

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



The Young Athlete

Many of today's youth simply want to play ball. They live and breathe their favorite sports and are quick to head out after school to practice the afternoon away.

This Christmas, give that special sports nut gifts he can use to hone his craft or enhance his passion for the sport he loves.

From extra gear to useful accessories, the world of sports gifts is vast. The first step to choosing the perfect present is to decide if you want to buy one that is practical or one that is more experience-based.

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION

From baseball and softball to hockey and football, and every sport in between, practice makes perfect. And depending on your geographic area, you likely can find private instructors ready to dole out invaluable lessons.

Check with your local recreational centers or indoor sports facilities to find out what they offer. Be sure to match your athlete's age with the proper instruction level.

Common lessons can include hitting, pitching and fielding for baseball and softball, or swinging and putting for golf. Pay attention to the child's game and find areas you think could use some development, and choose the appropriate training package.

GAME TICKETS

What better way to treat your young athlete than by letting her learn from the professionals? Tickets to a major sporting event can both motivate and educate youngsters

who have a true passion for the games they play.

You can hide the tickets in a complementary gift, such as a hat or jersey of his favorite team or player. Also let the child know you plan on making the game day even more special by arriving early enough to meet players for autographs before the game.

Some sports teams offer exclusive ticket packages that include visiting the locker rooms and walking on the field prior to the game. If this options fits in your budget, it may be the best way to get the youngster a taste of how her favorite sport is played at the highest level

MEMORIES

With today's online collection of photo product companies, there are more ways than ever to build custom memories of a child's athletic experiences. Photo books, calendars, coffee mugs and posters are just a few examples.

Make sure to take plenty of photos of games and practices, and turn them into to memorable items for the child to enjoy forever.

Take it a step further by tracking statistics throughout the child's season and incorporating them into the gift. A poster, for example, that features an enlarged action shot of your softball star with her batting average, home runs and team record will make her feel like a professional every time she looks at her wall.



The Beauty Queen

Do you have a friend who lives for the next great how-to makeup video tutorial or emerging trend in eyeliner? Why not spoil her with a beautified gift this year?

Many boutiques, spas and beauty counters are chock-full of various beautification products for the skin, hair and overall physical health.

If you're not sure which types of products to buy, consider splurging on a surprise spa day or getaway with the girls.

These types of thoughtful gifts can turn into memories that last a lifetime.

CUSTOMIZED GIFTS

Customized gift baskets are all the rage in the beauty industry. With a few clicks of your computer mouse or a quick visit to your local shop, you could sign your friend up for monthly beauty baskets that are delivered straight to her door.

Gift baskets full of lip glosses, hand relief lotions, candles and eye shadows are just the beginning. Many companies will prompt you to share information on your friend, such as her skin tone, favorite makeup and preferred brand.

Once the company understands what your recipient is looking for in beauty products, it will send fully customized baskets on a monthly basis, or for whatever frequency you choose. Many companies send out new product samples with tutorials to make the experience both enjoyable and educational.

IT'S HELPING OTHERS, TOO

What if you could buy a gift that not only made your friend smile but also provided funding to support critical women's health initiatives? With a little bit of research, you can.

Many beauty product organizations donate portions of their holiday revenues to fund breast cancer research or other important efforts in women's health. Ask your local beauty retailer about any such programs it is participating in and spend your money wisely.

Finding the perfect gift and advancing women's health: that's a beautiful win-win.



The Tennis Player

Many people take tennis very seriously. Others use it more as a leisure activity with friends. Either way, there are plenty of gift ideas for the tennis player in your life.

Tennis doesn't require much equipment to get started so you could help the novice player become involved in the sport with just a few purchases.

The more seasoned player probably already possesses plenty of balls, equipment bags and rackets. Why not set your gift apart a bit?

MEMORABILIA

Tennis fans are some of the most dedicated in the world, following a specific player with a passion. Look around for tennis memorabilia that may be signed by their favorite superstars.

Items like tennis shoes, rackets and balls are oftentimes auctioned off for charitable causes. Check in with player websites and social media platforms to see if any such promotions are in the works.

Landing the match-worn gear of your friend's favorite player could surely qualify as his best gift of the year.

NOVELTY GIFTS

If you've watched any professional tennis, you know that the sport has many nuisances. This uniqueness also makes the sport a perfect match for novelty gifts.

Anything from table clothes to bumper stickers can be a great fit for the tennis lover in your life. Chef aprons, bobble heads, trick balls and humorous T-shirts are some other options. And your gift recipient will likely use these types of gifts with pride in honor of their favorite sport.

RAIN GEAR

The most diehard of tennis players won't let a little rain stop them. Make sure they're prepared by gifting some essential wet weather gear.

Many clothing manufacturers produce breathable jackets and gear that is made for letting athletes play through the rain. Waterproof can also be valuable tools during a downpour, helping protect equipment and spare balls from being soaked.



