

# The Sampler

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## Online Shopping Hints and Hacks

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**In this issue:**

Online Shopping Hints and Hacks	1
Why Be Grateful?	3
Family & Consumer Science Events	4
3 Tips to Fanning the "Spark" in Your Relationship	5
Holiday Package Shipping Tips	6
Pies	7
Create Better Health News	8

Most of us are doing more and more shopping online, especially for gift giving. Here are a few tips to keep you safe and improve the process.

**SAFETY:**

1. Shop through websites you know and trust. Sadly, there are hundreds of bogus 'pop-up' websites this time of year. The FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center receives thousands of online theft complaints each year. According to LifeLock some businesses are fabricated by people who just want your credit card information and other personal details. So play it safe, only do online business with retailers you trust and have shopped with before.
2. Be proactive. The very first thing to do when shopping online is to use a virtual private network (VPN), then enable security features on your mobile devices, and create complex and strong passwords. Also, don't use the same password — however strong — on

multiple accounts. Yes, I know it is tempting, just for convenience and memory, but switch it up. A data breach at one company could give criminals access to your other, shared-password accounts. A VPN creates an encrypted connection between your smartphones and computers and the VPN server. Think of it as a secure tunnel your Internet traffic travels through while you browse the web, making your data safer from interception by nearby hackers. One last note on this: It's never a good idea to shop online or log in to any website while you're connected to public Wi-Fi.



3. Consider setting up a virtual credit card through your financial institution. These are relatively new, but becoming more popular. This is a randomly generated number that is linked to your account, and is used anywhere online. Anyone who tries to use that number is out of luck because your real card information is not connected to the virtual credit card number, therefore making it impossible for a charge to go through.

Another thing that happens when that number (if obtained) were used, your bank will easily be able to investigate without forcing your 'real' card to be shut down. Check with your financial institution about this option, if it sounds like something you might be interested in doing.

4. Check out a website's security. Lifelock again gives us some good suggestions: "That small lock icon in the corner of your URL bar tells you that the web page you're on has privacy protection installed. The URL will start with "https." These websites mask any data you share, typically on pages that ask for passwords or financial information. If you don't see that lock or the "s" after "http," then the webpage isn't secure. There is no privacy protection attached to these pages, so we suggest you exercise caution before providing your credit card information over these sites.

5. Check out the business. Be a detective. Does the company interact with a social media following? What do its customer reviews say? Does it have a history of scam reports or complaints at the Better Business Bureau? Take it one step further by contacting the business. If there's no email address, phone number, or address for a brick-and-mortar location, that could be a signal that it's a fake company.



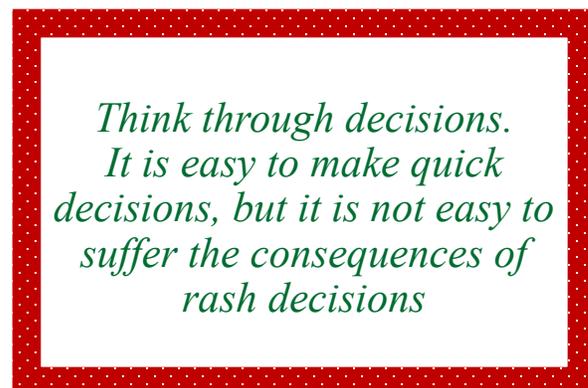
you can get cash back, plus have the perk of them identifying great deals and sending notifications. Of course, each has their own way of getting the funds to you, but if you are doing a lot of online shopping, these dollars will add up.

3. Shop online using a credit card that has a reward point/perks system attached.
4. Download the Honey app...it automatically searches and applies any discount codes at check out, AND gives you points every time you shop online. This app actually makes it so you don't have to manually sift through sites like RetailMeNot because it actually browses thousands of sites for you. Once you accrue a certain number of points you can cash them in for a specified gift card.
5. Take advantage of all the perks to save money on Amazon...trade for cash; deals on open box products; using the daily deal page; Amazon's outlet stores; reward points; etc.
6. Shop online using discounted gift cards, and/or giving discounted gift cards. There are companies like CardCash, Raise, and others that offer gift cards up to 50% off. So, a \$100 gift card is purchased for only \$50.00

## SAVINGS:

When shopping online, don't forget to do all you can to get extra savings. You know to watch for 'free shipping', but what about some others?

