

# Holiday Hints

## 5 Tips To Save Time (And Sanity) This Holiday Season

(NAPS)—Doesn't it seem like the most wonderful time of the year is actually the most stressful time of the year? Add to that a global pandemic, virtual schooling and working from home and it may seem like time is anywhere but on your side.

Well, the good news is: it doesn't have to be that way! Even though the days are getting shorter and the holidays are here, there are plenty of ways you can get some of that time back so you can still enjoy this festive season with your family and loved ones.

### Make a Master To-Do List -- and Organize it By Day

The hardest part in pulling off any holiday celebration is the preparation, and that is no different during a pandemic. Although you might not be hitting the crowded shopping malls or hosting gatherings, there are still a lot of details to plan.

Take the stress out of daily decisions by planning in advance when you're going to declutter, organize and decorate, celebrate in-person or virtually, and stock up on gifts and wrapping supplies in advance so you have what you need before stores run out.

### Plan Your Meals in Advance to Save Time

Another way to save your sanity—and your budget—is to get ahead of those busy winter nights by meal planning. Home Chef, the largest meal kit company both in stores and online, is answering the common "what's for dinner?" dilemma whether you're a long-term planner or like to drop into the grocery store the same day.

With Home Chef, you can sign up for subscription meal kits on [homechef.com](http://homechef.com) to plan and select your meals up to five weeks in advance, or choose from a variety of meal options in 2,000 Kroger grocery stores. Every meal kit includes the fresh ingredients in just the right amount you need to make simple, delicious recipes in the comfort of your own home—no last minute grocery runs for that whole jar of paprika when you only need a teaspoon.

Home Chef also has a variety of different meal kits that fit into different levels of preparation and cooking times, including an Oven-Ready line that comes packed in an oven-safe tin eliminating the need for a pan, and a Fast & Fresh line that can be warmed in five minutes or less.

In stores, shoppers can also choose from a variety of Heat & Eat soups and Sicilian Style Pizzas that can be warmed in minutes for a fresh, hot meal that



**This unusual holiday season, there is a "sanity clause": you can make life easier with a little advance planning and help from a special source.**

satisfies those cold-weather comfort food cravings.

### Save Money Shopping in Your Favorite Stores

We all want to shop local this year, so here's a tip to help you take advantage of big sales while still supporting your favorite neighborhood shops and boutiques.

When you head to your favorite store, ask if they match prices from other stores. A lot of them will even match prices from online retailers, saving you money nearly every time. In the event that your local shop owner is not able to match the "big box" prices, they may still be able to offer you a discount for shopping local and supporting the independently owned businesses in your neighborhood.

**2020 Tip:** Ask if they have online or phone ordering and take advantage of curbside pick-up!

### Give the Gift of Online Shopping

If you decided to avoid the shopping malls and stores this season, gift cards make an excellent last-minute gift for everyone on your holiday shopping list. Gone are the days when gift cards are an impersonal afterthought.

If you have a friend who loves to shop local, call a favorite boutique or shop in their neighborhood and order a gift card—many independent retailers will ship or email them directly to the recipient.

For the aspiring home cook on your holiday gift list, Home Chef offers gift cards that allow the recipient to sign up and choose their favorite meals, making it easier to stick to those January resolutions in the new year.

### Keep Your Holiday Decor Organized

If you have a large collection of holiday decorations, the very idea of sorting through them is probably overwhelming. And who wants to spend hours every year taking it down and putting it away!?

If detangling packing up your festive family heirlooms sounds like an exercise

in chaos, here are a handful of tips to help you keep your sanity while you deck the halls.

First, have a system for storing your decor in between holiday seasons. Stock up on a few clear storage tote bins to organize your decor by category: lights in one bin, ornaments in one bin and holiday trinkets in another bin. Keep your breakables from shattering in storage—and save yourself the hassle of bubble wrap—by storing each glass ball ornament in its own small plastic cup. Separate each layer of cups with a layer of cardboard, bubble wrap, or even a layer of leftover wrapping paper.

If you struggle with strings of holiday lights, take a piece of a cardboard box and cut slits in the sides so you can wrap the lights securely around each one, reducing tangling and eliminating those broken bulbs that are all too familiar each year.

### Decide Your Holiday Menus

One of the easiest ways to take the stress out of the holiday season is to know exactly what you're going to serve for the big meal. No matter how you are planning to celebrate, Home Chef has options.

If your holiday dinner plans are virtual, or if you are hunkering down at home, pick up your holiday meal from your local Kroger grocery store. Home Chef Holiday Bundles include your choice of turkey, ham or prime rib along with the traditional holiday side dishes like green bean casserole, sweet potato souffle, mashed potatoes, dinner rolls and a delicious dessert -- all in one box.

The featured meals require minimal prep and side dishes that can be cooked in minutes, so you can focus on family instead of spending the big day in the kitchen.

Bundles feed 6-8 people, so even small groups celebrating at home can look forward to leftovers.

Order in advance online at [homechef.com/holiday](http://homechef.com/holiday) or by phone by December 20 or at your local Kroger family of stores deli counter until December 22.

If you are planning an intimate New Year's Eve at home with the people in your household, a delicious and festive meal is a must. Home Chef's online menu features something for everyone as you ring in 2021, like Balsamic-Bacon Jam Sirloin Steak, Brussels Sprouts and Brown Butter Risotto and Crispy Fried Mahi Mahi with Preserved Lemon Tartar Sauce.

Simply place your order on [homechef.com](http://homechef.com) before Friday, December 25 at 11:59 a.m. CT.