



Low Cost Holiday Gift Ideas

- For the movie buff: local video rental stores may sell recently released, already viewed DVDs and video tapes at a reduced price.
- For the sports enthusiast: look in the yellow pages under Sporting Goods-Used for stores that buy and sell used equipment. You may be able to trade in outgrown or discarded items for the equipment needed.
- For the music lover: Look for second-hand music stores, they may not have the newest CD but may have recordings by favorite artists.
- For the book lover: local libraries hold book sales with deeply discounted prices, also try used book stores. You might find an out of print treasure.
- For young children: create a gift box of “dress up” clothes. Collect scarves, jewelry, hats, shoes and old clothes or uniforms. Most kids can have hours of fun playing dress up.
- For children’s toys and clothing: Check out thrift stores, discount stores such as Big Lots and Dollar Stores, secondhand stores, flea markets, pawn shops, garage sales, going out of business sales, etc.
- For a teenage girl: a cosmetic box might be appropriate. Look for sales at drug stores or discount stores like Big Lots for hair accessories, nail polish and makeup; buy beads and string at a craft store to make a variety of bracelets and necklaces.
- If you have sewing, knitting, crocheting, woodworking, quilting, etc. skills: make hats, mittens, sweaters, Afghans, a decorative shelf, cabinet or a quilt that compliments the recipient’s décor.
- If you have handyman skills: a “Gift Certificate” offering needed home improvement or repair service provided by you.
- Make a coupon book including things that the person likes. For example, a coupon for their favorite home-cooked meal; free night of babysitting, laundry or housecleaning service; baking cookies together; going to the park; a back rub or just spending the day together.
- Put together a gift basket with homemade baked goods or bath items.
- Homemade gifts and ornaments are an inexpensive alternative to the shopping mall and are often the most treasured by family members.

Other Holiday Gifts Ideas

- Give the gift of time. Check with your local Parks Department, libraries and Purdue County Extension Offices. They offer a wide variety of family activities that are either free or inexpensive.

Dial Connect2Help 2-1-1 at 2-1-1 or (317) 926-4357 to get connected to community resources.

Check out your local paper for free and low cost activity ideas. Also, local churches often have social activities during the holidays.

- Making a goal to volunteer as a family throughout the year can be fun and rewarding as well as instill a volunteering spirit in your children.
- Consider donating unneeded clothes and toys to a clothing bank or thrift store so that someone else's holidays might be brighter.
- Teach a younger person a skill such as knitting, sewing, woodworking, cooking, gardening, auto maintenance.

Remember to continue paying rent and utilities so children will have a warm place to stay after the holidays. Holidays do not last very long; celebrating them should not leave you in a bad financial position the rest of the year.



A Few Holiday Craft Ideas

- Look for recipes to make a gingerbread house or other holiday goodies.
- A box of heavy duty plastic spoons and a bag of chocolate chips can be used to make a great gift for any coffee or hot chocolate lover. Just melt the chocolate, dip the spoons up to where the handle begins and let them dry. Tie together with a ribbon and give away with packages of homemade hot chocolate, or mugs from the Dollar Store. The chocolate covered spoons make a gourmet treat out of a cup of coffee.
- If you have salt, flour, water and food coloring on hand you can make homemade clay. Use cookie cutters or simply shape the clay into candy canes, snowmen and other holiday shapes. Bake to harden and add a ribbon to make ornaments.
- Look in craft stores or discount stores such as the Dollar Store or Big Lots for inexpensive craft items like ribbon, glue, spray paint, glitter etc. Rummage through the house for bits of fabric, buttons and odds and ends that can be used for decorating. Gather items from the back yard like pine cones, leaves and twigs; all of these things can be used to make creative ornaments and keepsakes. Even plain white paper can be cut into "snowflakes" and hung in windows. Kids will have fun helping.
- Family members may appreciate gifts of photo albums, framed pictures, or collages of family photos. Buy inexpensive plain frames/albums or make them with cardboard covered with fabric and ribbon. Recruit the kids to decorate them. Even little kids can make tiny painted handprints that will be sure to melt grandma's heart.
- Make a scrapbook of kid's drawings, or write a poem or story about how much your family means to you. Collect family recipes to make a book. Gifts like these are very easy on the budget, and are often more meaningful to the recipients than a store bought gift.