://samaritans-purse.org.uk/occ).
- Do not include: Toothpaste, sweets, lotions and liquids; used or damaged items; war-related items; seeds, gum, chocolate or food items; religious or political literature; medicines, aerosol cans, sharp or fragile items.
- Participants can donate £5 per shoebox gift online through Follow Your Box to cover project costs and receive a tracking barcode to discover its destination.
- Participants who prefer the convenience of online shopping can browse [shoebonline.org.uk](https://shoebonline.org.uk) to select gifts matched to a child's specific age and gender, then finish packing the virtual shoebox by adding a photo and personal note of encouragement.
- Shoebox gifts are prepared for overseas shipment at processing centres across the UK by thousands of dedicated volunteers.

### Scope

- Shoebox gifts are collected in the UK, U.S., Canada, Australia, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Spain, New Zealand and South Korea.
- Nearly 500,000 volunteers worldwide—are involved in collecting, shipping and distributing shoebox gifts.
- Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian relief and evangelism organisation headed by Franklin Graham. Samaritan's Purse currently works in more than 100 countries to provide aid to victims of war, disease, disaster, poverty and famine.

## **Eternal Impact**

- Delivered into the hands of children through local churches, every shoebox gift is an opportunity to share about Jesus Christ and God's love.
- Since 2009, more than 40 million children who have received a shoebox gift have participated in The Greatest Journey—a 12-lesson discipleship programme. Children learn from trained, local volunteers what it means to follow Jesus and share their faith with friends and family.

## **Social Media**

To spread the word, tag Operation Christmas Child on any social media posts related to the project. You can also share your shoebox stories and photos by emailing them [occsocialmedia@samaritans-purse.org.uk](mailto:occsocialmedia@samaritans-purse.org.uk). Your content may be used on national social media pages. Be sure to like, comment and share Operation Christmas Child posts.

[Facebook @occurk](#) | [Twitter @occ\\_uk](#) | [Instagram @occurk](#)

## **Media Queries:**

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