1. If you are not a member of Amazon Prime...sign up now for a FREE 30 day trial period. You will get all of the perks associated with PRIME status for those 30 days.
2. Discover how and where to find extra coupons, discounts, and cash rebates. When you shop through places online like RetailMeNot, Ibotta, Swagbucks, EBates, and many other locations



# Why Be Grateful?

This time of the year everyone seems to be curious about what we each are grateful for, especially on Thanksgiving. Sometimes the list is long, never ending as each and every little thing in life is thought of and listed. Other times, you are lucky to have just one on the list that you can see that day. With everyone asking what you are grateful for, have you ever asked why? Why ask? Why talk about it? I know that my mother taught me to always say 'thank you', she said it was polite, but why? Why ask and why be grateful in the first place?

## Why ask?

In the articles that I have read, I have come to the conclusion that people ask what you are grateful for because they care and want to have you take part in the benefits of gratitude, whether it is consciously or unconsciously. There are many benefits from being grateful. In general, being grateful can improve overall well being. Meaning emotionally, physically, and socially. As others take the time to ask you, and as you ask them, "What are you grateful for?" it is showing them that you care, and that you want them to be happy.

## Why gratitude?

As mentioned before, gratitude has many benefits. Physical benefits include, but are not limited to lowering blood pressure, improving immune function, as well as, longer and improved quality of sleep. Emotionally the benefits include an emotional healing effect, ability to cope with daily stressors, happiness, greater resiliency and a reduction of lifetime risk of depression and anxiety.

There is a benefit of gratitude in all aspects of life. Even socially. When there is gratitude in someone's life, studies have shown that they do sporadic acts of happiness, generosity and cooperation. In general grateful people are perceived differently than those who are not. They are often seen as trustworthy, more helpful and outgoing.

## Being grateful

Even though it has been discussed that gratitude has many good things and being grateful is amazing, thinking about being grateful and actually being grateful can be hard at first. Especially if it is not already a habit. Just like working out, or solving a math problem. It can be hard at the beginning, over time muscles build and understanding increases as those skills are enhanced. The same with gratitude.

There are many ways to cultivate, or grow, gratitude. The most important way is to first and foremost choose to be grateful. No matter what is going on in the world or your life, choose to be grateful. With that choice made, there are many things that can be done to become more grateful.

- Celebrate the small things
- Have a gratitude journal, be as detailed as possible about that item, person or experience.
- Write a letter of thanks, mail it or even try reading the letter of gratitude to that person.
- Meditate or practice mindfulness, gratitude and mindfulness go hand in hand.
- Serve others, even something as small as a smile could be the exact act of service someone needs to help them through the day.



As more gratitude is shown and acknowledged the easier it will become to show gratitude towards others and see all that there is to be grateful for. Start with a small daily piece of gratitude, any little bit will help. Then allow the natural progression of becoming more grateful to happen. Remember, gratitude, like with many things in life, is a process. ☪

~Susie Savage, WSU Practicum Student

Resource: Gratitude as a psychotherapeutic intervention, RA Emmons, R Stern - Journal of clinical psychology, 2013 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jclp.22020>

## Family and Consumer Science Events

### *Home Buyer Education Classes*

USU Extension Service  
1181 No. Fairgrounds Dr., Ogden

◆ Saturday, December 7, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Last class of the year!  
These classes help prepare people for the home buying process. The curriculum covers mortgage options, finances, housing choices, etc. Cost is \$25 per household for certificate and free for education only. Call 801-399-8207 to register.



### *Holiday Homemaking Hacks*

Wednesday, December 5, 2019  
Weber Family Resource Center  
Burch Creek Elementary  
4300 Madison Ave., Ogden

Come to this fun class and review some clever, fun, and helpful hints to help make your holidays a little less stressful. Sign up for this class by calling 801-476-5311.