The Fitness Fanatic

The holidays are a great time to flex your gift-giving muscles. Bulking up your gifts this year is easy to do, even if you don't know the first thing about leg curls or power squats.

Fitness is one of the most valuable, practical gifts you can give this holiday season because of the long-term impact it could have on your friend or family member's health and lifestyle.

GYM MEMBERSHIPS

This gift may be one of the most popular come Christmastime because it helps save your friend money and gets them involved in physical fitness. If you currently attend a specific gym, have your friend join you by buying them a membership.

You can motivate each other to get in better shape — a perfect gift combination of fitness and quality time together.

PERSONAL TRAINING

If your friend or family member already has a gym membership, consider gifting the services of a professional trainer. Many individuals work out regularly and still don't see the results they are striving for.

Others may think they're performing an exercise correctly, never realizing they're actually doing damage to their muscles.

This is where getting in front of a fitness coach or trainer can help transform the workout experience. Find a certified professional who can help your gift recipient target specific parts of the body or push them to the next level.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology and fitness go hand in hand. There are plenty of digital gift options on the market that can track movement, workouts and even sleeping habits, giving your gift recipient a comprehensive overview of her workouts.

Look for wearable solutions that are also fashionable. Many will come in the form of bracelets, so consider if your friend is generally one to wear them. The last thing you want is for your friend to feel obligated to wear your gift, especially if he isn't comfortable doing so.



The Proud Grandparents

Are there people in your life who absolutely love their role as grandparents? Think they're a tough market to buy for? Think again.

Grandparents are critical in the lives of young people and can form quite a special bond with them. Buying gifts for grandparents can be simple if you incorporate a little personalization into your ideas. The thought really does count when the gift is coming from a child.

Depending on the age of the child presenting the gift, think about the specific relationship between grandchild and grandparent. Are there certain activities they like to do together? Places they like to go? Once you find that common ground, buying a personalized gift is a breeze.

CUSTOM PHOTO BOOKS

Grandparents love to stay updated on the latest family photos. With the help of online software tools, you can easily make your own photo book, personalized just for grandma and grandpa.

Kids can choose which photos to put in the book, along with funny captions that would make their grandparents smile. The key is choosing a great cover shot that makes them want to open it over and over again throughout the years.

COOKING ITEMS

Are you lucky enough to have grandparents who can whip up excellent meals? How many holiday feasts have you enjoyed at their home?

It's time to repay the favor by helping grandma and grandpa update their kitchen tools. Cookware, glassware, new pots or a bread maker are just a few gift ideas for the grandparent who loves to cook.

MAKE A DAY OF IT

Sometimes it's not an item that makes for the perfect gift but more of an experience. Do grandma and granddaughter like to shop together? Why not buy them a gift card to their favorite local shop and let them spend the afternoon choosing new purchases?

Do grandpa and grandson enjoy spending time in the great outdoors? Send them on a local fishing expedition with a professional guide. It will be time well spent together trying to reel in the big one.



The Traveler

Do you have a friend who always seems to be planning her next vacation? Maybe someone who is heavily involved in international missionary work?

Buying for the traveler can be fun because of the variety of items needed to pull off a successful trip. From gifts that your recipient can use in flight to something that will come in handy while packing, there are many gift ideas out there.

