

The  Current

# 2015 Holiday Guide

Great Ideas for Making it  
the Most Wonderful Time  
of the Year!



2S-FX15  
1/4 CTW  
Ring \$529

*Champagne  
Diamonds*



1R-FX15  
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Diamonds*



3J-FX15  
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*BDO*  
collection



2M-FX15  
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Bridal Set  
\$2,199

*Lovebright  
Bridal*



2A-FX15  
1CTW  
Bridal Set  
\$3,349

4M-FX15  
1/3 CTW  
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4K-FX15  
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*Lovebright  
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# Holiday Happenings

## Christmas parades:

**Lawton** – Holiday in the Park “Christmas Around the World” Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony, 7 p.m. Nov. 21, Elmer Thomas Park.

**Walters** – Theme is “Home for the Holidays.” 6 p.m. Dec. 5. To be eligible for cash prizes, parade participants must fill out a form available at Walters Bank & Trust.

**Cache** – 5:30 p.m. Dec. 12. Caroling, pictures with Santa, hot chocolate and more following the parade in Cache City Park.

**Marlow** – 10 a.m. Dec. 5. Interested entries are asked to contact the Marlow Chamber of Commerce office, 580-658-2212 for exact lineup locations and times.

**Duncan** – Theme is “A Dickens Christmas.” 3 p.m. Dec. 5.

**Comanche** – 6 p.m. Dec. 5

## Holiday Events

**Chickasha Festival of Light** shines for the 22nd year from 6 to 10 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays and until 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays in Shannon Springs Park beginning Nov. 21.

This nationally recognized symbol of community spirit draws more than 250,000 visitors annually. It has won numerous awards as a top attraction since its beginning in 1993. More than just a light show, the experience includes horse-drawn carriage rides, photo opportunities with Santa.

Kick off the holiday season at the annual **Main Street Duncan Holiday Stroll** from 5-9 p.m. Nov. 21. Enjoy live holiday music as the smell of hot cocoa wafts through the air. Santa will be on hand to go over wish lists, and merchants will offer free refreshments and gift wrapping.

Chisholm Trail Kiwanis Club of Duncan **Christmas tree and stand sales** begin Nov. 24 in Kiddieland in Fuqua Park. Trees range from \$10 to \$100. Hours are 2 to 8 p.m. Mondays through Fridays; 10 to 7 p.m. Saturdays; and 1 to 5 p.m. Sundays.


Enjoy an **evening of Christmas cheer** and festivities at the 905 Christmas in the Park beginning 6:30 p.m. Nov. 28 in Fuqua Park in Duncan. Munch on cookies, sip hot chocolate and take in the decorations while waiting for the tree lighting at 7 p.m. Drop by the caboose and the Stephens County Museum to visit with Santa. At 7:30 p.m. sharp, the 905’s bell will ring and the locomotive will light up.

**Tree-lighting festivities** are scheduled for 6-8 p.m. on Nov. 30 at CU-Duncan and on Dec. 1 Cameron University in Lawton. The come-and-go events will include horse-drawn carriage rides, cookie-decorating stations for kids of all ages and the lighting of a fully decorated tree. Refreshments will be served.

A performance of **Handel’s “Messiah”** begins at 8 p.m. Dec. 12 in McMahon Memorial Auditorium. This is a free concert sponsored by the Lawton Schubert Music Club, Fort Sill’s New Post Chapel and the CU Department of Music.

For information, call the Cameron University Department of Music at 580-581-2440.

**Stephens County Community Christmas Dinner** is from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Dec. 25. Stephens County Fair & Expo Center. Call 580-255-3231 for information.



First Baptist Church  
LAWTON - FORT SILL

The 35th Annual

# Living Christmas Tree

# LIGHT

OUT OF THE DARKNESS



Performances December 11, 12, 13

Fri. 7:00 pm, Sat. & Sun. 6:00 pm

Special Matinee Performance Sunday Dec 13, 3:00 pm

Free Admission

Free Childcare (birth - 5)

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## HOLIDAY LIGHTING COMPARISON

Holiday lighting options have come a long way over the last few decades. The chart below shows three types of lighting options, including wattage and operating cost comparisons.

TYPE OF LAMP	WATTAGE PER LAMP	WATTAGE PER 50 LAMPS	SEASONAL OPERATING COST*
C9 INCANDESCENT 	7	350	\$13.33
MINI INCANDESCENT 	.425	21.25	\$0.81
LED 	.069	3.45	\$0.13

\*Using 40 days of operation, 8 hours per day, \$.119 per kWh (DOE average)  
In addition, the LED will last as much as 40 times longer than the incandescent lamps.

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# Save energy with holiday decor

The holiday season allows people to transform their homes into wonderlands of lights, garlands and poinsettias. Each family has its own holiday traditions, and decorations are a part of many of those traditions.

Decorations might be awe-inspiring, but those that include lights often lead to substantially higher energy bills. Fortunately, there are ways for homeowners, whether they prefer subtle displays or more over-the-top arrangements, to save money and still celebrate the holiday season in style.

- Switch to more efficient lights. A great way to ensure holiday displays consume less energy is to change the bulbs being strung. Incandescent lights can use 80 to 90 percent more energy than LED lights. Gradually replace older light strands with newer, energy-efficient LEDs. Not only do LEDs require less energy, but they also can last longer than incandescent bulbs, meaning you won't have to replace them as frequently as more traditional bulbs. Furthermore, lower wattage usage means you can attach more strands of lights together safely.