### *Mark Your Calendar . . .*

#### *Northern Utah Marriage Celebration*

The Northern Utah Marriage Celebration, a fun date night for individuals or couples who want to prepare for or strengthen their marriage, will be held on Friday, February 7, 2020 at Weber State University's Shepherd Union Building, 6:00 to 9:30 p.m. (with bonus workshops from 4:00-6:00 p.m.). Tickets will go on sale starting December 13. Go to: <https://marriagecelebration2020.eventbrite.com>



#### *Master Food Preservation classes coming in the Summer of 2020*

Do you enjoy the art and science of food preservation and canning? Are you interested in updating your skills? If so, this training is just for you! It can be taken as a series or in parts by your topics of interest. Watch for more information coming in the Spring.



## 3 Tips to Fanning the “Spark” in Your Relationship

Does your relationship feel a bit more like a business partnership than a fiery romance? Busy schedules, life changes, and demands for our attention elsewhere can lead to survival mode with our relationships. During these times, we may get so focused on getting through our daily activities that we forget to feed our relationship. If you are in a current “funk” in your relationship, don’t worry, there is hope! Here are three things you can do tonight to feed your relationship and fan the spark.

1. **Unplug.** If your attention is on an electronic device that means you are simultaneously ignoring the most important social interaction in your life—your partner right next to you. So, take a few minutes to unplug and just be together. Give each other eye contact and hold hands while talking or cuddle. What you do during this time is not as important as the gift of your undivided attention.
2. **Kiss passionately for six seconds.** Research suggests that the way we transition really matters. For example, taking time to really acknowledge your partner as you say hello or goodbye lets your partner know that they really matter to you. So take time tonight to reconnect with a long, slow, sloppy, wet, passionate kiss that communicates how much you really care. As a bonus, kissing also releases an explosion of chemicals, including stress reduction chemicals.
3. **Take time to talk--**not about bills, kids and other business of everyday life but rather about your dreams, hopes and what is most important to you. Share what you appreciate about each other or ask each other silly open ended questions like when



you were first dating. You might learn something new about your partner and it might just get you thinking about why you fell in love with your partner in the first place.

While these small things may not seem like much, by turning toward your partner and reconnecting in little ways each day you can build your friendship with your partner and strengthen and fan the “spark” in your relationship.☞

~Naomi Brower

### Sources:

Caston, C. (2016, Oct. 27). *16 ways to fall in love all over again*. Retrieve from <https://www.gottman.com/blog/16-ways-to-fall-in-love-all-over-again/>

Wheeler, C. (2018, Feb 2). *The magic of the six-second kiss: Gottman marriage minute*. Retrieve from <https://mycounselingsolutions.wordpress.com/2018/02/02/the-magic-of-the-six-second-kiss-gottman-marriage-minute/>

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## COCONUT-PUMPKIN BREAD

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- ¼ cup cooking oil
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 (3 ⅛ oz.) package coconut pudding mix (do not use instant pudding mix)
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon walnuts, chopped



In mixing bowl, beat together eggs, pumpkin and oil. Stir together flour, sugar, pudding mix, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, and nutmeg; stir into pumpkin mixture until well blended. Stir in walnuts. Pour into a greased 9 x 5 x 3– inch baking pan. Bake at 350° for 50 minutes or until done. Yield: 1 loaf.

## Holiday Package Shipping Tips

Based on a recent and sad personal experience I had with shipping packages, I thought these tips might prove helpful for you this holiday season as well.

