

Mom's Moment: Holiday Budgeting

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Thursday, 14 December 2017 11:33 - Last Updated Thursday, 14 December 2017 12:33



It seems as if I'm swiping my card or clicking "pay now" on a daily basis. As a result, money is magically disappearing from my bank account in exchange for holiday gifts. As much as I wish money grew on trees (and yes, we have a money tree), it doesn't.

According to [Experian.com](https://www.experian.com), I'm likely one of the 48% of consumers who have spent more than expected. I'm also part of the 43% stressed about the holidays due to dwindling funds. Therefore, I'm all about sharing the company's [tips for holiday budgeting](#)...

- 1. Make a gift list:** Create a list of the people you need to buy presents for and how much you will spend on each person. Giving yourself a set amount at the start will help you stay focused when you're on the gift hunt.
- 2. Start early:** By avoiding the Christmas Eve shopping rush, you'll find better deals — and avoid overspending under pressure.
- 3. Budget for unexpected expenses:** Look outside your gift list and think about the ways you spend extra money around the holidays. Hostess gifts, baking and cooking supplies, gift wrapping and postage costs can add up to big expenses.
- 4. Keep track of spending:** Make sure you track every dollar you spend, and track spending as you go. This will hold you accountable.
- 5. Be careful with credit:** Use credit cards only if you are sure they will not tempt you to stretch your budget and can be paid in full when you receive your statement. Also, check your credit score periodically to see how your spending is affecting your score.