

How much can I afford to spend this Christmas?

Weekly Income (+) €	
Take-home pay (self)	
Take-home pay (partner)	
Social welfare payments (self) (Note: many social welfare recipients receive a bonus payment in December)	
Social welfare payments (partner)	
Total (A)	
Weekly outgoings (-) €	
Weekly shop	
Light & Heat	
Rent /mortgage	
Other bills	
Money set aside for bills in January	
Total (B)	
What have I left? (=A-B)	
What can I set aside for Christmas?	

What will Christmas cost me?

Food	Cost €
Cost of Normal weekly Shop	
Main Meal on Christmas day	
» Turkey/Ham, other meat	
» Vegetables	
» Dessert/Christmas Cake	
» Drink	
Other	
Total Cost	

Clothing	Item (s)	Cost €
Self		
Partner		
Children		
» Child 1		
» Child 2		
» Child 3		
» Child 4		
» Child 5		
Total Cost		

Gifts and Cards	Item (s)	Cost €
Partner		
Children		
» Child 1		
» Child 2		
» Child 3		
» Child 4		
» Child 5		
Extended Family		
» Parents		
» Brother 1		
» Brother 2		
» Sister 1		
» Sister 2		
Close friends (name)		
» Friend ()		
» Friend ()		
» Friend ()		
» Friend ()		
Christmas Cards		
Postage		
Decorations		
Total Cost		

Socialising	Cost €
Work/Social Club Christmas Party	
Going out with friends	
Inviting family over	
» Food	
» Drink	
Day out with the family	
Other treat or outing for children	
Donation to Charity	
Total Cost	



**Managing your money
this Christmas...**



The Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) gives the following tips for managing Christmas spending:

-  Set money aside for bills expected in January. If you can put money aside for the bills you know will arrive on your doorstep in January it will give you peace of mind and increase your enjoyment of Christmas.
-  Don't count on bonuses or overtime payments – if you rely on them and don't get them you will have overspent.
-  Make out a budget of your household income and outgoings to see how much you can afford to spend this Christmas.
-  Use our Christmas budget planner to make a list of what food you need and the people you intend to buy gifts for.
-  Decide in advance exactly what you want to buy and, more importantly, the amount you can afford to spend.
-  Shop early and give yourself time to shop around for the best bargains.



Pay cash if you can. Leave your credit card at home.



When buying food and drink be realistic. Shops will open again in a day or two after Christmas.



Encourage your children to choose early what they want from Santa Claus - before the advertisers decide for them. Children don't need new clothes at Christmas - if you must buy something new make sure they will wear it after Christmas.



Remember good friends don't need expensive gifts. Send a Christmas card, create your own gift, or set a limit with family and friends on what each will spend on the other or do a "Kris Kindle".



Don't panic if you have no gift for the surprise visitor. Simply recycle and rewrap a gift you have received and not used.



If you are on a low income and are under pressure to borrow for Christmas or are worried about making ends meet this Christmas contact the MABS Helpline 1890 283 438 or your Local MABS to see what options are available to you.

Do remember that January follows December. You don't want the ghost of Christmas spending to haunt you in the New Year.



The Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) is a

-  Free
-  Confidential and
-  Independent

service for people in debt or at risk of getting into debt. It is funded by the Department of Social and Family Affairs. It has 65 offices nationwide and is now providing a helpline service where people, for the price of a local call, can talk to a helpline adviser about their debt problems.

The MABS helpline number is


1890 283438

Monday to Friday 9am to 8pm.

www.mabs.ie

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