- Use timers. Timers can be set to turn lights on and off at specific times, ensuring lights aren't turning on during the daytime or being left on into the night by forgetful home-

owners. Timers also are a good safety precaution. A dark house that is normally lit up can advertise to thieves that no one is home. When lights turn on with a timer, it will create the illusion that it is business as usual in your residence.

- Use homemade decorations. You also can save energy and money by recycling materials into holiday decor. Trim branches from trees and use them in vases for an instant wintry look. Prune an evergreen on your property and make your own wreath with some wire and twine. Shop yard sales for gently used decorations that still have years of utility left. Sew ornaments from scraps of fabric or clothing that no longer fits. Each of these ideas reduces reliance on manufactured decorations that consume energy during production and fuel while being transported from factories to store shelves.

- Rely on extension cords. You can extend the length of displays without using more lights by spacing out light strands with extension cords. Intersperse spotlights to add attention to key elements of your display as well.

- Turn off interior lights. If a Christmas tree is illuminating a front window, turn off the lights in your home, as the tree may provide enough light to make a living room or den extra cozy.



*Homemade decorations reduce reliance on manufactured decorations that consume energy during production.*



## 42nd Annual Craft Harvest Craft Show "The Big One"

Friday	November 20	Noon - 8PM
Saturday	November 21	10AM - 6PM
Sunday	November 22	Noon - 5PM

Over 200 Craft Booths

— Food Court —

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Call 580-357-5694  
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*Lawton Crafts, Arts*

& Hobby A ssoc. 





# Keep safety in mind during holiday preparation

Gathering with family and friends during the holidays often means making great memories, reliving traditions, and sharing the spirit of the season. However, amid all the festivities, don't forget about safety. Safe Electricity shares tips to help ensure that your holiday season — whether decorating, feasting, or traveling — remains a safe one.

Keep safety in mind when decorating the home. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), decorative holiday lighting is involved in an average of 160 home fires each year, nine deaths, and \$9 million in property damage.

- Ensure that your tree is placed at least 3 feet away from heat sources such as fireplaces or radiators and on a stable platform.

- Before hanging holiday lights, check for worn spots, fraying, and exces-



*LEDs produce light without heat and are less likely to shatter.*

sive kinking. Damaged stands of lights should not be used.

- Consider investing in LED light strands. Although they are more expensive than traditional incandescent bulbs, LED lights last much longer and are also more efficient and durable.

Don't get burned in the kitchen. Alongside the joy of the holiday season, the NFPA has found that the number of home fires and electrical accident increases during winter months. Approximately 30 percent of total home fires and

38 percent of associated fatalities occur in December, January, and February.

The leading cause for fires in the home is a malfunction in cooking equipment.

- Clean your stove top and oven often, especially before the large amount of baking and cooking that takes place for family gatherings.

Doing so will help prevent fires in the kitchen, should a malfunction or accident in the kitchen take place.

- Do not leave combustible items, such as towels or pot holders, near the

stove top.

- Keep all appliance cords away from heat.

- Never use appliances near the kitchen sink. Plug appliances into ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets. Unplug your appliances when they are not in use.

Whether you are leaving the home for a few hours or for a few weeks, turn off all lights when they are not in use. Your neighbors can still enjoy your exterior Christmas lights while you are away if you put them on an automatic timer. This will remove the extra worry of an electrical accident while also reducing energy costs.

If you will be gone for an extended holiday trip, you can reduce the risk of a power surge damaging equipment by unplugging unneeded electrical devices before leaving.

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## Santa is Coming



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# Light up the holiday season safely, efficiently

The holiday season just would not be the same for many people without the bright and colorful light displays that decorate houses and city streets alike. Unfortunately, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports that more than 12,500 people are sent to the emergency room every holiday season because of injuries sustained from lighting and decorating. Safe Electricity provides tips for those who are undertaking holiday lighting and decorating projects to help them do safely.

Begin by checking that every strand of lights has been tested and approved by an official lab and make sure the cord is rated for where it will be used — whether indoors or outside. Examine each strand for any fraying or damage. To prevent possible electrical shocks or fires, do not use any damaged cords. Typically, one extension cord should only have three strands of lights connected to it at most, but you should also check that the extension cord is rated for its intended use.

Lights and decorations that are outdoors should be plugged into an outlet with ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection. A GFCI can protect you from electrical shock from damaged or defective decorations, or accidental electrical contact with water. GFCIs can be installed in a circuit breaker box or in an outlet and can be used anywhere you need it with the portable version.

