Utah State University
DigitalCommons@USU

All Archived Publications | Archived USU Extension Publications

1-1-2001

How Can I Better Budget For The Holidays? Part 1

Barbara Rowe

Warning: The information in this series may be obsolete. It is presented here for historical purposes only. For the most up to date information please visit The Utah State University Cooperative Extension Office

Recommended Citation
Rowe, Barbara, "How Can I Better Budget For The Holidays? Part 1" (2001). *All Archived Publications.* Paper 273.
http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/extension_histall/273

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archived USU Extension Publications at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Archived Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usu.edu.

Utah State University Extension
electronic publishing

ask A Specialist

A weekly question/answer column

How Can I Better Budget For The Holidays?

Barbara Rowe answers:*

First of Two

The best gift you can give yourself (and your family) this season is a careful watch on your wallet and spending. Here are some tips to help you anticipate holiday spending and to realistically estimate the money available to meet those expenses.

- Review your entertainment plans. Are there ways to reduce food expenses? Would a potluck supper or progressive dinner be just as enjoyable as your traditional lavish buffet? Would lunch or brunch, rather than dinner, do?
- Is this the year to prune your greeting card list of former neighbors who are little more than a hazy memory?
- Review entertaining and gift-giving policies at work and in your clubs and organizations. Is this the year to change?
- Make a realistic gift budget before you begin any shopping. Ask yourself:
- How much of my current income can I afford to spend on gifts?
- How much can I use from savings for holiday gifts?
- How much can I afford to buy on credit?
- Who do I want to remember with gifts?
- What price range is appropriate and affordable?
- If the answers to these questions reveal that the amount of money available is less than you need to complete your gift buying, take a second look:
- Are children's gifts preserving the magic of play? The basics – artist kits, board games, teddy bears, puzzles or books – are likely to preserve budgets as well as imagination.
- Not all gifts have to be purchased. Food and craft gifts are always appreciated. However, these items may require more time than you have. It doesn't help holiday stress if you have more projects than you can complete. Instead, give the most personal gift of all – yourself. Promise to baby-sit, shovel snow or clean the garage.
- Preserve tradition with another special gift. Assemble an album from grandma's cherished but unmounted photographs. Record the history of an elder relative or the children's voices at play. Give a family heirloom.

Next week: shopping tips for presents you plan to purchase.

---

* Barbara Rowe is Utah State University Extension Family Resource Management Specialist