



The holidays are upon us, and regardless of which ones you celebrate, the mere thought of preparing and shopping can send even the most seasoned turkey-maker into a frenzy. To keep your cool in the midst of consumer-driven craziness, follow these simple steps:

1. Make a budget. Start by determining how much you want to spend. Then allocate funds to various categories: holiday meals, decorations, gifts, etc.
2. Draw up a gift list. Keep your list for next year and you can easily prevent sending duplicate gifts.
3. Plan the events. If you're preparing a holiday meal this year, list everything you'll need (e.g., bird, side dishes, wine, ice, etc.). This way, you can do all your shopping at one time or assign items to each of your guests.
4. Start shopping. Be on the lookout for money-saving ways to achieve all of those "must haves." If you order gifts online or through a catalog now, you'll save money by having plenty of time for ground shipping.
5. Give to others. Consider donations to charities in your adult loved ones' names instead of giving items they don't really need.
6. Don't stress about your diet. Make sure to have a healthy snack before going out

## Top 10 Ways To Enjoy Organized And Stress-Free Holidays

by Stephanie Goldberg Glazer

to a holiday party and introduce yourself to lots of new people. You wouldn't want to meet new people with a mouth full of meatballs, right?

7. Gear up for guests. It's almost "Season" in South Florida. Time for the influx of long-lost friends and family members looking for a free place to sleep. Make a "guest pack" including clean sheets, towels and any other necessities. When one group leaves, launder the entire guest pack and keep it together (the big zip-top bags are great for this) for the next group.

8. Write out cards a little at a time. Print out address labels in advance and then write out five-10 cards per day while watching TV. This will definitely save on hand-cramps and having to come up with witty things to say at the last minute.

9. Avoid the tangled web of decorations. When you go through your decorations and lights, toss any that are not up to par. Once the holidays are over, pare down the holiday box so it's easy to store for next year.

10. Relax. Now that you're so organized, enjoy some free time to get ready for those holiday parties or just get some rest — you've worked hard!

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