

December 2020

Christmas Spending Tips



Even if it feels different in 2020, the most wonderful time of the year has arrived! Get ready for the hustle and bustle of holiday shopping with these tips to keep your wallet, and everyone around the tree, happy.

Set a budget

Set a limit on your holiday spending! Even better, decide specifically who you will be buying gifts for and how much you would like to spend on each person. Having everything determined ahead of time will help you stick to your budget and keep you from being deterred by something that is “just perfect” for your dog’s babysitter’s sister.

Only use savings sparingly

If you plan to use your savings to purchase Christmas presents, do so sparingly. Choose to take money from the account earning the least amount of interest so you continue to earn as much as possible on your other savings accounts.

Use a Christmas Club account

If you have a Christmas Club account already set up, this is its time to shine! Cash in the matured balance of your Christmas club for any extra holiday shopping spend. If you have any Christmas Club cash left after you’ve checked your list twice, put it back into your Christmas Club for next year’s gifts.

Pay off debt quickly

If you choose to use credit cards or small holiday loans to do your Christmas shopping, try to pay them off as quickly as possible. Credit is there for you to use (wisely) during high spending times like the holidays, just make sure your debt doesn’t follow you throughout the New Year.

Shop sales and shop early

The holiday shopping season began extra early this year due to big sales typically held in the summer being postponed to the fall months. The odd timing of 2020 sales has many anticipating discounts throughout the holiday season, so take advantage of them! Since many supply chains aren’t running at their usual speed this year, you may miss out or be forced to pay more if you wait until the last minute to search for the season’s hottest gifts. If you’re usually a Christmas Eve shopper, plan ahead this year.

Track your spending

Budgets don’t work if you don’t religiously track your spending. By the time the day before Christmas sales come around, you might forget that you already bought little Billy the new shoes he asked for on Prime Day and end up double spending on new PlayStation games.

Keep receipts

Even Buddy the Elf doesn’t always choose the right gift. Keep your receipts so that money doesn’t end up being wasted on unwanted or duplicate gifts.

Start preparing early

Once this season’s holiday shopping is complete, start preparing for next Christmas! If you don’t already have one, consider opening a Christmas Club or applying for a credit card a few months in advance so you have more spending power next year.

Did You Know?

If you are using a credit card to shop this Christmas, consider the Patriot VISA. Store cards may offer exclusive discounts, but if you carry a balance you may be paying a far higher interest, which may ultimately not be worth the store discount. With the Patriot VISA you enjoy low rates, no annual fee, convenience features to manage your card remotely and great benefits. Visit www.patriotfcu.org/borrowing/credit-cards/



Holiday Cash Contest

Using your Patriot Visa® Credit Card or Patriot Visa® Debit Card is a convenient, safe way to shop this holiday season. And it could pay you!

Once again, at the end of December, we will randomly select three credit card transactions and three debit card transactions during the month of December. The selected cardholders who conducted these transactions will each be awarded \$50. You could be one of our lucky six monthly cardholders – just make a qualifying transaction to be eligible to win¹

¹Contest runs from November 1, 2020 until December 31, 2020. Every Patriot VISA credit card transaction is eligible to win. Every Patriot debit card transaction that is done as a signature, credit transaction is eligible to win (PIN-based transactions are not eligible.) Each month 3 random credit card transactions and 3 random debit card transactions will be selected as winners. Winning cardholders will have \$50 deposited into their Patriot Savings Account within two weeks of the end date of the contest. To be eligible for the random drawings, your account must be in good standing. Employees of the credit union, board members, volunteers and their immediate family members are not eligible. All state, federal and local tax laws are applicable. No purchase or obligation necessary to enter or win. Non-purchase entries and purchase entries have an equal chance of winning. To obtain a non-purchase entry, stop by one of our branch offices or our website: www.patriotfcu.org.

Holiday hours

- **Thursday, December 24th** for Christmas Eve: Closing at 1:00 PM.
- **Friday, December 25th** for Christmas: Closed
- **Thursday, December 31st** for New Year's Eve: Closing at 3 PM
- **Friday, January 1st** for News Year's Day: Closed

Our ATMs, online and mobile banking services will be available to serve you on these days.

Virtual Visit with Santa



Book a virtual visit with Santa!

On **Saturday, December 12** from **9:00 AM - Noon** Santa will be live from the North Pole to talk to your child. A magical holiday experience from the comfort of your own home. Sign up no later than December 10, at www.patriotfcu.org/VirtualSanta. Spots are limited. Reserve your spot today!

Patriot Branches Continue to Offer Lobby Services, While Maintaining Utmost Safety

We understand that our branches are important because many members prefer to transact financial matters in person. While the COVID-19 pandemic persists, our branch lobbies continue to operate under appropriate social/physical distancing guidelines as we maintain strict cleaning and sanitizing practices. In accordance with the CDC and local health guidelines for universal masking, employees and members accessing a branch lobby are required to wear an acceptable face covering/mask.

Today our branch lobby operations look a little different, however, the way that we care for our members remains the same. We appreciate your patience and understanding, as well as your support.

- The first hour of regular lobby service on Tuesdays and Wednesdays is reserved to serve senior members (60 years of age and better) as well as members with health conditions that place them at higher risk during the pandemic. Besides these senior hours, the branches are open during regular hours.
- For your convenience, please consider using our drive-up and/or curbside services, eBranch (online banking), Patriot Mobile, or calling the Contact Center at **888-777-9982** during regular hours. It is also recommended that members needing "in-person" services schedule an appointment by calling **888-996-2735**.