



HOLIDAY SPENDING GUIDE

Navigate the holiday season and ring in the new year with joy and financial peace. This guide will help you plan and manage your expenses to stay on track with your financial goals throughout the season and beyond.

After you fill out the guide, save the file to your device to easily review and update it along the way.



Determine your *why*

Before you establish your goals, consider your why. Decide what is most important to you and what steps will keep you aligned with your priorities as you navigate the holiday season.

What are your values? These are the fundamental ideals that shape your actions and choices.

How do you want to feel during the holidays? How about after the holidays?

Create one or two “to be” statements. Referring to these statements during your journey will help you stay on track during emotional moments.

1.

2.



Determine your *what*

Once you have explored your why, or the aspects of life that are important to you, it's time to determine what you'll do. This means setting goals.

When thinking about what you want to accomplish during this time of year, it's helpful to leverage **SMART goals**. Defining these parameters ensures that your objectives are attainable within a certain time frame.



Set boundaries around your spending

Establishing boundaries can help you stick to your plan when you're feeling emotional or tempted to veer off course. Specifically, making and keeping commitments to yourself can go a long way toward maintaining financial control and reducing your stress during the holiday season.

I will ...

I will not ...

Determine *how* to get it done

Now that you understand the experience you want over the holidays and what boundaries to set for yourself, it's time to determine how to execute your holiday spending plan. How are you going to fund your holiday spending? Are you going to contribute regularly to a savings account such as a Christmas Club certificate? Maybe you would prefer to divide up the needed amount over just a few pay periods, use other savings or a year-end bonus. No matter which path you choose, the goal is to plan ahead to avoid increasing your debt or significantly impacting your monthly budget.

To fund my holiday spending, I will:

Create a holiday spending plan

As you identify expenses, add the spending category from the drop-down menu in the left column of the expense tracker. Then, describe the expense and list the estimated cost. Use your bank statements from last year to guide you. As you shop, update your actual costs in the right column of the expense tracker and adjust your spending, if needed, to help you stay on track with your budget. To view category totals, choose the type of expense from the dropdown at the top of the right column.

Expense tracker

< >

[illegible]

Category totals

[illegible]

TOTAL

Total holiday budget

Total actual costs

Need additional assistance with your plan?

Schedule an appointment with a financial guide by visiting **macu.com/schedule-appointment**.