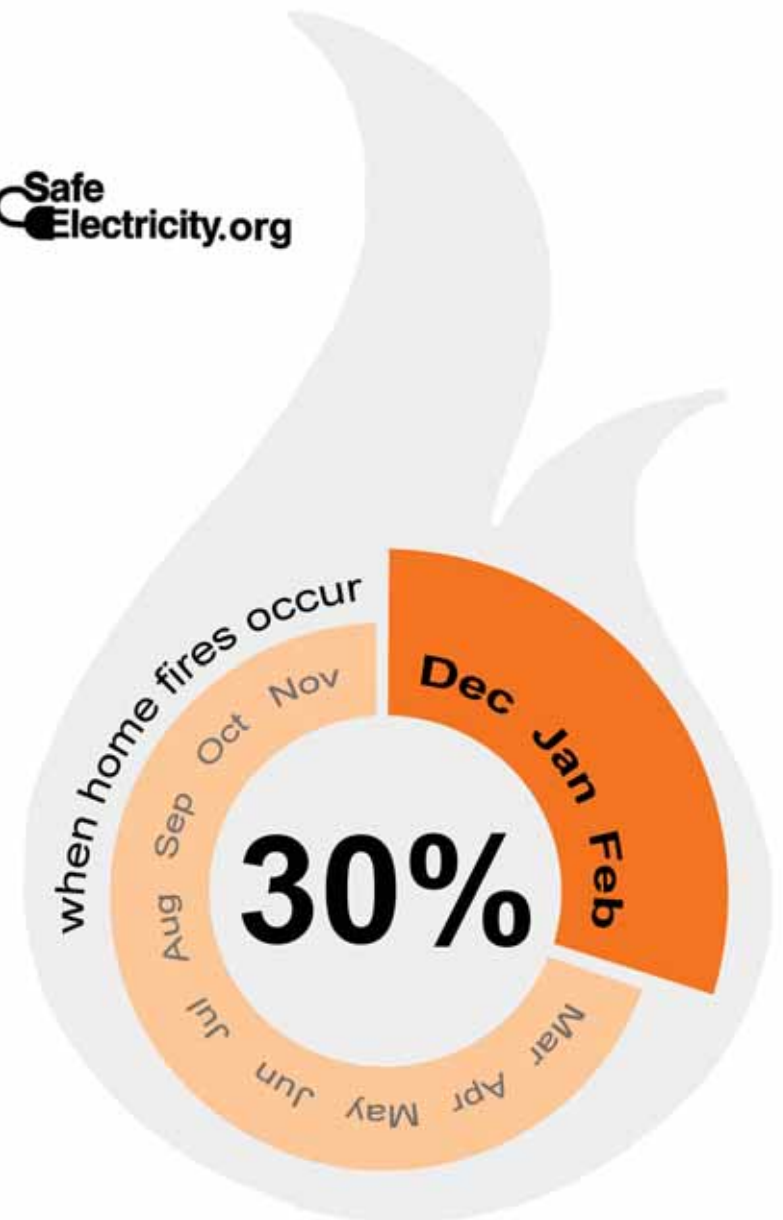
Also, consider switching to LED lighting, which produces light without the heat of conventional incandescent bulbs and has more durable and shatter-proof lenses than the glass lenses of incandescent lighting. At 25,000 hours and up, it also has an effective lifespan 25 times that of incandescent lights.

In addition, extra caution should be exercised when using a ladder as you decorate outside. Always look up and look out for overhead power lines, and always keep yourself and any tools, like ladders, a minimum 10-foot distance away.

Inattention can end in tragedy. According to WBAL-TV 11, a man in North Beach, Maryland, was electrocuted after his ladder came into contact with an electrified wire while putting up holiday decorations at a neighbor's house in 2013. The victim was airlifted to a nearby trauma center, but tragically passed away before medical specialists could save his life.

Heartbreaking cases like this are all too common. A CPSC report found that ladders are involved in more electrocutions than any other product. Fortunately, contact with overhead power lines can be avoided if you follow the proper precautions.

By keeping these safety guidelines in mind, you can help ensure a safe and injury free holiday season for you and your family. For more safety tips, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



research collected from the National Fire Protection Association

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# 'Tis the season to make sure your Co-op Connections Card is always nearby



As we all know, Santa and his elves are always up-to-date with the latest gadgets. Santa's had a smart phone since they came into vogue and his favorite app can be found at Connections.Coop.

That's right, The Big Guy went to Connections.Coop and downloaded the Co-op Connections mobile app. With it, he can check for money-saving deals in Walters, Lawton, Duncan or wherever he may be shopping.

The Man in Red travels a lot, and he always uses the app to look for the best deals in lodging, sleigh or car rentals and restaurants.

When he's shopping online, the Jolly Old Elf goes to Connections.Coop first. He signed up for the Cash Back Mall plan and uses that portal to enter websites for national retailers such as Bass Pro Shops, Macy's, Target and Walmart.

He piles up plenty of cash rewards that way and, when he hits \$25, he gets a check!

Cotton Electric members can save a bundle during the holiday shopping season with Co-op Connections Cards, too. There are 60 local businesses offering discounts in the Cotton Electric service area, all of them listed below. Details about merchants listed in red can be found in advertisements in this Holiday Guide.

There are hundreds of offers available across the nation. Using the keyword "gift" at [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop) brings up countless deals! The retail category ranges from flowers to electronics to jewelry to toys and beyond.

Co-op Connections is just another benefit to being a member of your local electric cooperative.

3B Industries  
A&M Appliance Service  
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AA Computer Services, Inc.  
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Billingsley Ford of Lawton and Duncan

Bluff Creek Lodge  
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Sue Cabelka, Realtor  
*Chisholm Trail Heritage Center*  
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Gene Burk Auto Glass

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Just Between Friends  
Lakeside Golf Course  
Lawton Imaging  
Ligon's Garden Center  
Linda's Carpet  
Nancy's Antiques  
Nita's Flowers  
On The Hill Gypsy Horses  
Osage Animal Hospital  
Rose's Custom LLC  
Red Dirt Bar & Grill  
Ringtail USA  
The Salt Cellar

Shane Burk Glass & Mirror  
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Solid Plumbing  
Southern Maid Donuts  
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Stephens County Humane Society  
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Santa Says,  
"Shop Locally!"



