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**Sharp Christmas Gift Ideas to be Given TO the Hard-to-Please FROM the Uninspired and/or
Busy Shopper**

By Susan Dunn

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Busy Shopper by Susan Dunn, MA, cEQc, The EQ Coach**

We've all got one or two people on our gift list that are just `impossible.'

You could always send a box of candy, flowers or a can of popcorn, but that shows so little thought.

Here are some nice ideas, sure to please, easy to order, in differing price ranges, arranged by type.

1. Doesn't care about Christmas, but is patriotic to the core? Lives in Alabama but made a trip to see the scene of the terrorism? Get the Polonaise Forever ornament (http://www.hsn.com/cnt/prod/default.aspx?webp_id=1417623&web_id=1417623&sz=0&sf=hs&dept=HS0026&cat=HS0027&subcat=&gs=&attr=&prev=hp!sf!dept!cat).

Oddly named, this ornament is described as "a patriotic and symbolic show of support for NY City and the US." On one side the Twin Towers with three firefighters and an American flag with banner reading "Forever in Our Hearts". On the other side, Statue of Liberty in front of Twin Towers with banner in red, white and blue saying "God Bless America."

2. More into "Western" than anything else? Get the Western Christmas Tree Skirt (http://www.hsn.com/cnt/prod/default.aspx?webp_id=1058898&web_id=1058898&sz=0&sf=hs&dept=HS0026&cat=HS0027&subcat=&gs=&attr=&prev=hp!sf!dept!cat).

3. They've "been there, done that" and are kind of blasé, but not about their grandchildren. Get the recordable talking photo ornaments. Add photo of grandkids and their voices, or a Christmas carol (http://www.hsn.com/cnt/prod/default.aspx?webp_id=1450443&web_id=1450443&sz=0&sf=hs&dept=HS0026&cat=HS0027&subcat=&gs=&attr=&prev=hp!sf!dept!cat).

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4 The heck with Christmas, let's get on to the Super Bowl? Try the Tailgate Blender (<http://www.sharperimage.com/us/en/catalog/productview.jhtml?pid=46757500&pcatid=39064300&catid=35023500>). Just plug it into the dash, half price now.

5 Classic. You can't go wrong with classic, and this is just-enough different. Fresh evergreen wreath (http://www.hsn.com/cnt/prod/default.aspx?webp_id=1524686&web_id=1524686&sz=0&sf=hs&dept=HS0026&cat=&subcat=&gs=&attr=&prev=hp!sf!dept), red bow, lights, indoor use.

6 Okay the holidays are here, but what's the weather going to be like tomorrow? And will there be snow in Arkansas where the kids are? For the fussy weather watcher, try the Personal Weather Station Five (http://www.windandweather.com/store/Gift_Guide___For_Weather_WatchersID6688?).

Description: "It monitors temperatures at your base station and up to three remote locations, without wires. The atomic clock - the most accurate chronometer you can get - features alarm and date. Big LCD readout simultaneously displays remote and base unit temperatures, with minimums, maximums, and trends."

Don't you just KNOW someone who needs this??

7. For the cell phone nut who can never remember to recharge it ... which could be most of us, right? Get the SideWinder Cell Phone Charger (http://www.windandweather.com/store/Gift_Guide___Gifts_Under___50_00GR2318?). 2 ½ oz., says it works with "most" cell phones.

8. She's romantic and you have very little money. Try the floating star candles for the bath (http://www.bath-and-body.com/productlist_candles.asp?department=15). 3-pack just \$2. you can add the "bath experience"!

9. They've got everything but do entertain and go all out decorating? Try Christmas soap. Give this gift early so they'll have it for their parties. Swedish soap collection has soaps imprinted with "Be Good" and "Be Nice", peppermint star soap and more. http://www.hamptonct.com/index.cgi/cart_id=1070400750.18856/vendor=Swedish%20Christmas%20Soap

More family-oriented? Angel, snowman, candy cane, gift-wrap, Christmas delights, 3 wisemen (<http://gdoor.com/Csoaps.htm>)

10 Just a heckuva great gift at a very reasonable price? The 12 Days of Christmas Handpainted Goblets (http://www.1800flowers.com/product.asp?section_id=0&pcode=8146&cc=1001&sc=1001&body_sc=1001&sku=goblet)

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Personalizing Your Presents With Gift Baskets

By Susan Green

When it comes time to purchase a gift for your next occasion, consider adding a decorative gift basket to make your presentation even more special. Synonymous with Easter, gift baskets are also used for birthday gift-giving, as well as Christmas, Valentine's Day and other holidays.

As the snow begins to fall and the Christmas trees are being decorated, everyone begins to think about creative ways to prepare their gifts. While the most traditional option has always been gift wrap, choosing to give a festive holiday basket filled with gifts and wrapped in cellophane is a much more artistic approach to gift giving. If you are shopping for a child, for instance, perhaps a favorite DVD movie, a gift card and a popular music CD placed inside of a small holiday basket will be just the ticket. Once the gifts are placed inside, whether individually wrapped or not, carefully place the basket inside of a cellophane bag imprinted with a Christmas theme. Once inside, secure the top of the bag tightly with clear tape and add a fancy red bow. Don't forget the name tag!

Another popular idea, when it comes to gift baskets, is a fruit selection for your friends and family. In addition, a fruit basket is also ideal as a gift for mail carriers, physicians, teachers, employers, etc. The best way to prepare gift baskets filled with fruit is to purchase a plain basket without the handle, which can be used as a centerpiece in the family or dining room, and begin to add an array of colorful fruits. Among the most popular additions are apples, oranges, plums, pears, strawberries, grapes, etc.

If you are curious for other ideas for inclusion in your special occasion gift baskets, consider adding jewelry, a wallet or purse, concert or sporting event tickets, gift certificates and cards, stuffed animals, candies, etc. The more variety and color that you can add to gift baskets, the more festive your overall packaging will appear. As for alternative ideas for gift baskets, consider putting together a special package for your pet, a baby or wedding shower, anniversary celebration, etc. There are unlimited options for creating the perfect gift basket filled with plenty of goodies and a lot of imagination.

If you are more of a shopper and less of a decorator, that's no problem. You can purchase a plain gift basket at your local florist, go out and purchase the items that you want to include and ask that they prepare the basket for you to give as a gift. Because their career revolves around their ability to make arrangements beautiful, a florist is the perfect person to help with all of your gift baskets and creative arrangements.

The author is a regular contributor to

where more information

about personal gifts and gift baskets is available.



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