

Planning to shop over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend? According to the National Retail Federation, 60% of consumers will be shopping Thanksgiving Day through Cyber Monday. Here are some tips to make the most of your holiday shopping.

Know if it's really a bargain. You have to know the real price to know if you're getting a real discount. Make sure it's a quality product and not just a cheaper product at a cheaper price. Is it something you really want or need? If not, it's a waste of money no matter what the price. Beware of impulse buys. Advertised sale items are designed to get you in the door. Store displays are designed to prompt impulse buys.

Plan ahead. Make a list of the items you need and set a spending limit. Do some advance preparation by checking ads, looking for coupons, and loading store apps on your phone. Look for ways to combine discounts such as a sale item plus coupons.

Read the details. Door busters, "while supplies last" or limited supplies – some stores don't offer rainchecks on Black Friday. Price match if you can but be aware that some stores don't offer price matching on Black Friday.

Pace yourself. Know when stores open and where you'll go and when for the best prices. Some stores open on Thanksgiving evening, some at midnight, others might offer "early bird" specials. If an important item is "while supplies last" you might want to plan to go to that store first and be in line early. Save some room in your holiday budget for future purchases. Remember, there are still bargains to be had throughout the holiday season.

Shop online. Many retailers also offer Black Friday deals to online shoppers starting Thanksgiving Day or even earlier in the week. Some online companies don't wait for Cyber Monday but also offer Black Friday sales. Some companies offer free shipping. If not, consider if the item is still a bargain after you add the cost of shipping.

For more tips, visit [www.uaex.edu/money](http://www.uaex.edu/money) or contact your local county office. The Cooperative Extension Service is your source for reliable information. We nourish individuals, families, and communities by connecting trusted research to the adoption of best practices. We are a catalyst of prosperity for Arkansans.

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