

## Your Black Friday Preview

Written by Nadine Toren

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[Television personality](#) and AZfoothills.com columnist [Nadine Toren](#) is scouring the area, finding savvy Valley features, bringing readers “on the scene.” Every day she’ll introduce you to [celebrities](#), [athletes](#), and give you an inside look into local events and hot spots. She’ll touch on topical issues, and keep AZ fans posted on all the big talkers [around town](#).



It's November...clearly time to gear up for the holiday shopping season. And this year, Santa's helpers are starting a little early. Here are your first round of tips for a successful Black Friday.

As I write this, there are 21 days, 15 hours, 12 minutes, and 40 seconds until Black Friday. That, according to the website I recently discovered called [blackfridaycountdown.com](#), fittingly named. Now that we're in November, shopaholics are preparing for their favorite day the year—a day dedicated to deals. All you have to do is scour the web, and you'll undoubtedly find an array of Black Friday features; walk through stores, and already Christmas gear is gracing the aisles. Yep, the holidays have evidently arrived.

That's why we're giving you a head-start, providing you with must-knows before the big black day. Your first insight is this: plan on eating turkey for breakfast, then getting much needed R&R. Yep, you'll want to rest up and set your alarm for 11pm, Thanksgiving day, because when the clock strikes 12, many stores will open. This year over 800 Macy's open at midnight after Thanksgiving. (Last year the giant retailer opened at 4am.) And the same schedule goes for Target.

To make matters more hectic, you might be cutting T-Day a little short; some stores will be open Thanksgiving Day. While many retailers have yet to reveal their T-Day hours, expect those like Sears, K-Mart, and Toys R Us to hop on the pre-Black Friday bandwagon.

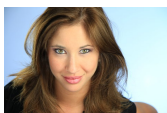
And if your cell is your BFF, download some free Apps that aim to make shopping a little easier.

Check out: the Barcode Reader, it helps you find great prices by taking a photo of any printed barcode; iSlick, which locates the hottest best online deals; Amazon Windowshop, an easy way to filter through the site; Catalog Spree, which consists of virtual catalogs from mainstream stores like Nordstrom; and ShopShop, a virtual hub that keeps track of your gift list.

And speaking of going digital, we're surely not excluding discussing Cyber Monday. Get this...according to Overstock, online shoppers spent more than a billion dollars last year on Cyber Monday alone, 16% more than they did in 2009. And go figure...the numbers are expected to increase this year because many sneaky workers tend to peruse at work.

The good news is, if you're just so anxious to start spending, you may as well start swiping now. That's because holiday shopping sales are already launching. While many retailers wait for Thanksgiving to promote big deals, 40% of online retailers start advertising gift ideas before Halloween. That, according to Google.

And while we're surely entering the season of shopping bliss, beware. In the midst of retail therapy comes major bills. Overstock reports that in November 2010, 13.6 million Americans still hadn't paid their debt from the 2009 shopping season. Moral of the story: spend wisely.



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