

10 Rules for Couples Gifts



By Johanna Lyman for GalTime.com

Do you love the season but not the shopping?

I love the holidays, but I'm not a fan of buying gifts. I'm one of those rare women who don't like to shop. I agonize over buying the perfect gift, but I'm not great with paying attention to details, so I never know what the perfect gift might be. This year, I decided to think outside the gift-giving box and come up with my best tips for making it all easier.

1. Be blunt when you talk to your Santa. If there's something special you want from your man, ask for it directly. I know, I know, it's uncomfortable to ask for what you want. But don't you think you deserve it? Your man is not a mind reader, even

if he loves you beyond all reason. He won't think you're being pushy if you give him a few ideas, in fact he'll love you for it. Trust me on this one.

2. Splurge on yourself. Give yourself the gift of a makeover or splurge on an outfit that makes you feel like a million bucks. The holidays can be a difficult time for people with self-esteem issues (in other words, most of us). One way to keep from getting the holiday blues is to do something that tell you "I'm worth it." Because it's true: you are worth it.

3. Your time and talents and donations count as gifts. Another great way to get happy during the holidays is to give the gift of your time, talents and treasures to those in need. Donate toys to the Marines, pick a couple of tags off a Christmas tree at the bank and buy the requested item for a needy child, and/or volunteer with your sweetie at the local soup kitchen. Maybe Christmas, as the Grinch discovered, isn't about "things, after all." Short on time? Make a donation to the local food bank so families in need can have a happy holiday meal.

4. Give him something he loves even if you don't love it. Now onto some actual gift ideas. If your man is into video games, go to a gaming store and ask the sales associate what the most popular new games are then buy one of those for him. I know you probably hate his Xbox, but that's not the point. The gift is for him, not you. He'll love you even more for getting him a game when he knows you're not a fan of gaming.

5. Help him cheer on his team. If he's into watching professional sports, get him tickets to the next home game. If those are too pricey, opt for an officially sanctioned jersey. The non-sanctioned jerseys and t-shirts are usually pretty cheesy and he'll love you for knowing the difference, especially if you don't care about his team.

6. Turn TV into a great gift. Does he have a favorite

television series, or is he a history buff? There are plenty of boxed DVD sets that make great gifts. The History of World War II in an 8-DVD set will keep him entertained for hours. The side benefit of this gift is that while he's watching the DVDs, you can have a guilt-free girls' night out.

7. Spice it up with a gift you'll both enjoy. If you want to get him something you'll both enjoy, opt for a weekend getaway. Inside the gift box, include some lingerie for yourself, with details of the trip folded on top. Remember, this is a gift for him. If you're going to enjoy it as well, it's nice to make it special for him.

8. Turn up the volume. For music lovers, there are plenty of options. Satellite radio for his car, a boxed CD/DVD set of his favorite band complete with never before seen live concert footage, or even an iTunes gift card. Concert tickets are a great idea too; get him two and tell him to take his buddy. Then you can have another guilt-free girls' night out.

9. Skip the chore-related gifts. Whatever you do, do not buy him something that you want. Also, do not buy him a tool that he needs to complete a project you want him to work on. That's selfish and transparent; it's like him buying you a vacuum cleaner.

10. Stay focused on the two of you. You may have noticed that only one of my gift suggestions was something that you would enjoy together. There are two reasons for that. First of all, gifts are supposed to be for the receiver, not the giver. Second, as important as it is to spend quality time together, it's equally important to spend time apart. That's why getting him a gift that gives you time to yourself or time with your girlfriends is a double win. Healthy relationships develop between healthy individuals, and knowing how to spend time alone is one way to cultivate being a healthy individual.

Happy shopping!