



# Twelve Tips For The Twelve Days Of Christmas

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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Every year the PNC Financial Services Group in the United States calculates the cost to purchase all the items in the carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas". For 2012, the total cost of these would be \$107,000 in US dollars.

Well, not everyone could afford this. Most people probably wouldn't want to give or receive the collection of geese, ladies dancing, French hens and other unusual things that are sung about.

Gift-giving can be difficult, expensive and time-consuming. Consider the following twelve tips which should make the whole experience easier for you this year:

1. If someone suggests that they don't want to receive or exchange gifts, respect the request and be thankful that the person was honest with you.
2. Make sure that you know if the recipient has allergies or illnesses such as diabetes before you send flowers, fragrances or sweets to them.
3. Ask people what they have on their wish lists. Shopping might be easier than you think if you know what they want. And remember to get the details about the item including the best place to purchase it.
4. Browse trusted websites for online shopping opportunities. You can save on wrapping, gift cards and shipping in most cases. And you don't have to get packaging, add the address or make a trip to the Post Office to anything.
5. Make sure you have a complete list that includes every single person you will gift as well as a budget for each person before you buy one thing. That way you will have a better chance of staying within your means without missing anyone.
6. Do price comparisons. Stores will compete for your business by advertising attractive sale prices on some items - just to get you into the store. You can save a lot of money if you just pay attention to the fliers and advertisements.
7. Consider using your talents and skills to make personalized gifts. Baking, crafts, sewing or wooden creations will likely be treasured more than purchased items because they represent your time and caring.
8. Give coupons for services such as pet care, housecleaning, massages, or transportation. Many people are downsizing materially and would prefer to have something they can use rather than something they have to dust or store.
9. Donate so that at least one person or family you don't know will be blessed at Christmas.
10. Offer a genuine compliment or word of encouragement to someone. These are the gifts that are remembered for years by the ones who receive them.
11. Purchase a CD of your favourite musician or speaker for yourself and enjoy it while you are driving to buy gifts or preparing for the holidays.
12. Give thanks for the greatest gift of all - the baby whose birthday we are celebrating on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December. Make sure that you remember the "Christ" that is the namesake of Christmas.

The expression "It is better to give than to receive" is true but it is important that you ensure that you use wisdom so that your gifts are appropriate and appreciated.

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