

Don't forget these top overlooked holiday tasks

With all the holiday hubbub swirling, most of us forget to do at least one mission-critical task.

Have you remembered to buy wrapping paper? How about the right batteries for all those holiday gifts and gadgets? Missing anybody from your list, even if you checked it twice?

Here are some of the most often-overlooked holiday tasks:

• **Buying cards, wrapping paper and tape.** You've purchased the perfect present for everybody on your list. You get everything home and the night before that big family party, you realize the only wrapping paper in the house is emblazoned with "Happy Birthday!" Or worse, you've forgotten a card for grandma. Make sure to stock up on cards, wrapping paper, tape, ribbons and bows. In fact, even if you think you did, double-check your closet right now.

• **Getting batteries, batteries and more batteries.** There's nothing worse than giving the perfect electronic gift, only to discover you've forgotten batteries or purchased the wrong ones. Some batteries, such as your typical carbon zinc AA batteries found on most drug store shelves, won't be able to fully power that digital camera or will quickly run out of juice for that MP3 player. For those high-to mid-drain gadgets – like digital cameras, HDTV remotes and MP3 players – try high-performance alkalines, which provide longer run times than standard alkalines in most applications. Put simply: You'll squeeze up to 60 additional photos from a digital camera powered by these

batteries, compared to standard alkaline models.

• **Stocking up on emergency gifts.** The doorbell rings and your neighbor is standing there, gift in hand. Happy holidays! But you've forgotten to get her something. How about the mailman, babysitter, your kids' teachers or your boss? Smart planners keep an emergency gift shelf stocked with small gifts already wrapped to ensure that delightful moments doesn't turn into frightful ones.

• **Making charitable donations.** It's far too easy to forget those less fortunate, especially during this hectic season. This year, make sure you've selected a worthy cause and completed your donation before the holiday hits. Especially when giving to local community organizations, it's helpful to get donations in early so they can make purchases in a timely fashion and brighten up the holidays for others.

• **Purchasing all the trimmings.** The pots are bubbling, sauces are simmering and cookies are baking. And then you realize you've forgotten the gravy – or the marshmallows for the hot chocolate or the sweet potatoes. It's easy to overlook the trimmings and those little things that make your special holiday feasts special. This year, prepare your holiday grocery list and then have your spouse or an older child inspect it carefully. Do this before hitting the supermarket together.

This season, be sure to plan properly and you'll be the best-prepared holiday reveler on the block. 🎁

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