

WHAT TO BUY LAST-MINUTE GIFTS

1

SHOPPING
DAYS LEFT

It's hours before the dawning of Christmas Day, and you forgot to purchase someone a gift. Don't sweat. Time for a little last-minute gift buying. Stores are still open and we've got great suggestions. So read on, then get the car keys, and be careful while dashing to the store. All stores mentioned here are open Christmas Eve, but hours vary.

— ROSE RUSSELL,
BLADE STAFF WRITER



Fun socks

Enough with ordinary black, navy, brown, or white socks. This last-minute gift idea is a fun accessory that will amuse observers. They start at \$7; try JCPenney at the mall.

Jewelry

Hardly can you go wrong with jewelry. A pair of hoops for her and a pair of studs for him from a department or discount store will easily fill this last-minute need. Simple can be elegant, and elegant doesn't have to mean expensive: from \$10 at Claire's in Franklin Park Mall, which closes at 6 p.m.



Christmas ornaments

It may seem late to give someone this gift, but there's always next year. Many retail stores sell them at a discount in the final days before Christmas. From \$10 up at Werner's Hallmark on West Central Avenue, which closes at 5 p.m.



Measuring tape

The DIYers in your life can never have too many of this oft-misplaced item that sells at hardware or home improvement stores. From sewing cloth to a child's height, you never know what you'll need to measure. From \$25 at stores such as Lowe's, which closes at 6 p.m.



A basket of teas

If you can't find a basket with teas in various flavors to buy, you can quickly pull together a little basket with different flavored teas in sealed bags. Throw in a teapot if you're feeling especially steeped in glee. Or get a tea set for \$50 at Teavana in the mall.



Carved and, or scented soap

Nothing says love like this hygiene accessory, great for last-minute gifts. There are so many colors and different shapes. Go to a specialty shop or, if you're feeling especially industrious, make your own.

A single bar is from \$3 at Bath and Body Works at the mall.



Paint brushes

Artists who paint are likely to appreciate new brushes for their water, acrylic, and/or oil painting, so get to an art supply store such as Michael's which closes at 6 p.m., for one brush or a package of brushes, from \$5 up.

Scented candles

You can never have too many candles, especially scented ones, and you can buy candles from most stores, from grocery outlets to specialty shops. Think of it as aroma therapy for the soul. From \$15 at Yankee Candle Company at the mall.



Treats and toys for the family pet

Don't forget the furry members of a family. While pet toys entertain both cats and dogs, our canine buddies are more likely to show excitement about toys than our feline friends. Check your preferred pet store. Kong Bouncers at PetSmart, which closes at 6 p.m., are from \$7.



Photo frame

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a great picture frame is worth its weight in memories. Consider not just traditional frames, but the electronic versions that allow the owner to segue through a host of vivid images. You will be thanked, promise. From \$25 at Target, which closes at 11 p.m.



* Prices and availability subject to change.