## Many benefits to shopping local

Holiday shopping dominates many people's free time between the day after Thanksgiving and the final days before Christmas. While many may shop 'til they drop on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, those days account for a relatively small amount of the hundreds of billions of dollars that are spent each holiday season.

Shoppers now have a bevy of options at their disposal as they embark on holiday shopping season. Traditional in-store retailers are still around, and online shopping continues to grow in popularity with each holiday season. But many holiday shoppers are looking to buy local this holiday season, and such a decision can pay a host of dividends for both shoppers and the communities they call home.

- Buying local benefits your local economy. Studies have found that independent, locally-owned retailers return a far greater percentage of their revenue into their local economies than national chain stores. One such study examined the disparity between revenue recirculation among independent, locally-owned businesses in Raleigh, North Carolina, versus four major national chains in the city. The former recirculated 51.1 percent of revenue into the local economy, while the latter recirculated less than 14 percent. Similar results were discovered in many cities, indicating that buying local not only benefits local business owners, but also the communities those owners and their customers call home.

- Buying local creates jobs in your community. One of the biggest ways local business owners recirculate revenue locally is job creation. While national chains also create jobs, such jobs only benefit a community if the chains are located within that community. If the local mall is a considerable drive away, chances are the chains within that mall are not employing many fellow community members. Local businesses in your community are more likely to employ residents of your town.

- Shopping local may provide access to more unique gifts. In addition to the economic benefits of buying local, shoppers may find merchandise made by local craftsmen is more unique than mass-produced items found on the shelves of national retailers. Recipients may cherish more unique items that they cannot find on their own, and that appreciation may even spur them to visit more local retailers after the holiday season has come and gone, benefiting their own communities in so doing.

- Local business may provide a more personal touch. Buying from national chains has its advantages, but customer service is not always one of them. Should your loved ones encounter problems with their gift that requires assistance, they might be forced to wait on the phone for extended periods of time as they and thousands of others wait for customer service representatives to answer their calls. Local businesses do not deal with nearly the volume of customers as national retailers and, therefore, are capable of addressing concerns more quickly and personally than large chains.

Buying local not only benefits small business owners, but it also pays dividends for their customers and the communities they call home.



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# THE NICE LIST

GREAT GIFT IDEAS  
FOR UNDER THE TREE



FAMILY FEATURES

**S**anta's made his list, checked it twice and found out who's been naughty and nice. For family and friends who found their way on to Santa's nice list this year, these great holiday gift ideas, ranging from organization to ways to stave off that winter chill to gifts that bring out the magic of the season and last long after the holidays are over, can help earn you a spot on your loved ones' nice lists for years to come.



## Experience the Magic of Christmas

Start a new family tradition this holiday season with the Magic Light Wand. Witness real magic on the children's faces when they touch the button on the wand, hear the tinkling chimes and see all of your holiday lights come alive. Avoid the hassle of rummaging around behind the tree to plug in a cord or searching for a tiny remote and visit [magiclightwand.com](http://magiclightwand.com) for more information and to order.



## Pens and Pencils Make Great Stocking Stuffers

Everyone loves a stocking full of sweets and treats, but why not add something both fun and practical, such as Zebra pens and mechanical pencils that last long past the season? Durable Steel pens make great gifts for dads and dudes, while Cadoodles' playful patterns please kids of all ages. Moms can express themselves with vibrant Sarasa gel pens, which come in many colors, and everyone can appreciate the smooth, reliable Z-Grip Plus. Learn more at [zebra.com/stockingstuffers](http://zebra.com/stockingstuffers).

## Heat Up Your Holidays

This chilly holiday season, give the gift of heat to the outdoorsman who loves to hunt and camp, a friend who enjoys tailgating or the proud parent who spends time on the sidelines at their child's outdoor games. The Chaheati Heated Add-On is cordless, lightweight, has a rechargeable battery and fits onto any portable chair. The heating system has four temperature settings – keeping you warm and outside doing what you love longer. Visit [Chaheati.com/Retailers](http://Chaheati.com/Retailers) for retail locations and more information.







### Comfortable Holiday Warmth and Style

Give the gift of luxe comfort this season with a cashmere turtle-neck sweater from Charter Club. Soft to the touch and incredibly warm, this sweater is a versatile addition to any wardrobe and the perfect way to embrace the latest color trend by selecting an of-the-moment pastel hue. Retailing for \$139, pick up this holiday essential exclusively at Macy's stores and [macys.com](http://macys.com).



### A Safe Home for the Holidays

Give homeowners simple, smart security this holiday with Kidde's RemoteLync WiFi-enabled products. The plug-in monitor sends an alert upon hearing a smoke or carbon monoxide alarm. The cordless camera instantly sends video upon sensing motion. Mount it nearly anywhere and set it to arm/disarm based on your location, or request an on-demand video if the monitor is triggered. A free mobile app allows for custom notifications. For more information, visit [kidde.com](http://kidde.com).



### Get Organized This Holiday Season

Stop overloading friends and family members with presents that cause clutter. This holiday season, get creative and give the gift of organization. With ClosetMaid's SuiteSymphony Collection Kits, you can provide an easy way for your loved ones to reclaim control of their closets. Available in three finishes (pure white, natural gray and espresso) and a variety of configurations, Collection Kits are easy options to consider this year. Start your holiday shopping now at [ClosetMaid.com/SuiteSymphonyCombo](http://ClosetMaid.com/SuiteSymphonyCombo).

