

30 Frugal Gift Ideas to Show You Appreciate Someone

What do you get someone if you want to show you appreciate them, but if you don't have a lot of money to spend?

If you have a lot of money, you can buy just about anything for that person. But for those of us with limited budgets, you'll have to show that appreciation with a little creativity.

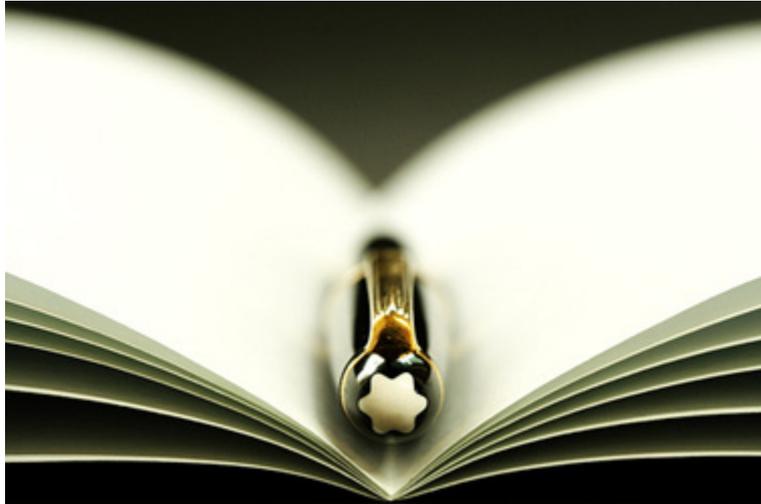


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Australian reader Victory recently asked:

I'm in my final year of high school and in about a fortnight we graduate before heading off to exams (in Australia for those who live in Victoria) and so I was wondering if you could perhaps make a post about Teacher gifts. I'm a little low on ideas for showing gratitude to my teachers but I know they deserve something decent for helping me getting into university and such so perhaps you could offer frugal but tasteful advice on gifts other than the usual wine/beer/chocolate?

It's a great question. Teachers are some of the most selfless people I know, and the work they do benefits us individually and as a society. However, I thought I'd broaden the topic for those who aren't in school ... and talk about frugal gift ideas for showing your appreciation to someone.

Let's first identify what's essential: that we show the person who has done something nice for us how much we appreciate them. It's not essential that the gift be big, or expensive, or anything like that. It's a token of our appreciation ... and let me tell you, no matter how small, the person will likely appreciate the gesture.

The gift should also be appropriate to the person — if it's personal, it's likely to mean more. So while wine is always a nice gift, if the person is into other types of drinks (such as coffee), that would make a better gift. So take a moment to consider the person, what they like, and the times you've spent together.

So, let's look at some ideas ... some obvious, perhaps, but this list is meant only to spark your own ideas. Also, the definition of "frugal" is broad here ... some ideas cost more than others, and some can be made for very little.

1. Frame a picture of you with them.
2. Lotions or bath oils.
3. Journal. A nice journal can be beautiful. It's one of my favorite gifts.
4. Gourmet coffee with a personalized mug.
5. A nice pen.

6. Photo album or scrapbook, with memories already included.
7. Homemade cookies you bake yourself.
8. Or brownies.
9. Spice gift basket. Get some small jars and fill them with exotic spices.
10. Gift certificate for the person's favorite hobby store.
11. A burned CD with all the person's favorite songs.
12. A letter, hand-written on nice paper, from you. Make it heart-felt, with all the reasons you appreciate the person.
13. A small plant.
14. A movie pass and a small container of gourmet popcorn kernels.
15. Soup mixes or cookie mixes in nice clear jars.
16. Personalized T-shirt.
17. Stationery and stamps.
18. IOU booklets, with whatever services you are willing to perform. Obviously only good for someone you know really well.
19. Knit or crochet something for someone (I can't do this, but I know people who can).
20. An "I appreciate you because" jar. Fill a nice jar with slips of different colored paper, each with a reason you appreciate (or love) someone.
21. Jams and jellies.
22. Good bread (home-made works great).
23. Books (my favorite).
24. A blank recipe book ... write some of your favorite recipes on the first few pages.
25. A keepsake DVD with a video of special moments, edited (and captioned) by you. A slideshow presentation with music burned on a DVD works too.
26. Create your own art (and put it on nice stationery or in a frame). By "art", I mean a sketch, painting, poem, short story, whatever.
27. Scented candles.
28. Make-up set.
29. Shaving kit.
30. Box of good tea and a teacup.

Have some great gift ideas of your own? Let us know in the comments.

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