

🎵 JANUARY FEATURED SONG 🎵

by Paul Cooper

HEY FOR CHRISTMAS

This song was first published as a broadside in London in the 1600s. The tune is by the legendary English Baroque composer Henry Purcell. I am pretty sure the good Master Purcell did not write the words, which tell of a festive and rather bawdy Christmas celebration, which apparently was not unusual in seventeenth century England. Many more verses exist in the various sources. The version below is as performed by Houston's [Wylde Meade](#).



To hear the tune go here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNi_fDWdIH8&t=61s. They are in the Key of B, so you would have to transpose, or tune down a half step to play with them (yes, it's a lot like The Irish Washerwoman).

THE SHROPSHIRE WAKES

C Dm
Come Robin, Ralph, Tom and Harry; meet for sport upon our Green,
C F G7
With Briget, Kate, Nora and Mary - The finest maids that ere were seen!

CHORUS: So hey for Christmas, once a year
Where we have Cakes, both ale and beer,
And to our Christmas feast there come,
Young men and Maid to shake their bums!

Gammer Nichols has a Custard,
Neighbour Wood – a roasted Pig,
Widdow Franklin has beer and mustard,
At their house there is good swig!
A fiddler to play e'ry Dance,
where young Lads and Lasses meet:
With which the Men and Maids will prance,
the fiddler before them down the street.



CHORUS

They sat down to their good cheer, Pleasant were both Maids and Men,
Having dined and drank their beer, they rose and went to dance again,
They did daunce from noon till night, toppling down both Maid and Man,
The Fiddler was an awful sight! And sweat down their buttocks ran! CHORUS



Richard was pulling John by the throat, and most of them fell in the mire.
The men went away and paid ne'r a groat, but left the Maids to pay for their chear
Betty was forst to pawn her laste coat, and Nel to leave her Wrapping there

And so my merry ballad is Ended, when Maids come again to these wakes
they'll first see the young lads manners mended -
And make them pay for ale and Cakes. CHORUS