

Cost-saving at Christmas

Tips and hacks on how to reduce costs on festive food and gifting in preparation for Christmas.

Christmas and other religious celebrations in the calendar are a time for indulgence, treats and gifting. This can bring financial stress around spending. Here are tips to reduce seasonal spending without needing to cancel festivities or run up extra debt for the New Year.

Food shopping

- It's easy to end up buying a lot more at the supermarket than you will need. Plan ahead before going shopping by meal planning and making a shopping list to avoid overspending. Consider the total number of your household and guests who will be eating at your home, and how much food they will need.
- Supermarkets increase food prices by up-selling with attractive Christmas packaging and the addition of extra ingredients to make it sound indulgent and entice you to spend more. Compare with the cost of buying food in regular packaging and see how much you can save.

Free local support at Christmas

Struggling financially to provide for Christmas? Check out charities, volunteer groups and organisations in your local area for access to seasonal support including free food, Christmas Day dinner, and gift donations for children.



Cards, presents, and gift wrapping

- The cost of sending Christmas cards is very expensive due to high stamp prices. Aside from anyone who is digitally excluded and would appreciate a card through the post, save money by sending digital greetings, such as a zoom call or digital message. If you are giving Christmas or New Year cards, charity shop cards are cheapest.
- Reduce the amount spent on Christmas presents without financial pressure or stigma of trying to hide that money is tight by agreeing with your friends or family circle to limit spending on gifts to an small affordable amount per person, or agree to buy presents for just for children in your family.
- Buying tissue paper, ribbons, tags, decorative paper, and gift bags to wrap presents is another added cost. Reduce this expenditure by saving anything suitable from packaged purchases or wrapped gifts you receive during the year, and recycle these to wrap Christmas gifts. If you or your children are into art and crafts, trying making your own gift wrappings using online YouTube instructions or by attending free community craft activity sessions in your local area.
TIP: You can save on the cost of festive home decorations by getting crafty and making these too.

Article by Cost of Living, People Participation Team



Visit <https://www.elft.nhs.uk/service-users-and-carers/cost-living> for more tips and advice on how to save on your household bills and on food costs for Christmas.