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Perfectly Practical Holiday Gifts for \$30 or Less

by homewarranty.com

Practical doesn't have to be boring. We uncovered some great gift ideas to help you give- with your heart and your mind. This year, why not spend your money on something they will enjoy and actually use? Here are eight perfectly practical holiday gifts to get you shopping!

1. Bombas Socks \$12.00 - Bombas.com knows the #1 requested clothing item in homeless shelters is socks. Your purchase will help give back. For every pair you buy, one pair is donated to an organization in need. By giving, you will receive the ultimate in sock wear. Seamless toe, arch support, and they actually stay up.

2. Handcrafted Soaps \$20 - Finchberry.com This 2-bar box contains a beautiful pair of soap slices from Finchberry.com. These handcrafted soaps are gluten-free, vegan-friendly, and made without chemical preservatives - nothing in this box but a little good, clean, fun.

3. Unique Wall Hook \$20 - Umbra.com Buddy Hooks from Umbra.com utilize durable polypropylene to create unique and playful characters that appear to be climbing up a wall. When these hooks are not in use, what remains is a quirky accent that adds personality to any wall space.

4. Coffee Press \$29.95 - AeroPress.com Any coffee drinker on your list would be delighted to receive the gift of a perfect cup of coffee or espresso. [AeroPress](http://AeroPress.com) offers a unique, patented brewing design to give you a quick, smooth, full-flavored cup of joe. Clean up is a breeze. This BPA-free coffee press is lightweight, compact, durable, and easy to use - which makes it perfect for camping or traveling.

5. Handmade Slippers \$14

ShopThePurpose.com brings you these Babouche Slippers - handmade in Morocco from gorgeous, remnant fabrics. With their soft, leather sole, these go-to house shoes can be used all year long. [Shop the Purpose](http://ShopThePurpose.com) makes it easy to give back with their list of "Giveback Partners" to whom 3% of your purchase price will be donated - you choose the organization. You give, they give - that's a win-win.

6. Pet Candles \$21.95

- OneFurAllPets.com This pet odor eliminator candle from OneFurAllPets.com is specially formulated with odor neutralizers to remove unwanted pet smells from the home. These natural soy wax candles are hand-poured, long-lasting, and come in a variety of fragrances. We've given you the idea; now you to come up with a great explanation as to why your loved one needs an odor-neutralizing pet candle in the first place.

7. Solar Puff Light \$30

- UncommonGoods.com Solar Puff inflatable lights use energy from the sun to provide up to 12 hours of light. This unique light has a shell made of sailcloth to provide durability and style. Water-tight Solar Puffs are perfect companions for camping or sailing - or even a power outage. These lights collapse, so they're easy to store in a glove compartment or suitcase.

8. Tote-able Food Containers \$24

- Swell.com brings you S'nack by Swell - stylish, insulated food containers for those on your list who love to eat on-the-go. BPA/BPS-free, these eco-friendly, durable containers are lightweight and easy to carry. Food-grade stainless steel keeps soup hot and yogurt cold. The whimsical designs keep them smiling through lunch.

December Calendar

December 7 - Pearl Harbor Day

December 10 - Hanukkah Begins

December 25 - Christmas Day

December 31 - New Year's Eve

Homeowner Tip:



Keep the Home Fires Burning

Winter is perfect for enjoying a night by the fireplace, but make sure your fireplace and chimney are functioning at their peak. The National Fire Protection Association recommends hiring a professional chimney cleaner to clean and clear debris from the flue, smoke chamber, damper, and vent of your fireplace. Experts estimate a cleaning is due after about 80 fires. So snuggle up, and start counting!

5 December Home Maintenance Tips to Remember

We all get caught up with the holidays in December, but here are 5 tips to keep your winter home running all season long.

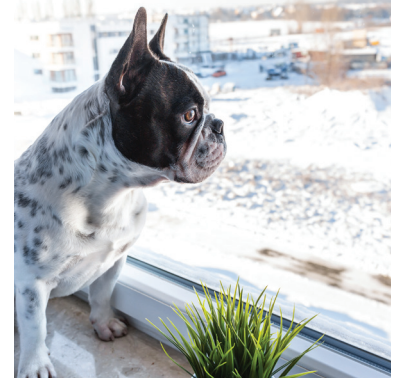
1. Check your gutters. Be ready for the rain that comes with winter. Make sure your gutters and downspouts are free of debris to prevent clogs that can damage or break your gutters and even put a strain on your roof.

2. Check your electrical. Take a look at your main panel and make sure the breaker wires are insulated and are not discolored. If you spot potential problems, schedule a professional electrician to do further testing and evaluation.

3. Clear your dryer vents. Dryers are a common cause of house fires, so reduce the risk by cleaning the lint screen, but more importantly, the lint vent which is located at the back of most dryers.

4. Seal your windows. Check for gaps in your windows and doors by simply feeling for cold air with your hands. Add new weatherstripping or caulk where needed. Ask your local home improvement store for recommendations depending upon the age and type of your windows.

5. Reverse your ceiling fans. Many of us forget this simple task that keeps the warm air down low in winter where it belongs. Most ceiling fans have a switch to reverse airflow.



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No-Bake White Chocolate Peppermint Oreo Truffles

Ingredients

- 27 regular sized Golden Oreos
- 2 peppermint candy canes
- 1/2 package cream cheese (4 oz)
- 1 1/2 cup white chocolate to coat your truffles
- 3 crushed peppermint candy canes for garnish

Directions

In a food processor, process Oreos and candy canes until fine crumbs. Add the cream cheese and process until the dough comes together (it will form a large ball).

Line a baking sheet with plastic wrap or foil. Roll Oreo mixture into balls and place on the baking sheet. Freeze at least 2 hours or until solid.

In a double boiler (a small pot with a glass bowl sitting on top will work just fine, as long as it is far off the bottom of the pot), melt the chocolate: add 1 inch of water in the bottom and bring to a simmer. Place bowl on top and add the chocolate to the bowl. Simmer over low heat, stirring constantly, until white chocolate is melted and smooth.

Dip Oreo balls in white chocolate, sprinkle with crushed candy canes and set back on baking sheet to set up. Store in the refrigerator until ready to serve, or freeze for up to 6 months.



Photo & recipe courtesy of thereciperebel.com