

# Ten Tips to Spend Wisely This Holiday



**You're hoping for happy holidays**—but it's also important to have a happy wallet. Overdoing it on unintended splurges or overpriced last-minute gifts can set you up for the post-holiday blues when the bills roll in. **Try these 10 tips to help you spend more wisely this season.**

- 1. Start with a budget.** Be realistic about how much money you have to spend for gifts this year. Avoid the credit card trap—if you can't pay it all off, you may have to deal with paying interest on those purchases, which will cost you more money in the long run.
- 2. Plan a gift for each person and how much you want to spend.** Do some price-checking online to make sure the intended gift is in line with what you budgeted.
- 3. Look for sales, promotions and/or coupons.** This can help you buy a gift that is worth more, while spending less.
- 4. Scour cash-back sites to help you get money back on purchases.** Getting cash back can help you offset some of the dollars spent during your holiday shopping!
- 5. Avoid the “one for you, one for me” spending.** If you're yearning for an item, see if you still want it after the holidays—then hunt for sales.
- 6. Try switching up your family's gift-giving.** For example, you could do a Secret Santa where each person gets the name of another person, and just has to buy a nice gift for that one person.
- 7. Consider making gifts and cards.** Handmade gifts such as crafts and baked goods—or even nuts in a decorated jar—are less expensive, but generally have greater meaning because you took the time to make them yourself.
- 8. Ditch expensive wrapping.** Get creative with your presentations. One idea: Recycle a brown paper bag decorated with a colorful handwritten greeting. Or forgo wrapping altogether—fancy socks rolled up and tied with twine can still be a fun gift!
- 9. Consider giving certificates for a cause in someone's name.** Whether for an animal lover, an outdoor enthusiast or another person with a particular passion, this could be the exact right gift for the right person (and help you out come tax time, too!)
- 10. Focus on experiences instead of presents.** Spending time with those you love, making memories that last a lifetime is priceless! Consider asking your family for ideas for sharing an experience this year. Even going on an outing to enjoy the holiday lights together followed by hot cocoa can be meaningful for young and old!

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