## Gifts to keep kids engaged

Store aisles are filled this time of year with every must-have gift retailers can advertise. Children often plead and beg for the hottest toys weeks ahead of the holidays, hoping to find their requests wrapped up come the big day.

But once the gift wrap is torn away and kids have played with their presents for a day, some already grow bored with their new belongings and cast them aside. Certain toys are not engaging enough to warrant extended periods of play – no matter what the advertisements boast.

No gift-giver wants to spend money on a present only to have it collecting dust days later. With that said, employing these strategies can help anyone select a gift that will continue to inspire and excite children long after the holiday season has come and gone.

- Don't believe the hype. It's easy to fall hook, line and sinker for ultra-popular trendy gifts. While such gifts may have popular appeal, that does not mean they're a perfect fit for your child. When shopping for youngsters come the holiday season, choose a gift be-

cause your child will truly enjoy it and not because it's the trendy item of the year.

- Focus on the play factor. Too often, shoppers get caught up in toys' appearances. Instead, think about how the toys will work with imaginative play. The more a child can envision himself doing with a particular toy, the more likely he or she will exhibit a continued interest in that toy.

- Look for minimal bells and whistles. Kids often find toys that leave more room for imagination more interesting than toys that are loaded with gadgets. Children prefer to make up their own stories and create modes of play that are more about what they like rather than the "right" way to play or win.

- Choose gifts that grow. Shoppers want to select gifts that are age-appropriate for children so they will be safe during play time. But shoppers also should look for toys and activities that can be modified and grow with the child as he or she ages. A game that gets progressively harder through levels or a toy set that can be supplemented as kids grow older may make good gifts.



*Select gifts that will have a longer shelf life, guaranteeing more opportunities for play.*

Musical instruments also can grow with a child, as the instruments become easier to master with practice.

- Figure out the child's interests. Toys that cater specifically to a child's interests will be the most warmly received. It may take going the extra mile to find a gift that matches a child's interest rather than picking up the first trendy gift you see, but the results will be well worth it.



# Tech gifts offer teachable moments

(Family Features) From games to smart phones and devices, you'd be hard-pressed to find a holiday wish list that doesn't include at least one new tech device. These gifts provide kids with the tools to connect with friends, and empower them to learn and explore; while also presenting an opportunity for parents to start a conversation on how to live safely in an increasingly digital world.

Technology access starts as early as 6 years old in many families, according to a recent survey by LifeLock, an industry leader in identity theft protection. At this young age, a whopping 74 percent of children have access to laptops/desktops. The rate of technology use increases from there – by the time kids hit their mid-teens, 80 percent have a smartphone.

“The holidays are a great time to gift a child their first device, but parents are trying to find the balance between the opportunity to build friendships, learn and have fun using technology, and the need to stay safe and develop healthy lifestyles,” said Paige Hanson, Educational Programs Senior Manager with LifeLock.

As technology increasingly plays a larger presence in our lives, parents recognize the need to help their kids live a balanced life online and offline. Four out of five parents surveyed reported having technology agreements with their children that define areas such as safety

and privacy, screen time, apps and downloads and respectful behavior. However, the overwhelming majority (79 percent) relies on oral versus written agreements with varying degrees of effectiveness. As you think about gifting your kid a device this holiday season, it is also a good time to establish, or update, the ground rules you'd like to have as a family, and discover new resources that can help create a positive conversation.

One such resource is “The Smart Talk.” LifeLock and National PTA, the nation's oldest and largest child advocacy association, recently teamed up to create this free digital tool which is designed as an interactive experience between parent and child, guiding families through a series of questions and conversations. After agreeing on healthy limits, a personalized family agreement can be stored on the computer or printed out and posted in a high-traffic home area – like your fridge! By doing this, it will help serve as a daily reminder for the whole family to follow the agreed-upon guidelines.

“We need to help the next generation establish safe behaviors at an earlier age, and give parents a roadmap to set ground rules that strike a better, healthier balance,” said Hanson.

It is also a good exercise to remind parents that they also should practice healthy online habits and safeguard their family's identities.

“Always think before you post to your social networks,” said Hanson. “While posting a picture of your family seems harmless enough, you could be opening yourself to identity theft. Each photo and status update also creates your child's first digital footprint, especially when they are too young to be online themselves.”

“When it comes to forms – extracurricular, doctors' records and more –

don't be afraid to ask what personal information is actually needed by the organization. Many times, they just need a name and maybe a birthdate, but not your kids' Social Security Number,” concluded Hanson.

Start by visiting [thesmarttalk.org](http://thesmarttalk.org) to begin setting ground rules, learn best practices and protect your children's safety and security when using technology in today's always-connected world.





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# HANDMADE for the Holidays

## *Pom-pom Fur Wreath*

Crafting time: Weekend project

Skill level: Some experience necessary

Supplies and Tools:

Pom-pom makers: 2 1/2-inch, 3 3/8-inch, 4 1/2-inch

Bernat Softee Chunky Yarn: Grey Heather, Taupe Grey, Natural (2 skeins each)

Scissors

Hard foam tubular 12-inch wreath

Bernat Faux Fur Pompoms: Grey Lynx, White Rabbit (2 each)

Hot gun and glue sticks

T-pins or 2-inch pins with pearl heads

Decorative ribbon: 2 1/2-inch-by-12-foot, blue-grey

1. Follow directions on pom-pom maker packages to create three different sizes of poms of various colors using chunky yarn. If desired, mix yarn to give some pompoms a speckled look. Make about 50-60, depending on the fullness of the desired look.

