

Perkins Computer Center



hsoft consulting

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Black Friday, Cyber Monday

How to Use the Internet to Save BIG this Shopping Season

It's that time of the year again—turkeys are stuffed, fall leaves are raked, and people around the country gather around the table to give thanks. Some are thankful for health, family, friends; others are thankful that in a few short hours after the Thanksgiving meal is finished, the real fun begins. Black Friday, so termed by savvy merchants who see an increase of sales by shoppers eager to save on huge markdowns [thereby marking the first day many shops are officially "in the black"], occurs on the Friday after Thanksgiving and offers 30-80% off on merchandise for the smart shopper. While some novices may casually attempt at some light shopping that day, others view it as a marathon, or a war. They carefully plot out their strategies, map out their destinations, and wait at the ready, coupons in hand. While navigating through the onslaught of sales might be daunting to some, here are a few hints on how to use your computer to ease the frenzy of Black Friday and Holiday shopping, and to get the peace of mind that anyone would be thankful for.

First, *gather information and make a plan*. Many stores have time limits on their sales, and most only have a certain number of a particular hot sale item on hand. In order to get the items you really want, you need to prioritize your shopping list and map out which stores to hit first. Websites like BlackFriday.com (or any variation thereof), have many popular companies' Black Friday Sales Ads for weeks before the event. Browse through the ads and plan accordingly.

Second, *be prepared*. Print out any coupons or circulars with the item you want and the sale price listed on it and bring them with you when shopping. Many companies' websites may have prices that are different than in the store or prices could ring up differently due to register or human error. While most stores will not honor the internet prices (it could just be an internet special that doesn't translate to stores), it doesn't hurt to be armed with information. You may find a sympathetic associate who can waive other things, like assembly fees, for you.

Third, *opt to stay home and shop on Cyber Monday instead*. Cyber Monday is the marketing term for the Monday immediately following Black Friday. When retailers saw that online sales increased by 70+% on that Monday, they responded with even more sales and discounts and another prime sales day was born. Sites like CyberMonday.com showcase online deals, most with free shipping, for that Monday and can help you map out your holiday shopping, all in the comfort of your own home. With no lines, no hassles, and plenty of fabulous deals, Cyber Monday can be the holiday-shopping-phobe's best friend. Just be ready to deal with minimal web difficulties, in case items quickly sell out or too much traffic bogs down a website.

Bargain-hunting for the Holidays doesn't have to be a pain. With these few hints, you may actually enjoy the thrill of the sale hunt instead of feeling the pain of retail hell. Your next present, to others and to yourself, may just be a mouse click away.

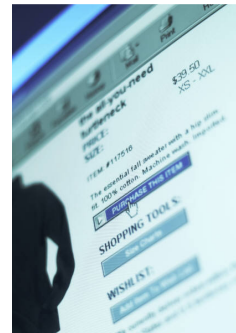
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Consumers spent over
\$887 million on Cyber
Monday in 2009

Thanksgiving Trivia

- ✓ The first Thanksgiving feast was held in the presence of around ninety Wampanoag Native Americans and their leader, Chief Massasoit
- ✓ Sarah Josepha Hale, a magazine editor, started a Thanksgiving campaign in 1827 and it was result of her efforts that in 1863 Thanksgiving was observed National Holiday
- ✓ Food at the first Thanksgiving likely included duck, geese, swan, fish, lobster, eels, mussels, plums, & berries

Hear Ye, Hear Ye: Recipes from the First Thanksgiving

The feast on the first Thanksgiving table is certain to look positively alien compared to the Thanksgiving table of today. While there were wild turkeys roaming about when the first settlers sat down to eat, it is more likely that the meats consisted of deer (brought by the Wampanoag Native Americans), duck, geese, and swan. According the period journals, Wampanoag oral history, and archeological evidence, the table was loaded with native fruits like plums, melons, grapes, and cranberries, plus local vegetables such as leeks, wild onions, beans, Jerusalem artichokes, and squash. (English crops such as turnips, cabbage, parsnips, onions, carrots, parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme might have also been on hand.) To recreate the original feast, try the following recipes from epicurious.com:

"Seethed" Mussels with Parsley and Vinegar

4 pounds of mussels
2 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup chopped parsley
1/2 cup red wine vinegar
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 garlic cloves, minced



Place mussels in cold water and scrub them clean. "Beard" them by taking off the tuft of fibers projecting from the shell (if there are any—many farm-raised mussels are "beardless"). Discard any mussels that are broken or do not close when touched. Place 1 cup of water and all ingredients except the mussels into a large pot, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Add the mussels and reduce the heat so that the mussels cook at a simmer. Cook, shaking the pot occasionally, for 10 minutes or until all of the mussels have opened fully. Keep an eye on the mussels—if cooked too long, they can be chewy. To serve, pour the mussels and broth into bowls, setting another empty bowl on the table for discarded shells.

Stewed Pumpkin

4 cups cooked squash or pumpkin, mashed
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 to 2 tablespoons of cider vinegar
1 to 2 teaspoons of ground ginger (or any combination of nutmeg, cloves, cinnamon, and/or pepper, to taste)
1 teaspoon salt

Place the squash, butter, vinegar, and spices in a saucepan over low heat. Stir and heat until all of the ingredients are well-combined and hot. Adjust the seasonings to your liking and serve.



Sweet Pudding of Native American Corn

6 cups water
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 cups very coarse grits (Gonsalves brand is best)
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons sugar (or more to taste)

Bring water to a boil in a large saucepan. Stir in the salt and the coarse grits, stirring until the contents of the pot return to a boil. Turn the heat to low, and cook very gently for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Be sure to stir across the bottom of the pot to keep the grits from sticking. Remove from the heat and allow to stand about a half hour or until the grits are tender. Stir in the milk and sugar (and any desired optional spices). Variation—To make a more deluxe version, you can use cream in place of milk, add sweet spices to taste (like cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, cloves, or ginger) and 1/2 cup of currants or raisins.

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Shop Hop at the Overpass — Live Music. Free Food. Art.

Join us during Shop Hop at the Overpass as we present the Art of Christopher Turner! A native of Baton Rouge, Christopher is an acclaimed local artist known for his modern abstracts, paintings, drawings, digital arts, and mixed media work. He is famous for his live paintings during various city events and counts the natural fusion of art and music as one of his passions. Enjoy live music and free food and drinks as Christopher Turner and other artists showcase their art at our shop. Also, purchase gift certificates for computer service at 40% off their regular prices! Call Christine at 225-293-1264 for more info.

