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## Valentine's Day

## Choosing a gift for your sweetheart

As the clock ticks down to Valentine's Day, the pressure is on to find the ideal gift. While some sweethearts may provide some clues to help with Valentine's Day shopping, many gift-givers are on their own.

When shopping for Valentine's Day, try to avoid these common mistakes and choose gifts that are creative and heartfelt.

- Skip the gas station flowers, candy or lastminute gifts. Valentine's Day is a time to show you care. If you've left gifting to the last minute, you may make the situation worse by giving something impersonal you picked up on an errand. If you forgot or ran out of time, simply admit you goofed or time got away from you. Then ask your sweetheart what he or she wants and go shopping together.
- Avoid attention-getter antics. Sure it may seem like a good idea to send 20 helium balloons and a boatload of flowers to a

sweetheart's office. But what if he or she really doesn't like being in the limelight? Are you gifting this way for the attention you'll receive rather than doing so to make your sweetheart happy?

- Eschew overly personal gifts. If your relationship is in its infancy and you haven't both mutually expressed interest to take it to the next level, avoid gifts that suggest moving in together (appliances), personal fragrances, couples massages, or other intimate activities. Wait until the relationship has reached certain milestones before getting too personal with gifts.
- Stop trying to be helpful. If your sweetheart has expressed a desire to make certain lifestyle changes, you may think a gym membership or a subscription to a new wardrobe mail service makes a great gift. But such gifts may send the wrong message, inadvertently, and even falsely, indicating that you don't like your partner the way he or she is.
- Pass up practical gifts. Valentine's Day is a time to cater to fantasies and wishes more so than necessities. Even if your sweetheart needs that new electric shaver or a snow scraper for the car, go for something more special on Valentine's Day.

Valentine's gifters should focus on presents that will be meaningful to the recipient and something he or she may see as an indulgence.





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