

Tips for Picking and Presenting Perfect Holiday Gifts



(StatePoint) With a few simple tips, your holiday gifts can be personal, meaningful and beautifully wrapped.

Pick a Present

Spend time brainstorming. Make a list of the recipient's hobbies, activities you've done together, favorite places – anything that might inspire a gift. Take a look at the recipient's social media pages to see which brands he or she likes or follows, or pinned on Pinterest.

Does your brother follow tech blogs? Purchase the latest tech trend, like a smart watch. Does your best friend pin anything with a monogram? Find great gifts on sites like Etsy or Personal Creations, which offer items that can be engraved or monogrammed for a completely one-of-a-kind present. Head to the store or look online with a specific idea in mind, so you're not overwhelmed.

Shop Smart

Do a quick search online for available deals, and to compare prices from different retailers. Deal-sharing sites like Slickdeals provide information on offers across a wide range of product categories, while sites like

PriceZombie allow you to track costs for your preferred present. The site will send you an alert when the item's price drops.

Some research also helps you discover which stores have the best selection (and return policy). Be sure to get a gift receipt, especially if purchasing clothing.

Knowing exactly where you need to go – the sporting goods store, the shoe section, the beauty aisle – simplifies the entire process.

Personalize Packaging

Make the wrapping as extraordinary as the gift with fun, creative packaging. Colorful wrapping paper in your recipient's favorite color or pattern is always a good choice. Next, embellish with ribbons, bows or glittery tapes. Finally, don't forget a card to express how you feel.

Remember, commercial packaging lacks the personal charm and care of a gift wrapped and shipped by you. Luckily, brands like Duck brand offer all the materials you need to easily – and safely – ship your wonderfully wrapped gifts.

Start by selecting the right shipping materials for the size of your item. You may want to consider a cushioned envelope, such as those from the Bubble Wrap brand, when possible, as they're more cost-effective for shipping smaller items, plus provide extra protection for your shipped goods. For larger gifts, wrap them in several layers of Bubble Wrap cushioning for safety, then ship in a clean, sturdy box.

Seal the box with strong packaging tape, like EZ Start packaging tape. It won't split or tear; plus the tape's Frustration Free special release technology means you never lose the tape end, making the entire process easier.

For an even more festive look, consider using a colored or printed packaging tape, wrapping items in colored Bubble Wrap, like purple or red, or adding stickers to the outside of the box – just be sure there's room for the shipping label.

With planning and creativity, you can purchase and present the perfect gifts for loved ones this year.

Ways to Keep Cozy This Season

(StatePoint) In cool weather, staying comfortable is a top priority – from the clothes and shoes you wear to the food you put on your family's table.

Here, lifestyle experts explain their personal techniques for staying cozy all season long:

No Shoes Policy

Avoid tracking the outside elements into the interiors of your home. A no-shoes policy in the house can help. Keep a shoe rack by the door of your house to encourage family and guests to remove their shoes upon arrival. You can make the policy stick more easily by supplying your family with weather-appropriate shoes that are easy to slip on and off.

"We keep a small basket of Crocs by our sliding door to the backyard. It's easy for the kids to grab their pair, so they can go outside," says lifestyle blogger Kacia Hosmer of Coconut Robot.

Though known as a summer shoe, she cites some of the brand's newer styles, such as Baya Heathered Fuzz Lined Clog, as being cool weather-friendly and a

good fit that stay on one's feet.

Simple Meals

With energy-zapping seasonal afflictions an ever-looming threat, your energy levels can be as unpredictable as the weather. But cooking your family wholesome foods that evoke warmth and comfort doesn't need to be complex or tiring.

"Since I've been under the weather, I didn't really feel like spending a lot of time in the kitchen," says Stephanie Keeping of Space-ships and Laser Beams, who of late has turned to simple recipes that can satisfy hunger morning, noon or night.

One dish recipes like stews or chili are great for incorporating seasonal vegetables with minimal fuss.

Dress for Comfort, Stylishly

The temperatures may be dipping but that's no reason why you can't remain at the intersection of comfort and style. Seek out good quality outerwear. The key is finding favorites that look good with everything, work well no matter what activity your

family is doing, and will last year in and year out.

And it all starts with shoes. Especially for moms who want to quickly slip something on when running out to pick up the kids from after-school activities or racing around for last-minute errands.

"If you know flats, you know not every flat is a very comfortable one," says Jenny Ingram, the family blogger behind Jenny on the Spot. But Ingram and her daughters have been sporting Crocs Mammoth Bow Flats, a discovery she calls "winning the simple and comfy lottery."

When it comes to shoes for kids, parenting experts recommend fuss-free shoes designed for a lot of activity. "Let's just say that tying shoes is not top on his priority list. Crocs Kids Bump-It Shoes have been his shoes of choice since they arrived and they are keeping up with all his outdoor neighborhood activities," says Camille Gabel from the family and parenting blog Growing Up Gabel.

