



What Holiday Shopping Reveals About Financial Status and Gender: CardRatings Survey

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Findings include five habits of highly-effective holiday shoppers and why women are better at it

Foster City, CA – December 15, 2021 – A survey by [CardRatings.com](https://www.cardratings.com) finds that the way people approach holiday shopping is strongly related to the strength or weakness of their household finances. It also shows that women feel more pressure when it comes to holiday shopping, but that pressure may be a good thing--their approach tends to be more financially responsible than that of men.

Full analysis of the survey is available in a pair of articles on CardRatings.com:

[5 Habits of Highly Effective Holiday Shoppers](#)

[Women are Smarter Holiday Shoppers but Feel More Pressure.](#)

The survey groups respondents by [credit score](#), ranging from poor to excellent. It finds key differences in how these groups approach holiday shopping:

- While many feel pressure to spend more than they can afford around the holidays, people with poor credit are more likely to feel this burden. In fact, 45 % of survey respondents with poor credit scores feel pressure to spend more than they can comfortably afford, compared to just 17% of people with excellent credit.
- Last-minute shopping can contribute to poor spending decisions, and people with poor credit are twice as likely as those with excellent credit to put holiday shopping off until late in the season.
- People with excellent credit know how to use it to their advantage. Some 86% of this group plan to pay their card balances off in full by the end of the next billing cycle.

"Good holiday shopping habits and good credit go hand-in-hand," says Brooklyn Lowery, editorial director and credit card analyst for CardRatings.com. "Good credit makes credit cards cheaper to use, and getting more for the money helps maintain good credit."

Women in particular seem to have mastered the art of effective holiday shopping. The survey finds key differences in how men and women approach the task:

- Despite feeling pressure to spend more, a higher percentage of women than men actually plan to spend less on holiday gifts this year.
- Women are adept at spreading their gift-giving around cost effectively. While men typically spend more in total on holiday gifts, women give gifts to more people.
- Women are more likely than men to avoid last-minute shopping pressure. A greater percentage of women than men start holiday shopping before December, and more women say they are opportunistic about snapping up gifts as they see them throughout the year.
- Debit cards are cited most often by women as their primary means of paying for holiday gifts, while credit cards are the number one choice for men. This makes women more likely to avoid interest charges, though it also means they could be missing out on the rewards and protections offered by credit cards.

"Gender doesn't have to determine how you approach holiday shopping," asserts Lowery. "Both women and men are capable of adopting responsible financial habits – or lapsing into bad ones. The key for anyone, regardless of gender or credit score, is to plan your giving well and stick to your budget."

Methodology:

The survey was designed and analyzed by CardRatings.com and conducted by Op4G. It polled 1001 U.S. adults, including 515 females and 486 males.

About CardRatings

CardRatings is owned and operated by QuinStreet, Inc. (Nasdaq: [QNST](#)), a leader in providing performance marketplace technologies and services to the financial services and home services industries. QuinStreet is a pioneer in delivering online marketplace solutions to match searchers with brands in digital media. The company is committed to providing consumers with the information and tools they need to research, find and select the products and brands that meet their needs. CardRatings is a member of QuinStreet's expert research and publishing division.

CardRatings innovated online credit card ratings and has been offering independent ratings and reviews of credit card offers since 1998. The website collects and maintains data on more than 700 credit card offers and carefully compiles objective lists of the top credit cards by card type, making it easy for consumers to find the right card to fit their needs. Sign up for the bimonthly newsletter [here](#).

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