2. After making pompoms, place pompoms around wreath, varying sizes and incorporating fur pompoms, as well. The overall look should be a kind of hilly terrain look to give it depth.

3. Once desired placement has been achieved, glue them in place with hot glue. If needed, secure poms with T-pins or pearlhead pins.

4. Using blue/grey decorative ribbon, create a bow with trailing ends and glue in place with hot glue.

(Family Features) A holiday-ready home is filled with small touches that celebrate the season. Welcome guests with these easy DIY projects that lend an extra special feel to your home.

Extend a warm greeting with a faux fur wreath that dresses up the front door, such as this design from the crafting experts at Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Stores. Then, put some empty Mason jars to use with a display perfect for an entryway table or ledge. Make it even prettier by nestling the jars among some evergreen branches and finish them off with a pretty bow or twine.

Find more ideas for DIY projects to spruce up your home this holiday season at [joann.com](http://joann.com).

## *Rose Gold Holiday Mason Jars*

Crafting time: 1-2 hours

Skill level: No experience necessary

Supplies and Tools:

Smooth Mason jars

Jelly jars

Rose gold spray paint

Provided templates: Deer head, tree, snowflake

Scissors

Pencil

Sharpie

Detail paintbrush

White enamel paint

Gold acrylic paint

Medium flat paintbrush

Scrap strips of fabric

Baker's twine

1. Lightly spray inside or outside of smooth Mason jars and jelly jars with rose gold spray paint.

Allow each coat to dry completely.

2. Locate templates at [joann.com](http://joann.com) by searching for the project title; print templates and trim shapes. If the outside of the jar was spray painted, trace the shape with a pencil. If the inside of the jar was spray painted, trace the shape on the glass with a Sharpie.

3. Fill in each design using a detail brush and white enamel paint. Apply additional coats as necessary.

4. Paint jar rims gold.

5. Apply a thin layer or dry brush gold acrylic paint on jars for added texture and dimension.

6. Embellish jars by making bows and knots with scrap strips of fabric or baker's twine around rims of jars. Fill with sprigs of dried flowers or branches or other seasonal decorations, or for jars painted on the outside, fill with candies or treats for an edible gift.







# 3 great reasons to give homemade gifts

Nearly every holiday shopper has at least one person on their list who seemingly has everything. When shopping for such loved ones, shoppers often find the perfect gift to be especially elusive.

While gift cards are a go-to fallback option when shopping for the person who has it all, many gift givers feel such cards are a tad too impersonal. But in lieu of traditional store-bought gifts, shoppers stuck on what to buy should consider the many great reasons to give homemade gifts.

1. Homemade gifts show your loved one how much they mean to you. Gift cards are practical, but they rarely elicit the warm feelings holiday shoppers want their gifts to produce. A homemade gift will show your loved one that you put time and effort into making their holiday season special, and that's something they will appreciate when they use or see the gift.

2. Homemade gifts won't break the bank. Holiday shoppers working on tight budgets likely won't have to break the bank to create a homemade gift. The Internet is a great resource for inexpensive homemade gift ideas.

3. You can control quality with homemade gifts. Store-bought items are not always of the highest quality, and no shopper wants to give a gift that falls apart within a few days. By creating the gift yourself, you can ensure it's made with the highest quality materials so it will withstand the test of time.



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## Ornament treats you can eat

(Family Features) As you set out to make this a holiday to remember, your creativity doesn't have to be limited to your craft room. Let your imagination loose in other areas, such as the kitchen, for delicious treats that taste as good as they look.

These simple pretzel candies, created by the crafting experts at Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Stores, are sure to be a hit, whether you let them brighten up the dessert table at a holiday party or package them in clear cellophane with a bold bow for a sweet gift.

Look for more ideas to spread holiday cheer throughout the house at [joann.com](http://joann.com).



### *Easy Christmas Ornament Pretzel Treats*

Prep time: 1-2 hours

Skill level: No experience necessary

Makes: 12 pieces

4 ounces Red Candy Melts Candy

4 ounces Dark Green Candy

Melts Candy

2 ounces Bright White Candy

Melts Candy

Christmas nonpareils

Gold sugar pearls

Pretzel rings

Granulated sugar

Mini marshmallows

Wilton food-crafting supplies:

Parchment paper

Cookie sheet

12-inch disposable decorating bags

Food-safe scissors

Place pretzels on parchment paper-covered cookie sheet.

Melt red and green candy, separately, in disposable decorating bags according to package directions. Cut small point off tip of disposable decorating bag. Use melted candy to fill hole in pretzels. Allow to cool in refrigerator, about 10-15 minutes. Reserve remaining melted red and green candy.

Dip food-safe scissors in granulated sugar. Cut 1/8-inch off top and back of marshmallows.

Melt white candy in disposable decorating bag according to package directions. Use candy to attach marshmallows to top of pretzel ornaments. Allow to cool in refrigerator, about 3-5 minutes. Reserve remaining melted white candy.

Use reserved melted white candy to pipe line across top and bottom of pretzels. Add nonpareils. Use melted red or green candy to pipe line across the center of ornaments. Allow to cool in refrigerator, about 3-5 minutes.

