

HOLIDAY COUNTDOWN



11 SHOPPING DAYS LEFT

WHAT TO BUY GRANDPARENTS

Buying for grandparents can seem daunting. After six, seven, even eight decades of accumulating things, what could they possibly need? But with a little digging, there are plenty of good ideas out there. Here are some gifts, both useful and sentimental, for dear old grandma or grandpa.

— Tyrel Linkhorn
BLADE STAFF WRITER



▲ **A scarf** — It's simple, sure. But if you're looking to go with a clothing item, you really can't go wrong buying a scarf. It's not like you're going to buy the wrong size. And with cold weather here, a nice, warm scarf can give a little extra insulation from the cold. **Macy's** has super soft cashmere scarves for around \$65. If that's too pricey, scarves made of synthetic fiber can be had for around \$15.

▼ **Nintendo Wii and Fit Plus** — Buying grandparents a video gaming system might seem a little odd, but the Wii Fit isn't your traditional game. While it's not a wonder routine that will have you off running marathons, many recent news articles have quoted researchers and therapists saying the game system can help older people increase their balance and mobility. Plus, it's fun and easy to use. Available at many retailers including **Kmart**. The Wii itself costs \$149.99, while the Fit, which comes with a balance board, costs \$99.99.



▼ **A personalized photo book** — Whether you want to share events like birthdays or graduations that a far-away grandparent may have missed or just collect some cherished family memories, a photo book from a place like **Walgreens** lets you choose the cover type and photos, background, and captions on every page. They come in many sizes and finishes and many already have a theme. The standard book from Walgreens has 20 pages, though you can add more if you need additional room. The books are priced at \$20 to \$50.



▼ **A photo printer** — Film photography is becoming less and less common as the world shifts to digital. A photo printer would allow them to make quick prints of favorite photos easily at home. Many also allow you to directly plug a memory card into the printer without needing a computer — especially useful if your grandparents have a digital camera but haven't purchased a computer. **Meijer** has the **HP Photosmart 6510 All-in-One Printer**, which also will scan and copy, for \$149.99.



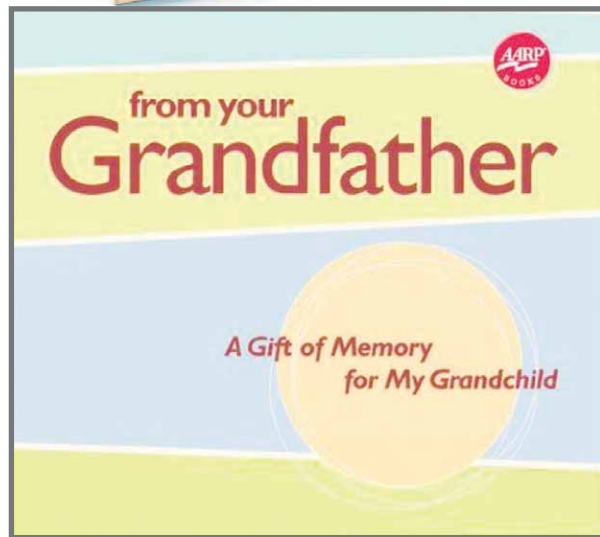
▼ **Snack basket** — The traditional holiday snack basket seems to be summer sausage and fancy cheeses, but there are all sorts of other baskets out there. Whether you have a sweet tooth, like roasted nuts, or have a taste for fruit, there's probably some configuration that will please. **Hickory Farms** has a standard summer sausage and cheese basket for \$40. If you're looking for something different in the same price range, try the dried fruit assortment for \$48.



▲ **A garden kneeler** — Gardening is something many people take up in retirement, but as joints age, they often don't bend like they used to. A small, lightweight garden bench can help ease that pain stooping or kneeling can inflict and make gardening more pleasurable. The **Yard Butler Garden Kneeler** provides both a padded seat and a padded kneeler. It folds flat for storage and weighs about 8 pounds. It's also useful for other household chores. Available at **Home Depot**. Costs about \$35.



▲ **Patio furniture** — If winter is just too unbearable, think ahead to spring with new outdoor furniture. Your grandparents might enjoy starting their outside day with a cup of coffee or finishing it by relaxing in the evening with a favorite book. Stores like **Walmart** have a large assortment of outdoor and patio furniture, from single chairs, to gliders, to swings. The **Mainstays Lawson Ridge 3-Person Swing** gives plenty of room and includes a cover to keep the sun from getting too hot. Costs about \$200.



▲ **A memory book** — A gift like this is really a gift for the both of you. Included are question prompts that will help lead your grandfather through his life's memories to create a lasting record of the places he went, people he knew, and lessons he learned. Many include questions related to the grandparent's relationship with their grandchildren. Filling out the questions together might help lead you to ask further questions to learn more about the previous generation. **Amazon.com** has a wide assortment from various sellers. Check out the hardcover *From Your Grandfather: A Gift of Memory for My Grandchild*. Costs \$9.95.



▲ **Golf balls** — If your grandparents are avid golfers, this box of golf balls makes an inexpensive and useful gift. Check in to see what their preferred brand is, or do a little snooping in the golf bag to ensure you get the right one. Of course, if you don't buy the right brand, you could provide a plausible excuse for grandpa's buddies the next time he shanks one into the woods. **Dick's Sporting Goods** has all the popular brands and offers free personalization for online orders on many of them. Figure to pay \$20 to \$45 for a box, depending on the brand.

▲ **A Web cam** — If your grandparents live far away or winter in a sunny locale, a Web cam can help you keep in touch, face to face. There are many sites and programs online that allow for free video chatting. Just plug in the Web cam and you're good to go. You can get a high-definition Logitech USB Web cam with a built in microphone for \$79.99 at **Best Buy**. If your grandparents are real technocrats, it even allows one-click uploads to social media sites like Facebook.

