



University of California Cooperative Extension – Kern County

NEWS RELEASE

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Holiday Giving

The holidays will be here before you know it and now is the time to start making plans for your holiday giving. By planning ahead you will reduce the stress that is experienced around the holidays and stay within your budget.

Due to the current economic conditions, there are many bargains to be found. By starting early you will be better positioned to take advantage of these bargains. Here are some simple steps to get you started:

- Make a list of who you want to give gifts to.
- Brainstorm some ideas of what you want to give the people on your list.
- Develop a budget that includes not only how much per person but also how much per month you are able to spend.
- Watch for sales and other opportunities to fill your list.

If you are planning on purchasing gifts, don't be afraid to haggle. It never hurts to see if the clerk has a coupon or can give you a discount. Locally owned business may be more willing to negotiate with you, it never hurts to ask.

Don't forget to check out thrift stores, flea markets, antique stores, online auction and sales sites. Some companies donate new goods to thrift stores. Often there are great bargains to be found.

What if you really don't have money to spend for gift giving? There are many gifts you can give that cost your time or talent and are greatly appreciated. In past year's spending money one did not have was no big deal...just charge it. Attitudes have changes and Americans are paying off their debt and saving money in record amounts. Many people have given up or cut back on luxuries that were once taken for granted.

The infamous coupon book is a strategy to give of our time and talents. This gesture is sure to be appreciated this holiday season. The ideas for coupons are endless; car washes, inside detailing, pedicures, washing windows, paint a room or yard work. You are only limited by your imagination. Think about the person and what they would like and you are on your way.

Food gifts are also greatly appreciated by those who don't cook, bake or have the time to do so. Gifts such as pumpkin bread, candies, cookies, soup, casseroles, jams and jellies are always popular. Once again you are only limited by your imagination.

Here's wishing you a happy, healthy, debt free holiday.