Use melted green or red candy to pipe lines across top and bottom of pretzels. Use melted white candy to pipe line across the center. Add gold sugar pearls. Allow to cool in refrigerator, about 3-5 minutes.

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## Did you know?



Leaving cookies and milk for Santa Claus is a Christmas Eve tradition. Children regularly place a dish of cookies and a glass of milk by the tree on Christmas Eve so that Santa has enough energy to complete all of his gift-giving before kids wake up on Christmas morning.

The tradition of leaving cookies out on Christmas Eve may trace its origins to Saint Nicholas. On the feast of St. Nicholas on Dec. 6, children would leave food and drink for the saint and any attendants. The treats would be exchanged for gifts.

While that's one theory behind the tradition, others think it is linked to the history of the Christmas tree and the edible decorations that adorn it. Santa would snack on the ornaments.

After edible decorations gave way to inedible ornaments, the tradition of leaving a snack remained. Whatever the origins behind the tradition, millions of children dutifully leave milk and cookies for Santa on Christmas Eve.



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# Festive Fun WITH COOKIES AND COCOA

## Metallic Spritz Cookies

Makes: 10 dozen cookies

- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 1/2 cups (3 sticks) butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon Wilton Pure Vanilla Extract
- 1/2 teaspoon Wilton Imitation Almond Extract
- Silver Color Mist Food Color Spray
- Gold Color Mist Food Color Spray
- Buttercream icing
- Wilton Silver Sugar Pearls
- Wilton Gold Sugar Pearls



Heat oven to 350 F.

In medium bowl, combine flour and baking powder.

In large bowl, beat butter and sugar with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add egg, milk and extracts; mix well. Gradually add flour to butter mixture, mixing to make smooth dough. Do not chill.

Place dough into cookie press using an 8-petal flower disk and press cookies onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned around edges. Cool cookies on pan on cooling grid 2 minutes. Remove from pan; cool completely on grid. You will need two cookies per treat.

Use silver or gold Color Mist food color spray to spray cookies. Let dry, about 3-5 minutes. Turn cookies over and spray underside. Let dry, about 3-5 minutes.

Prepare buttercream icing or use pre-made buttercream icing. Use tip 12, cut disposable decorating bag and icing to pipe elongated beads on bottom of one cookie, following cookie shape. Sandwich two cookies together.

Use tip 4, cut disposable decorating bag and icing to pipe a dot in center of sandwich cookie. Top dot with either silver or gold sugar pearls.



### FAMILY FEATURES

**T**reat your holiday guests to something special this Christmas. From mouth-watering spritz cookie recipes that will outshine the rest, to delicious hot cocoa boosted with salted caramel and an edible candy spoon on the side, you'll be the host with the most in no time at all.

#### Spritz Cookies with a Little Glitz

You know gingerbread and sugar cookie, but do you recall the most impressive cookie of all? Spritz cookies are fast and fun. Use a Wilton Cookie Press to make dozens of delicious, perfectly-shaped uniform cookies quickly. Add a spritz of edible silver or gold Color Mist Food Color Spray to make them shiny and bright.

#### Santa's Favorite Spritz Cookie

Indulge Santa's sweet tooth with decadent chocolate spritz cookie sandwiches filled with a layer of peppermint icing. Take a shortcut by using decorator icing that is already flavored and ready to squeeze, perfect for the time-crunched holidays.

#### Ho-Ho-Hot Cocoa with a Twist

There's nothing quite as comforting as a cup of hot cocoa on a cold winter day, but add a dash of salted caramel flavor and you're in for a real treat. Made with velvety Dark Cocoa Candy Melts candy, steamed milk and a splash of Treatology Salted Caramel flavor, this cocoa offers just the right balance of salty and sweet.

#### Melt-in-Your-Mouth Sugar Cookie Spoons

The delicious taste of sweet, baked Christmas cookies is captured in the Limited Edition Sugar Cookie Flavor Candy Melts candy and made into edible candy spoons with a microwaveable Spoon-Shaped Silicone Candy Mold.

For more holiday ideas and inspiration, visit [wilton.com](http://wilton.com).

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**Sugar Cookie Candy Spoons**

Makes: 24 spoons

Wilton Sugar Cookie Candy Melts Candy (12-ounce bag)

Wilton Christmas Candy Spoon Mold

Wilton 12-inch Disposable Decorating Bags

Break 12 candy wafers in half and place in cavities of mold.

Place mold in microwave and microwave at half power or defrost setting for 1 minute. Gently jiggle and lightly tap mold to smooth melted candy. Continue to microwave and tap at 30-second intervals until smooth and completely melted.

Alternate melting method: Melt candy in disposable decorating

bag according to candy package directions. Snip a small tip off end of bag and gently squeeze bag to fill cavities with melted candy.

Chill filled mold until candy spoons have hardened, about 10-15 minutes. Place mold on flat surface and gently push on bottom of cavities to release candy.

**Chocolate Peppermint Spritz Sandwich Cookies**

Makes: 4 dozen sandwiches

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup cocoa powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups (2 1/2 sticks) butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2/3 cup firmly-packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon Wilton Pure Vanilla Extract
- 2 eggs
- Wilton Peppermint Decorating Icing

Heat oven to 350 F.

In medium bowl, combine flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt.

In large bowl, beat butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add vanilla and eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, mixing to make a smooth dough.