With the right head-to-toe gear and the right mindset, you can stay cozy all season long.

Winter Preparedness on the Dairy Farm

BROOKINGS, S.D. - Weather this time of year can change in a hurry. Are dairy producers ready for winter, asks Tracey Erickson, SDSU Extension Dairy Field Specialist?

Below Erickson outlines a basic winter preparedness checklist for producers to review.

"Obviously, there may be things that you will need to add to this list as each farm is unique, but it will serve as a starting point," Erickson said. "It is my hope that this check list will help you prepare your dairy for the winter season ahead and be beneficial as you put your winter preparedness plan into action, while simultaneously making those cold winter mornings less stressful."

Make way for snow removal: Pick up any items from the yard that may

become buried under a snow bank or entangled in the snow blower.

Snow fence: Put up an appropriate snow fence or snow break in yards for protection and to minimize drifts in areas where they are not wanted.

Fix muddy areas: Consider bringing in any necessary fill or mounding areas that become muddy or troublesome spots in the spring.

Barn Maintenance: Take a look at your barn maintenance list:

1. Check curtains on barns to make sure they are operating properly and repair any holes or tears;
2. Check and maintain ventilation fans including tightening belts and keeping blades and louvers clean;
3. Look upward, inspect and repair building roofs and rafters, making sure there

is no loose tin or cracked rafters present;

4. Maintain and repair any doors in freestall barns that may not open or close properly;

5. Check and clean barn heaters to make sure they are operating properly;

6. Outside the facilities, do preventative trimming of trees around barns, driveways and fences.

"It never fails that in winter, Murphy's Law prevails and equipment will break down or have problems on one of those extremely cold days, making repair work miserable," Erickson said.

So what are some things to consider regarding winter equipment maintenance and preparation?

Test and service your generator(s) and make sure there is adequate fuel on hand to run them.

Winterize and service farm equipment such as tractors, semi's, skid loaders, pay loaders, feed mixing wagons, manure pumps, etc. Take time to check anti-freeze levels, batteries and fuel filters as these items routinely cause issues in cold weather. Keep extra fuel filters on hand for equipment that uses diesel fuel and may gel up in extreme cold.

Examine snow blowers or other snow removal equipment and make sure it is in proper working order.

Fourth, obtain and store enough fuel (No. 1 Diesel or 50:50 blend) to run equipment for an extended period of time. (A two-week supply is suggested.)

Feed & Water Checklist
1. Clean and check heat-

■ **WINTER,**
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AUCTIONS

160 ACRES UNIMPROVED YANKTON COUNTY LAND AUCTION

In order to settle the Lea Guthmiller estate, we will offer the following land at auction. The auction to be held at Minerva's Convention Center in the Kelly Inn at 1607 E Highway 50 in Yankton SD on

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29TH • 10:00 AM

Offered in 3 tracts (Tract # 1: West 80 Acres, Tract # 2: East 80 Acres, Tract # 3: 160 Acre Combination)

Land is located ¾ mile west of Jct of Hwy 81 and 292nd Street or from Yankton County/Hutchinson County line jog on Hwy 81, 1 mile south and ¾ mile west.

The real estate consists of 160 acres (+ or -) of unimproved farm land. The FSA Office reports that it has 154.14 acres tillable and the balance in stock dam, ditches and low ground. The predominate soil types are Clarno-Bonilla loams, Tetonka Silt Loam, Clarno Loam, Ethan-Bonilla Loams, Tetonka Silt Loam, Clarno Loam, Ethan-Bonilla Loams and it has a 77.5 soil productivity index rating. This tract lays level to gently rolling, a 74.5 acre corn base with a 146 bu yield and 75.97 acre soybean base with a 38 bu yield. The annual real estate taxes are \$2830.02. This would make an excellent add on unit for farmer or investor.

LEGAL: The SW ¼ of Section 1-96-56, Yankton County, South Dakota

TERMS: Cash Sale with a 10% nonrefundable downpayment per tract the day of the sale and the balance on or before February 11, 2016. A personal representative's deed will be provided, title insurance will be utilized with cost split 50/50 between buyer and seller. Full possession granted for 2016 crop year at closing. Seller will pay all 2014 and 2015 RE Taxes. Sold subject to confirmation by the Personal Representatives. Wieman Land & Auction Co., Inc. represents the seller in this transaction. The seller does not warrant that all fencelines are on the true and correct boundary lines. Sold subject to all easements on record.

LEA L. GUTHMILLER ESTATE, OWNER
Gary Guthmiller & Kim Heikes, Co-Personal Representatives
605-661-1532 or 402-316-6026

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