

December

COMMENT Sold

Holiday Checklist

Creative sales to keep the holiday shopping momentum going

December 2021 | Dates to Remember

Hanukkah - Nov. 26-Dec. 6

Christmas Day - Dec. 25

New Year's Eve - Dec. 31

Green Monday - Dec. 13

Boxing Day - Dec. 26

Christmas Eve - Dec. 24

Kwanzaa - Dec. 26-Jan. 1

Shipping Deadlines: USPS

USPS Air/Army/Fleet/Diplomatic retail ground service	Dec. 9
USPS Retail ground service	Dec. 15
USPS Air/Army/Fleet/Diplomatic priority mail express military service	Dec. 16
USPS first-class mail/packages	Dec. 17
USPS priority mail	Dec. 18
USPS Hawaii + Alaska to/from Continental U.S. priority mail express	Dec. 21
USPS priority mail express	Dec. 23

Shipping Deadlines: FedEx

FedEx ground economy	Dec. 9
FedEx ground + home delivery	Dec. 15
FedEx express saver	Dec. 21
FedEx two-day + two-day a.m	Dec. 22
FedEx overnight services	Dec. 23
FedEx same-day	Dec. 24

Shipping Deadlines: UPS

UPS second-day air services	Dec. 22
UPS next-day air services	Dec. 23
*No UPS pickup	Dec. 25
*Check UPS website for ground-shipping estimates	

Types of Sales for December Holidays

BOGO ½ off or BOGO free

Offering “buy one, get one” deals helps you move aging inventory out the door faster.

Ladder discounts

Shoppers receive a “prize” if they reach a certain subtotal. For example, “spend X and receive Y” or “spend \$100 and get \$10 off.”

Gift card specials

These are great for last-minute shoppers, particularly those who missed the shipping window for merchandise. One special you can try is selling \$100 gift cards for \$80.

Loyalty rewards

Give customers incentives for repeat shopping so they keep coming back for more. Shoppers can earn “cash-back” in the form of account credit for every purchase.

Mystery items

Bundle certain items together without showing shoppers exactly what’s inside. These build intrigue and are a good gift idea for people who are hard to shop for.

Prizes get bigger as the day gets closer

Keep your sale date top-of-mind by offering giveaways each day leading up to the big event.

Free shipping

Timed free shipping gives customers a limited window to pay for their claimed items. This encourages people to checkout instead of abandoning their carts.

Pre-holiday sale

Provide coupon codes or gift cards early in the season for customers to spend on or by a specific date in December.

Percentage off by the hour

This encourages shoppers to keep carting items and checking out. You can put this into action by offering a certain percentage off each hour (e.g., 20% off at midnight, 30% off at 9 a.m.)

Doorbusters

Drastically mark down specific items, preferably anything stockpiled, to get these items out the door quickly and easily.

Category markdowns

Offer a sale on an entire department, such as hats, jewelry, leggings, or shoes. This helps push out slow-moving inventory or last season’s trends.

Bundle higher-priced items with lower-priced items and sell them for a middle-range price

This offers options for a variety of shoppers’ budgets. For example, you can bundle a higher-priced coat with a less expensive scarf and hat.

Ideas for Holiday Promotion and Marketing

- Schedule product drops ahead of time**

Build hype before the day of your main sale event and get a plan in place to release new items on specific days.
- Go live for 24 hours**

This may be a big undertaking, so make sure you have enough inventory to last the whole day! Marathon live streams are big in the influencer community. Hosting live sales for an extended period of time gives you ample opportunity to offer specific discounts and giveaways by the hour or drop new products at specific times.
- Build out gift guides**

Consider who your customer will be shopping for during the holidays and group these items together on your website and mobile app. Create graphics for your social accounts to promote the collection, e.g., “Gifts for Him” or “Presents your Trendy BFF will Love.”
- Offer customers something to come back to next year**

Provide coupons they can use on a future date. Tease upcoming styles for the new season.
- Hit customers from every angle**

Promote your holiday sales on social media, ads, and through email marketing so shoppers don't miss out.
- Giveaways**

Customers feel special when they receive shoutouts during live sales—offer freebies if they are engaged in the comments to build excitement and brand loyalty. You can also post an image of products you're giving away on your social channels; to enter the giveaway, followers must tag a friend or two. This helps expand your organic reach on social media.
- Offer shop-for-a-cause products**

Philanthropic shopping makes customers feel good about their purchases and the brands they shop with. List these items and communicate that a portion of proceeds will be donated to a worthy cause.
- Prepare a holiday collection in your webstore and app**

Plan to publish this the first week of December. Think New Year's party dresses and sparkly accessories that shoppers can buy early in the month and wear to their holiday events.
- Offer cheap stocking stuffers in the \$5-\$15 range**

Showcase these products during a live sale—these are easy items to cart and impulse buy during the excitement of your live!
- Utilize your communication channels to thank customers for a great year**

Who doesn't love a thank-you note? This adds personability to your brand and helps build trust with your shoppers. While thanking customers, tease items you have coming up in the New Year.
- Vary your marketing language**

Some sales can feel “cheap and cheerful” while others should feel more exclusive. For the latter, use language like “we never do this, but...”

Tips for End-of-Year Sales



Bring items that didn't sell in November back for December holiday sales

You'll want to move aging inventory and trends out, so offer free shipping or remarket these products as "favorite items" or "classics."



Purchase on-sale items from wholesalers to sell in your shop the following year

These will be stored in your warehouse for ~10 months, so timeless, essential pieces are preferable.



Make sure you have enough inventory to meet customer demand

Expect last-minute shoppers who may wait until the end of December to buy gifts (or use gift cards on themselves). Run reporting to pull added vs. waitlisted items, sell-through, trends, and popular collections to anticipate December sales more accurately.



Pick a "last day to ship" that your team can realistically commit to

Communicate all shipping dates and deadlines internally and to your shoppers so you're setting expectations and sticking to them.



Avoid buying holiday winter items from vendors in December

You'll want to clear cold season items between Christmas and New Year's Day since you'll start shopping for spring styles in January.



Push volume for the last week of December

The week after Christmas is a huge time for returns, so focus on clearing out items as the month concludes. Fill-the-bag events can get products out faster!



Start prepping for January

Get ready to transition your items to spring—plan ahead to clear out winter items like faux fur, vests, heavy coats, scarves, etc. These are items you'll want to focus on pushing during your holiday sale events.