- Choose a box with enough room for cushioning material around the contents. If you are reusing a box, cover all previous labels and markings with heavy black marker or adhesive labels.
- Always use a heavy-duty corrugated box when shipping items. Never use gift boxes or shoe boxes that can be easily crushed.
- When reusing boxes, make sure the structural integrity of the box is intact. A box that is floppy or soft is not suitable for shipping.
- Do not wrap packages in paper or bind them with twine – this is no longer acceptable to most carriers, as it gets caught in processing equipment.
- Enclose an extra label, business card or letterhead with the shipper's address and phone number and the recipient's address and phone number inside the package before sealing it. If the outer packaging gets damaged the shipper will still have the return information.
- Use an appropriate size box.
- Put 3 inches of cushioning, such as air-cellular cushioning, loose fill peanuts, corrugated fiberboard, foam pads, crumpled paper or molded plastic, on all sides of the container to fill void spaces and prevent movement of goods inside the box during shipping. Close and shake the box to see if you've used enough. If your item shakes or shifts, add more.
- Place goods that might be affected by dirt, water or wet conditions inside a plastic bag.
- Consolidate small parts or spillable granular products in a strong sealed container.
- Double-box fragile items with 3 inches of cushioning in and around the smaller box.
- Wrap fragile items individually with cushioning material and center them in cartons away from other items and away from the sides, corners, top and bottom of the container.
- Position bottles that contain liquids upright. Use



- an inner seal and perforated breakaway cap. The inner packaging must be able to contain leaks.
- Place items that might be damaged by normal handling, such as soiling, marking or application of adhesive labels, in a protective outer container.
- Band or shrink wrap printed materials that can shift around, and then cushion them within a heavy-duty corrugated cardboard carton.
- Wrap rolled goods such as fabric and wallpaper in air-cellular cushioning, reinforced plastic or heavy brown paper before placing them in an outer container.
- Tape the opening of your box and reinforce all seams with 2 inch wide tape. Use clear or brown packaging tape, reinforced packing tape or paper tape.
- Apply at least three strips of pressure-sensitive adhesive plastic tape to both the top and bottom of the box.
- Distribute the tape evenly across flaps and seams, using the H taping method.
- Use pressure-sensitive plastic tape, water-activated paper tape (minimum 60-lb. grade) or water-activated reinforced tape.
- Don't skimp on tape. More is usually better. If in doubt add another strip. It is better to be safe and have your box overly secure than have it open in transit.
- Using a complete and correct address is critical for efficient delivery.
- Place delivery information inside and outside the package. Include an address for your recipient and yourself.
- Supply a physical address rather than a P.O. box address when shipping with anyone other than USPS.
- Remove or cross out any old address labels on the carton.
- Package labels and packing slips should be applied facing the same direction on the same side of the package.
- Place shipping labels on the package's largest surface.

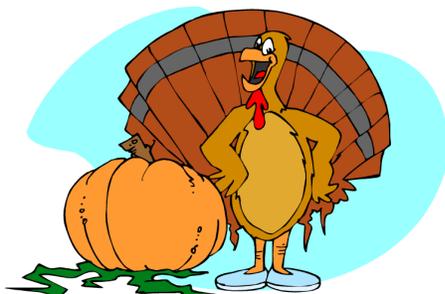


- Do not place labels over seams or sealing tape
- Use tie-on tags on transit cases (including tradeshow display cases), golf bags, skis and luggage.
- Ask, and use, the tracking service provided, so you know your package whereabouts. This is critical to notifying the carrier if the package does not arrive at its destination.
- Packages will get be exposed to heat when the weather is warm and cold when the weather is cold. Keep this in mind if the item being shipped is temperature sensitive.
- Only USPS counts Saturday as a delivery day unless Saturday delivery is requested. Plan accordingly.
- Purchase insurance if your item is valuable. UPS, DHL, and FedEx automatically insure each package for up to \$100. Supplemental insurance is available from all carriers.
- Shipping rates differ considerably between carriers depending on origin, destination, and package size, among other things. Compare rates between the carriers.
- Know your options. With four main national carriers in the US each offering a number of shipping options, you have literally dozens of methods to ship depending on how fast you want your package to arrive at its destination. Ground shipping provides the best value for packages which are not urgent. Consider priority or 2-day service for items which are more urgent. Finally, all carriers offer an overnight or express option for items which need to get there in a very timely manner. You can compare the estimated shipping times of all services.



