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**Creating & Maintaining a "Gift Chest"**

**By Stacie Dahl**

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Creating & Maintaining a "Gift Chest"  
by Stacie Dahl

With all of the weddings, baby showers, birthday parties, etc. it seems there is always a gift needed at the last minute. Do you have cash in your wallet to slip in the card? Do you re-gift a gift certificate? Do you run to the store and buy on a whim?

Why not solve the last minute rush of gift giving once and for all by creating a "gift chest" full of gifts ready to give.

To create your "gift chest," start by identifying what types of gifts your family needs. Are you invited to a lot of weddings? Do you have kids and get invited to birthday parties? Do you have a lot of friends having babies? After identifying what types of gifts your family is in need of, start by purchasing inexpensive cards for the occasions you are invited to most. Most drug stores have a \$0.99 section or what about buying a prepackaged stack of cards with a cute cover and blank insides (buying in bulk is always less expensive).

Next where do you store all these gifts and cards but are still able to find them later on when you need them most. I have an under-the-bed plastic storage bin where I can store the gifts. For cards I use a 13 divider plastic storage accordion file. The dividers can be divided by month and you stick the cards in for the appropriate events in each month. Or you can label your dividers by event—new baby, girl birthday, boy birthday, adult birthday, wedding, etc.

## Creating Maintaining a "Gift Chest"

Here are some of my suggestions to start building your gift chest:

1. Young Girls—purses, sparkly stuff, stationery, fun pens & pencils, tea sets, and anything mini and dainty.
2. Young Boys—cars (matchbox to medium size), noise making action figures (be careful of trends and try to pick one that is more timeless), spy kits, small animal sets (farm, dinosaur), people sets (cowboys, army), and camping kits.
3. Generic Children—books, puzzles, crayon packs, activity/coloring books, craft/activity sets, and food making toys—like snow cone maker, chocolate mold maker.
4. Teenagers—fast food gift certificates, journal, books (particularly those to improve their own self image), and a certificate for a one year subscription to a magazine of their choice.
5. Weddings—glass goblets, serving platters, rays, candles with candle holders, cloth napkins with matching table runner and/or placemats but be sure to use a neutral color like white or beige so it

doesn't clash with each couples color scheme.

6. New Baby—Get something unique other than an outfit like blankets, bibs, burp cloths, small baby toys. New moms have a hard time remembering who gave what outfit but they will always remember who gave them baby's special blanket for instance.

There are some free activities you can find online as well. For boys and girls, I particularly like <http://www.makingfriends.com> You can print them out for your kids or grandkids. Or you can even slip them in a card for someone else to enjoy. They can print, cut and make their own paper dolls. These are fun because kids or adults can present a play with their creations, retell a story or glue them to cards for gift giving.

Now when I go to my gift chest I am ready to wrap and don't have to put my life on hold to find a gift. Don't forget to keep your gift chest well stocked but not over-stuffed and overflowing! Try not to buy big bulky items that will use up all your space.

Make sure to keep a budget on gifts and don't overspend. By keeping your gift chest well stocked you can actually save some money by being able to get the items on sale throughout the year and not buying a more expensive item on impulse because you're already late for the party!

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About the author: Stacie is a WAHM with 4 little kiddos and owner of Blankie Bundles, an online gift boutique specializing in babies and young children's gifts. Visit: <http://www.blankiebundles.com>

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### **Know Your Muscles – The Chest And Upper Back**

**By Rick Mitchell**

**Know Your Muscles – The Chest And Upper Back by Rick Mitchell**

## Creating Maintaining a "Gift Chest"

Becoming familiar with the muscles that make up your body has more benefits than simply allowing you to talk shop with your training partners. The more familiar you are with the muscles you're working, the better you'll be able to judge what's needed to make improvements. In this article we'll get to know the muscles that make up the chest and upper back.

Although they are two distinct areas, the chest and the upper back will be considered together because achieving a muscular balance between them is crucial, particularly in relation to maintaining good posture. Creating an imbalance between the two is likely to result in injury.

The main muscles found in the chest and upper back are as follows:

1. Pectoralis major – these are the large chest muscles found to either side of the breastbone. Its main job is to bring the upper arm inwards across the body, a movement that is known as horizontal adduction.
2. Latissimus dorsi – this is the largest back muscle that runs from the lower back to the upper arm bone. It pulls the upper arm towards the body and acts as an internal rotator of the upper arm.
3. Trapezius – this muscle runs from the mid spine to the shoulder and then to the neck. Its main role is to facilitate movement of the shoulder blades.

Rick Mitchell is the creator of the [bodybuildingadvisor.com](http://bodybuildingadvisor.com) website that provides guidance and information to athletes at all levels of bodybuilding experience. Go to

to learn

more about the issues covered in this article.



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