

## Top 5: New Year's online

March 12, 2008

New Year's Eve is a love or hate time for most - you either ring it in with paper hats and leftover Christmas cake while wedged between a snoring great-aunt Nora and grumbling grandad, or you find yourself in a mile-long toilet queue in a nightclub with a full bladder while your friend drinks your glass of champers.

Considering the options, maybe it's time you tried ringing in the New Year online. Think about it: comfy couch, no crowds, no nagging relatives and you can log off whenever you get bored!



### 1. Live webcam from Times Square

The biggest New Year's celebration is always at Times Square in New York - this year, log on and see the action live as it's happening with [Earthcam](#), which has been running for the past 12 years.

### 2. Second Life

Why tie yourself down to one real party when you can attend multiple virtual ones? Ring in the New Year at the London, New York and Sydney/Melbourne Ball, without the worry of a new outfit for each party. The only drawback is that the alcohol is virtual, but the music is sure to be good!

### 3. Google Countdown

Maybe this New Year's will be a traditional one, but in all the excitement, it is important to keep track. Google's 2009 countdown will keep you in check online, on your mobile or on your iGoogle homepage. Just make sure you're checking the right time zone.

### 4. Online January sales

New Year's Eve is just the beginning. Many of us are up bright and early for the January sales as we prepare to battle our way through huge crowds for bargains we will never realistically use but buy in the heat of the moment.

Bypass the crowds and the mania by settling in on 31 December with a glass of wine and your laptop, and head over to sites like Pixmania, ebay and Maplins for a gadget blitz in the comfort of your own home.

### 5. Skype

Spend this New Year's with loved ones who could not be there to celebrate it with you in person: video-chat live online through Skype's VoIP service and sing Auld Lang Syne in chorus.

By Marie Boran