Check out [www.howtoship.com](http://www.howtoship.com), your local carriers holiday shipping notices, and [www.ups.com](http://www.ups.com) for more good information on shipping. ☞

~Teresa Hunsaker



## Pies

Pies can cause a lot of last minute frustration, however most pies can be frozen ahead, either baked or unbaked. Baked pies can be thawed and warmed by placing in a 375° oven for 30 minutes. To bake frozen unbaked pies, cut steam vents in top crust and bake at 400-450° for the first 10-15 minutes and then complete baking at 375°. Pumpkin pie is best frozen unbaked (freeze the filling in the shell before wrapping.) Pie crust can also be prepared ahead and frozen without the filling. One of the easiest ways is to roll the crusts to the right size and stack them with two thicknesses of waxed paper between each crust. A frozen pizza box sealed with freezer tape makes a good container. Frozen pies may be kept up to six months. Don't freeze custard pies or meringue toppings.



Here is a recipe for those of you who don't like the texture of pumpkin pie but love the taste.

### PUMPKIN ICE CREAM PIE

1 cup mashed, cooked pumpkin or canned pumpkin  
 ½ cup packed brown sugar  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 ½ teaspoon ground ginger  
 ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg  
 1 quart vanilla ice cream  
 1 9-inch graham cracker crust  
 Whipped cream  
 Pecan halves

Combine pumpkin, brown sugar, salt and spices. Stir vanilla ice cream to soften; then fold ice cream into pumpkin mixture. Pour into graham cracker crust. Freeze until firm. Remove from freezer about 15 minutes before serving. Garnish with whipped cream and pecans.



# Create Better Health News

## Happy and Healthy Holiday Season!!

Warmest wishes to all those about to embark in the holidays! This time of year can be a very rewarding, cherished, and nostalgic experience. Or it can be stressful, chaotic, and anticlimactic. In order to make sure your experience is the former, we here at Create Better Health have come up with some healthy food swaptions. Meaning, instead of eating the traditional holiday fare, which can be very unhealthy, we've devised a way to swap out those not so good choices and replace them with a better option... a Swaption!

For instance, do you love turkey? Great! But maybe instead of slathering it with gravy, try to stick to cranberry sauce, or try brining your turkey or sprinkle it with some herbs for added flavor.



Another good swaption is to try to stick to the white meat instead of the dark meat. It has less calories and you can still enjoy Mr. Tom Turkey without having to sacrifice flavor. It seems like as soon as cold weather hits, warm, gooey, cheesy sauces hit the appetizer table. Do you like warm artichoke dip with white crusty bread, or how about fondue? Instead try to swap out bread or crackers for fresh vegetables. And try hummus as your dip and forego the cheesy stuff. And let's not forget to get some lean protein in your diet. Have yourself some merry little shrimp with cocktail sauce and a fresh squeeze of lemon. You get all of that luxury taste without adding the extra holiday pounds. An all-time classic during the holidays is eggnog. Can you have Christmas without it? Well, it turns out you can. A healthier swaption is to have mulled apple cider. It makes your home smell delicious, and it provides those spices we've all come to love without

the added saturated fat. Or, if you're a die-hard eggnog person, try diluting it with some regular milk. Reducing those naughty calories are sure to put you back on Santa's nice list.

Many wonder if there will be any healthy options at holiday parties. To make sure that you will have healthy alternatives always at your fingertips, ask your host or hostess, in advance, if you can help bring something. Then make sure you have an arsenal of great swaptions for you and the other guests. As an example, offer to bring a veggie tray or a fruit platter to your holiday gatherings.

Another way to stay healthy during the holiday season is to exercise! But, it is a little harder to go on a run during a snow storm. Instead, try shoveling the snow in your neighbor's driveway. What better gift can you give than that? It's a great way to show that you care, it burns some serious calories, and you get to spend some time enjoying the great outdoors. Plus, and this is a big plus... It's FREE. How many neighbor gifts do you know that are free?

If you look closely, there's a myriad of choices where you can upgrade a few items to make it healthier. And if there's a food item you simply can't live without, go ahead, indulge! But maybe have half of a portion, or share it with a friend. ☞

~Grayce Anderson, Weber County Nutrition Educator

*Christmas is a necessity. There has to be at least one day of the year to remind us that we're here for something else besides ourselves.*

Eric Severeid

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1.800.221.5689 or visit online at <http://fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/coalition/map.htm>. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.