The leaves may still be green and summer vacation memories still fresh on the mind, but it’s time to start thinking, planning, and shopping for the holidays.

This holiday season, consumers plan to spend $998\(^1\) on average gifting, be it for themselves, their families or their friends. Ongoing supply chain challenges as a result of the pandemic and inflation, which is at the highest it’s been over the past 13 years, means finding unbeatable deals on the most coveted items will be challenging this holiday season.

In preparation for one of the largest gift-giving seasons, Zulily reveals how the early bird can catch the deal.

New research shows those who plan ahead get more than just the best deals on top toys of the season, such as Barbie, The LEGO Group and PicassoTiles. Zulily offers up to 70% off on the must-haves for the season – from gifts and home décor to toys – with an average of $5-$10 savings per item. Millions of moms (four times as many) are willing to trade off speed for cost savings and can shop now to take advantage of planful behaviors that can leave them with more money in their pockets, peace of mind and other health benefits.

Zulily’s new “Brain of the Planner” research – a first-of-its-kind pilot study conducted by third-party researcher ENGINE – used Artificial Intelligence (AI) to analyze human emotions through facial and linguistic expressions to understand what motivates moms to plan and what benefits they experience as a result. Planners experience more feelings of happiness, less stress and better health overall, a.k.a. letting them kick back and truly enjoy the holidays with peace of mind. Planners also report feeling more confident and financially secure and have stronger family relationships.

So, what does that mean for holiday shopping?
If you’re planning to buy toys for a little one in your life, ‘tis the season to start shopping early. Zulily’s in-house toy experts compiled a list of the 25 must-have toys of the 2021 holiday season to help moms keep their finger on the pulse of what’s trending among kids and what toys they’ll wish for most. Moms can find these or similar toys in Santa’s Workshop on Zulily.com, which is a dedicated shopping destination for all things toys within their Holiday Shop. With Zulily’s assortment changing every day, make sure to shop early, as most of its sales events last only 72 hours – so once it’s gone, it’s gone! But with new things added every day, customers can check back often to find exactly what they’re looking for.

ZULILY’S top 25 TOYS FOR HOLIDAY

1. Barbie® Three-In-One Dreamcamper Set
2. PicassoTiles 101-Piece 3D Magnetic Building Tile Playset
3. Fisher-Price® Giant Rock-a-Stack® Toy
4. Joybay Sky Blue Premium LED Swing Car
5. LEGO® Marvel Studios The Guardians’ Ship
When it comes to holiday décor and preparing the home for guests and merriment, the early bird catches the deals! 71% of moms start buying their holiday gifts in advance. These moms who are gathering garland before even putting the pumpkins away are the ones flush with savings and fresh finds. Not to mention they find peace of mind before the hectic holidays commence and an excuse to decorate early. Shopping data from Zulily reveals moms are stockpiling Christmas décor and other holiday items as early as July. If these items are on your list, use this helpful shopping data to plan ahead and avoid a last-minute panic.

### DECK THE HALLS

- In need of new **STOCKING HANGERS**? October and November see huge spikes in purchases (+1,853% in October – November 2020) compared to the rest of the year. So, whether you’re designing your mantlescape to be farmhouse chic or classic holiday, secure your stocking hangers in September while there are still plenty to choose from.

- Christmas in July rolled out and there is never a time too soon to purchase your holiday stockings. Beginning in July 2021, the number of **HOLIDAY STOCKINGS** purchased were already up +256% over previous months, and are expected to reach an impressive +1,609% by the time November rolls around, based on 2020 sales. Whether you’re getting a stocking to match each family member’s personality or a matching set for the whole family, now is the time to shop.

### SUGAR & SPICE

- Wondering which holiday treats reign supreme? Consider the baking utensils purchased most ahead of time: most **CAKE PANS, LOAF PANS,** and **COOKIE CUTTERS** are purchased from August - October. Grab your utensils now so you can keep the sweet treats flowing this season!

### TRIM THE TREE

- Trading a pine candle for the unique smell of a Christmas Tree? Most **FAUX TREES** are purchased in October and November – and most **WREATHS** and **GARLAND** are snatched up during that same timeframe – so start looking for the faux trees and green trimmings earlier in September to beat the rush.

- Looking for the perfect **HOLIDAY ORNAMENT**? Data shows planners get them all in July and August, with August selling 4x as many as July. If you haven’t begun the hunt for the perfect set to dress your tree, start now before it’s too late.

### PRO TIP FOR HOLIDAY SAVINGS IN 2022

Whether you’re borrowing inspiration for this holiday or you’re a super planner taking advantage of Boxing Day sales, in addition to unbeatable deals during September – November, data from the 2020 holiday season reveals January is the best month to purchase **DECORATIVE PLATES, THROW PILLOWS** and **PASTRY TOOLS.**

While 57% more **WRAPPING PAPER** was purchased in October than September of 2020, January is also a top time for moms to replenish their gift wrap and gift bag stash.

Stockpile these items nearly a year in advance to cue a cozy (and easy) holiday season for next year.
The most toys might not be found in the North Pole but in… Texas. Whether it be creative play, traditional and retro board games or even intergenerational video games, families are seeking out fun and playing together in some cities more than others! According to Zulily sales data and Google trend searches of toys and games, certain cities rank as America’s Most Playful Cities, from the bright lights of Vegas to the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. Not to mention Texas, where everything is bigger, even the fun, snagged five spots!

Las Vegas, Nev.
Vegas is known for playing games, but did you know they love board games the most? You’d have to pass GO in Monopoly 75 times to equal the number of board games purchased here over the last year.

Fort Worth, Texas
Home to the Texas Motor Speedway, the number of toys and games purchased in Fort Worth over the last year is equivalent to going around “The Great American Speedway” track over six times.

San Antonio, Texas
San Antonio is not only the most visited city in Texas, it’s also a huge fan of having fun. You could line nearly the entire length of the Riverwalk (over 13 miles worth!) based on the number of toys and games they’ve purchased in the last year.

Louisville, Ky.
If you stacked all the card games Louisville purchased over the last year, you’d have the equivalent of 1.86 times the height of “The Big Bat,” the city’s famous exact-scale replica of Babe Ruth’s 34-inch Louisville Slugger, which towers over 120 feet into the sky.

Colorado Springs, Colo.
When it comes to superheroes, Colorado Springs a.k.a. Olympic City USA might know a thing or two. Home to the U.S. Olympics and Paralympics headquarters, training center and museum – it’s no surprise action figures were the city’s top toy choice.
Methodologies:
The Top Trending Holiday items were identified by looking at sales of holiday items sold on Zulily.com from 7/25/20 through 8/1/21 to determine month-by-month trends.

Most playful cities were identified by comparing top cities that ranked across Zulily sales data and Google Trends search data. The cities that purchased the most Toys and Games on Zulily.com from 8/1/2020 – 7/31/2021, were compared with those that ranked highest in Google Trends for searches of “Toys” and “Games” from 8/1/2020 – 7/31/2021. The average ranking was calculated for each city that appeared in all three data sets to determine their spot on this list.