

Dayton Daily News

These gift ideas are surefire hits for the outdoor set

Local fitness experts offer up their suggestions. Pick right for hikers, cyclists and paddle sport enthusiasts.

By [Debbie Juniewicz](#) - Friday, December 5, 2014



A new daypack is just one of the holiday gift ideas for hiking enthusiasts. CONTRIBUTED

While Black Friday and Cyber Monday are over, many people still have holiday shopping to do.

If someone on your “nice” list is an outdoor fitness enthusiast, here are some ideas that might make their Christmas very merry. And you don’t have to break the bank to find gifts that are both useful and enjoyable.

You also don’t have to brave the mall crowds, as many items are available at local retailers such as True Heights Equipment and Outfitter, Great Miami Outfitters or Whitewater Warehouse.

Five Rivers MetroParks staff and local outdoor fitness experts weighed in on gift ideas:

Kayaking, Canoeing, SUP

Source: paddlesports coordinator Erik Dahlstrom

\$50 or less

- › Canoe/Kayak or Kayak Session magazine subscription
- › Patch kit, rescue pulley, river knife, safety whistle, small dry box, Sink the Stink cleaner, NRS straps, sun hat, tube of Aquaseal, 303 UV Protectant

\$100 or less

- › Life jacket, throw rope, set of float bags, dry bag, bottom wicking thermals, paddling jacket, paddling pants, neoprene booties, poggies or gloves.

Worth a splurge (\$100+)

- › Helmet, dry top, wet suit, dry suit, paddle, boat (to get suited up to try the region's whitewater parks at Eastwood MetroPark and Buck Creek in Springfield)
- › Stand Up Paddleboard: Fast-growing stand-up paddle-boarding (SUP) offers a fun, relaxing way to enjoy the water. With a minimum of equipment, you can paddle anything from ocean surf to lakes and rivers.

Hiking

Sources: Outdoor Adventure Connection and Dayton Hikers' Andy Niekamp

\$25 or less

- › Lexan Spoon: The last camping spoon you will ever need. Stronger than steel and won't bend or crack — lightweight and indestructible.
- › Fifty Feet of 550 Paracord: Originally used for parachute cords, this thin rope is strong and lightweight. Great for hanging your food from a bear, making a clothesline or tying down your tent. Excellent for an emergency shoelace and fishing line and a must for survival kits. Available in a variety of colors.
- › Photon Micro Light Led: Made for key chains but great for hiking too. Clip one to your pack and you will never be without a light. These tiny, bright lights come in handy whether you are on the trail, cooking dinner or inside your tent.
- › Outdoor Products Ultimate Dry Sacks: For less than half the price of one brand name stuff sack you get three waterproof dry sacks of different sizes. Great for storing your hiking gear and clothes that need to stay dry.

\$50 or less

- › Eddie Bauer RipPac Packable Daypack: Great for backpackers and campers who need a lighter pack for day trips away from camp. Adjustable shoulder straps, two water bottle pockets and three compartments.
- › SuperFeet Green Insoles: Prevent hiking foot pain with these insoles for your boots and hiking shoes. This rigid insoles give you heel lift and arch support so your foot can pad itself naturally.
- › Outdoor Research Rocky Mountain High Gaiters: They are a must for hiking in wet, muddy, or snowy conditions. They keep dirt and debris out of your boot and keep your feet warmer.

› ThermaRest Z-Lite: These foldable, egg carton style, closed cell foam sleeping pads are highly versatile. Great for keeping you off the cold ground when sleeping in your tent. Fold them in quarters to make a sitting pad, fold it in half to lay out our gear on, lay it against a log for a padded back rest.

Worth a splurge (\$100+)

› Black Diamond Trekking Poles: Great for balance and getting your arms involved in hiking. Especially useful for hiking in the snow. Poles are adjustable to suit any size hiker.

› Olympus Tough TG-3 Camera: Waterproof, drop proof and freeze proof. Excellent photo quality for a point and shoot camera. Has a built in GPS to geo-tag your photos. You can instantly transfer photos from the camera to your smart-phone for uploading and email using the built in Bluetooth capability.

Backpacking

Source: backpacking coordinator Angie Sheldon

\$10 or less

› Sea to Summit Pocket Soap: tiny and compact slivers of soap to use for washing you or your dishes at camp — weighs just half an ounce › Whistle: great to have for an emergency in the backcountry

\$50 or less

› Klean Kanteen Insulated bottle with the cafe lid: keeps beverages hot or cold, great for coffee or tea drinkers. › Orikaso dinner set: lightweight easy to clean, origami style plate, bowl and mug › Hydration pack: like the Platypus Hoser Hydration System that fits in practically any backpack and makes it easier to stay hydrated on the trail

Worth a splurge (\$100+)

› A nice down jacket to keep them warm this winter or on cold nights around camp: Sierra Designs DriDown Hoody or Patagonia Nano Puff › ENO Hammock: great for backyard relaxing, hiking or backpacking

Cycling

Source: bycling coordinator Randy Ryberg

\$20 or less

› Specialized Insulated Purist water bottle: keeps cold liquids cold in the warmer months and helps keep water from freezing during the colder winter days. › Cycling Socks: a great way to show support of a great cause or organization. › I Bike D8N T-shirt: sold at Dayton Urban Green at the 2nd Street Market

\$50 or less

› Park Tool Big Blue Book of Bicycle Maintenance. › A membership to a great cycling advocacy group like the Miami Valley Mountain Bike Association or Bike Miami Valley.

Worth a splurge (\$100+)

› A powerful headlight: look for output of 250-350 lumens. › A balance bike: this helps children learn to balance and essentially teach themselves to ride. Getting started is as easy as stopping at one of the local bike retailers like Whitmans Ride Shop in West

Carrolton, Bike-way Bike Shop in Miamisburg, Chain Reaction in Englewood, Kettering Bike Shop, or K&G Bikes with locations in Center-ville, Kettering and Xenia.

Gardening

Source: horticultural education supervisor Betty Hoevel

\$20 or less

> Seed starting trays, bagged potting soil > Plant- and pet-friendly ice melt > Paper whites or amaryllis bulbs

\$50 or less

> Small garden tools, gloves > House plants, including seasonal varieties as well as potted sensitive bulbs such as Clivia Miniata and agapanthus, which can live many years — outdoors in summer, indoors in winter > Heating mats for seed trays > Compost bin

Worth a splurge (\$100+)

> Mini greenhouse which can be assembled and disassembled easily > Give a gift that grows. Many local garden centers offer gift certificates that can be used to purchase trees, shrubs or other services.