



## Easy Ways To Decorate For The Holidays On A Budget

*Don't break the bank to spread holiday cheer this season.*

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According to the National Retail Federation (NRF), holiday sales during November and December 2017 increased 5.5 percent to \$691.9 billion over the same time period in 2016. The NRF reported an average spend of \$967.13 per person in 2017. Keep your budget -- and your sanity -- intact by following a few simple money-saving steps and avoid getting carried away this holiday season.

Buy an artificial tree.

The benefits of buying an artificial tree are threefold: it's good for the environment, it's good for people that suffer from allergies, and because it's a one-time purchase that can last for many years, it's easy on the pocketbook. Get one at an end of season sale and store it properly to ensure it will last for a few seasons.

## Simplify.

Hope Mazzola, [a licensed associate real estate broker for William Raveis](#), suggests that homeowners take the same advice she gives to folks wanting to decorate for the holidays while selling a home: simple elegance is the way to go.

“Take a simple approach to decorating your home for the holiday season. Think vases with winter greens and berry sprigs, groupings of related items like tapered candles or pillars of different heights on a mirror or tray, and simple white lights,” said Mazzola.

## Don't go overboard.

It's easy to over decorate when it comes to the holidays, but to stay within budget, Mazzola cautions, “Don't buy anything too big, too loud, too shiny, or too opinionated. No holiday knick knacks or clutter. Get a simple display but not the entire holiday village. Don't use too many colored lights and don't even consider a lawn inflatable.”

Bill Cielinski, co-owner of [B&B Holiday Decorating](#), a professional holiday decorating service, adds, “We try to steer our customers away from the large gaudy items, like the blow up decorations. The traditional look on the house will always look good and is easy to maintain from year to year.”

## Use common scents.

Nothing infuses a home with a festive feel like a scented candle or the smells of holiday baking, according to Mazzola. When it comes to bedrooms, she advises against putting too much decor in a bedroom, but focusing on holiday scents instead, like a saje or oil diffuser with fresh pine or winter scent. A fresh flower display or garland along a dining room table with candles and a door wreath with fresh greenery can also provide nice muted scents without overpowering the room.

This year, don't get yourself into debt trying to have a nice holiday season. Take the advice from the experts, shop smart, keep it simple and enjoy some extra cash to take into the new year.