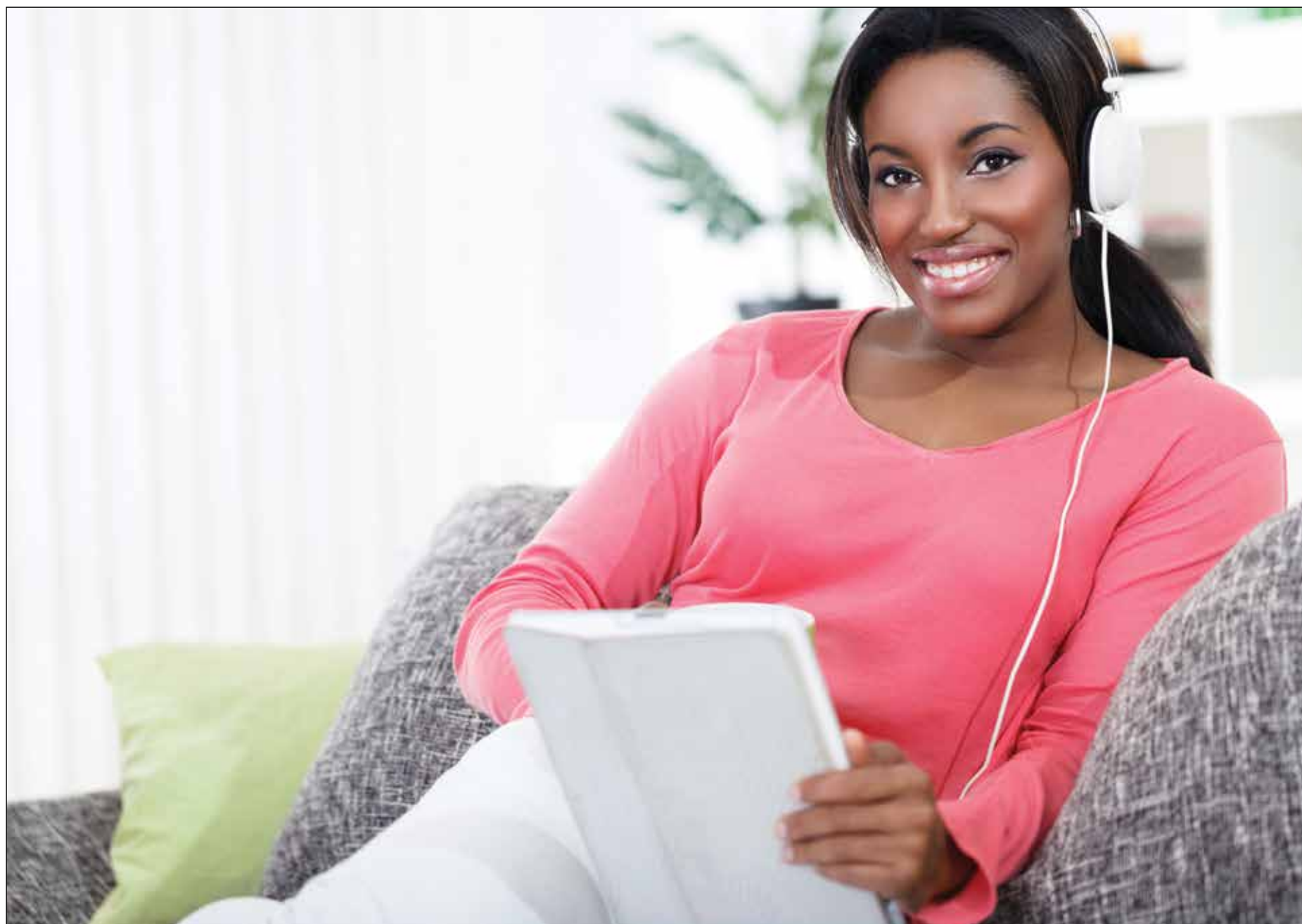
ESSENTIAL LUGGAGE

New luggage is the perfect gift for the globetrotter, especially if what you buy simplifies the experience of traveling. What if you could take away the burden of using heavy, bulky luggage?

There are many luggage options on the market that come in smaller, more portable sizes than traditional suitcases. These pieces can help ease the burden of traveling with oversized luggage while also making packing a breeze.

NOISE-CANCELING HEADPHONES

Traveling is supposed to be an enjoyable experience, but that can be difficult to attain when you're traveling with a plane full of other people. Find a pair of noise-canceling headphones with strong sound quality so your recipi-



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ent can listen to his favorite music on the flight.

Noise-canceling headphones are generally inexpensive and make for the perfect portable gift because they can be easily folded up.

A TRIP

Any jet-setter will of course be thrilled to receive a gift trip. If it's in your budget, a couple of plane tickets to your recipient's favorite destina-

tion — because you're going too — would be the perfect start to an amazing trip.

Just be sure to schedule the trip far enough in advance to give your friend or family member time to adjust her

schedule or save money for trip extras.

Your trip could be the gift she looks forward to redeeming, and remembers for a lifetime because of the special memories you'll make.

The Decorator

Everyone knows a decorator — the person who has an immaculate home with every piece of furniture and decoration in just the right place.

She hosts numerous get-togethers throughout the year because she takes pride in how her home looks and feels. This holiday season, help her feel even better about her space by giving her unique, design-related gifts.

Depending on your friend's own style and personality, you will be able to find gifts that help take his love for design to the next level. If purchasing unique pieces that would fit well on his walls or tables, make sure you're fitting in with his color scheme and design strategies.

INSPIRATION

The best home decorators and designers learn from the inspiration around them. Help them become inspired by planning a trip to a local art gallery or even a farmer's market.

She will revel in the environment, picking out vibrant designs and displays built to attract and retain your attention. Talk about ways she could incorporate the ideas into the design of her own home.

A ROOM RE-DO

Maybe your design-savvy friend is also a super busy mom. Is there a room in her home that she has been wanting to overhaul for a while? Surprise her with a gift card for materials and your commitment to help her finish her project over the next couple of weekends.

She'll be excited by your offer and thankful for the extra help. The gift



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card could come in handy for decorations, artwork or even building materials.

CENTERPIECES

Another gift idea involves center-

pieces for the next big special party at your friend's home. Check in with your local florist or craft shop for ways to create unique, lasting arrangements. These could be made out of baskets, candles or flowers — as long as they match the decor in your

friends' dining room.

Since there is still plenty of cold weather left, consider opting for a winter arrangement that incorporates evergreen, berries and metallic vases or bowls. Save the vibrant colors for spring and summer.