Place dough into cookie press and press cookies onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes or until edges are slightly browned. Cool cookies on pan on cooling grid 2 minutes. Remove from pan; cool completely on grid.

Sandwich cookies together with Peppermint Decorating Icing.



**Salted Caramel Hot Chocolate**

Makes: 4 cups

- 4 cups milk
- 1 cup Dark Cocoa Candy Melts Candy
- 1/4 teaspoon Wilton Treatology Salted Caramel Flavor Concentrate

In large saucepan, cook milk on medium heat until hot; remove from heat. Whisk in candy and flavor concentrate. Continue whisking until candy is melted and mixture is smooth. Serve immediately.

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# WHIP UP A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY MENU

FAMILY FEATURES

**N**othing brings family and friends together quite like a full holiday meal menu. Whether creating an entire festive feast from scratch or looking for a tasty dish to take and share, these dishes aim to fill up the table and keep the seats around it full as well. From a tender, juicy attractive main dish to a zesty twist on a holiday favorite to sweet treats that bring holiday cheer, dinner through dessert offer tastes sure to please.

Photo courtesy of Getty Images.

## A centerpiece worth celebrating

A stunning main dish is the centerpiece of any holiday meal, and a pork crown roast can lend an extra special touch to this year's celebration. Find main dishes, sides and desserts, as well as a variety of holiday meal packages to fit any size gathering, at [OmahaSteaks.com](http://OmahaSteaks.com).

### *Pork Crown Roast with Garlic Herb Rub*

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 2 hours, 30 minutes

Total time: 3 hours

Serves: 12-16

**1 Omaha Steaks Pork Crown Roast**

**1/4 cup kosher salt**

**2 tablespoons coarsely ground black pepper**

**1/3 cup fresh garlic, peeled and finely diced**

**1/4 cup thyme, leaves removed from stem and coarsely chopped**

**1/4 cup rosemary, leaves removed from stem and coarsely chopped**

**2 tablespoons sage, leaves removed from stem and coarsely chopped**

**1/2 cup, plus 2 tablespoons olive oil**

**2 pounds baby red potatoes, halved**

**1 pound fresh pearl onions, peeled and halved**

Thaw roast completely and remove plastic packaging.

Heat oven to 350 F.

Prepare rub by combining salt, pepper, garlic, herbs and 1/2 cup of olive oil.

Mix 2 tablespoons of rub with remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil and toss with potatoes and onions.

Liberally rub all sides of roast with remaining rub, including in between bones. Put any excess rub on top.

Place roast on foil lined sheet pan and spread potatoes and onions around sides of roast. Cook on center rack of oven for approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes to 2 hours and 35 minutes for a 9-pound roast, or until internal temperature reaches 145 F in the middle.

Let rest for 10-15 minutes before cutting away string and slicing between bones for 16 even portions. Serve with roasted red potatoes and pearl onions in natural au jus.







## Serve up nutrients and color

With all of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, remember that making healthy and appealing foods does not have to keep you in the kitchen all day long. Recipes using versatile, heart-smart canola oil – one of the healthiest cooking oils in the world – are ideal for any festive meal. With its neutral taste, light texture and high heat tolerance, canola oil ensures that flavorful seasonings and ingredients remain the starring attraction on your holiday table, as in this dish of roasted vegetables. For more information and more recipes, visit [canolainfo.org](http://canolainfo.org) and find CanolaInfo on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

### *Roasted Winter Veggies and Tri-Colored Potatoes*

Servings: 10

- 1 1/2 pounds tri-color potatoes, quartered
- 1 pound Brussels sprouts, cut in half
- 1 large red bell pepper, coarsely chopped
- 1 medium red onion, coarsely chopped
- 2 medium zucchini, cut lengthwise and sliced
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped rosemary
- 1/3 cup canola oil
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

Heat oven to 400 F.

In large roasting pan, place vegetables. Add rosemary, canola oil, salt and garlic powder, and stir to combine. Cook about 40 minutes or until vegetables are tender.



## Warmth with a dash of holiday cheer

On a cold winter night, there are few things that compare to curling up by the fire with a warm cup of hot cocoa. Adding a traditional holiday flavor such as peppermint extract can impart that extra seasonal touch. Find recipes using fine vanillas and flavors for any occasion at [nielsenmassey.com](http://nielsenmassey.com).

### *Gourmet Peppermint Hot Cocoa*

Serves: 6

- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (Dutch processed)
- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups whole milk
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 1 teaspoon Nielsen-Massey Madagascar Bourbon Pure Vanilla Extract
- 1/2 teaspoon Nielsen-Massey Pure Peppermint Extract
- 1/4 teaspoon Nielsen-Massey Pure Chocolate Extract

In medium saucepan, combine cocoa powder, sugar and salt. Place over medium-low heat and gradually whisk in milk and half-and-half until combined. While stirring occasionally, continue to heat until hot, without bringing to a boil. Stir in vanilla, peppermint and chocolate extracts.

Before serving, top with a Vanilla Bean Marshmallow. For an extra blast of peppermint, drop a peppermint candy in each mug before serving.



## *Festive fun that melts in your mouth*

This holiday season, treat your guests to something special. The delicious taste of sweet, baked Christmas cookies is captured in the Limited Edition Sugar Cookie Flavor Candy Melts candy and made into edible candy spoons to give you a scoop on being the host with the most in no time at all. The recipe is on Page 21. For more holiday ideas and inspiration, visit [wilton.com](http://wilton.com).



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