



Graduates Gifting Guide

Finding the right grad gift is hard, so we
did the research to make it easy

How do you find out **what grads really want?**

Graduating from high school or college is a big achievement, but you know what's close to impossible? Shopping for a new graduate. Depending on their plans and their place in life, grads have a huge range of unpredictable needs and wants.

To fill in this mystery and get to know the modern accomplished young adult, at Blackhawk Network we did the unthinkable: we went out and asked them. In this ebook, you'll find the results of our survey. More than 760 recent grads weighed in from across the US. We've got the inside scoop on the brands they love and how you can be a better grad gifter.



Who gets an A+ on gifting?

If you're a distant acquaintance or co-worker of a recent grad, we have some bad news. Respondents to our survey rated acquaintances and co-workers as the worst gifters by a wide margin.

How did everyone else do?



Likelihood to Purchase a Gift Graduates Love

	Women	Men
Spouse/Partner/ Significant other	A+	A
Parents	A	A-
Close Friends	A	B
Relatives	C	C
Acquaintance/ Colleague	C	D



Doing **the** research

How can you find out what your grad wants without giving away the surprise? 20% of our respondents, both male and female, weren't very concerned with having a big surprise gift.



Did you know:

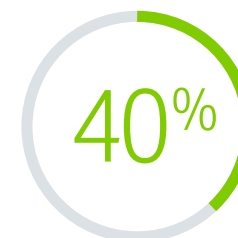
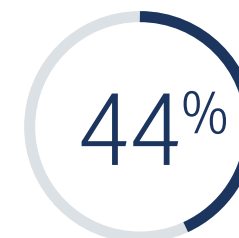
Taking mental notes for gift ideas while we spend time together is a good idea

People prefer that you ask them directly

Less than half of both groups say that checking with their family for gift ideas is a good idea.

Women

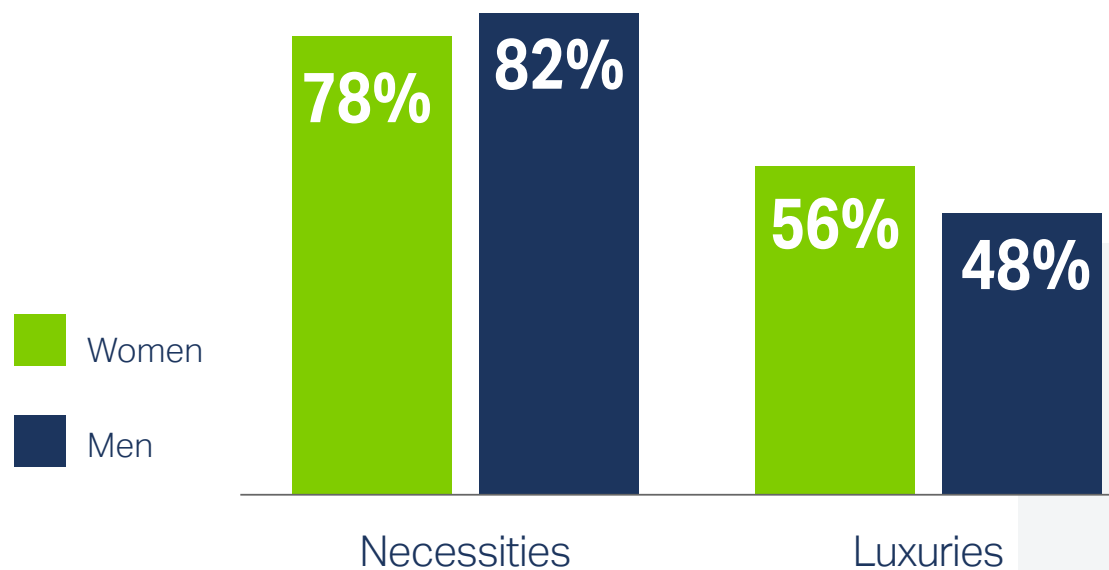
Men



Needs vs wants

The moment in our lives when we graduate is one of the most unpredictable times, and the range of needs and wants for recent grads can be enormous. Both male and female graduates typically plan on spending gift cards on something they already needed—59% of men and 55% of women agreed with that plan.

On average, we found that slightly more men planned to spend their gift cards on something they need, while women were more likely to spend their gift cards on a luxury they've always wanted.

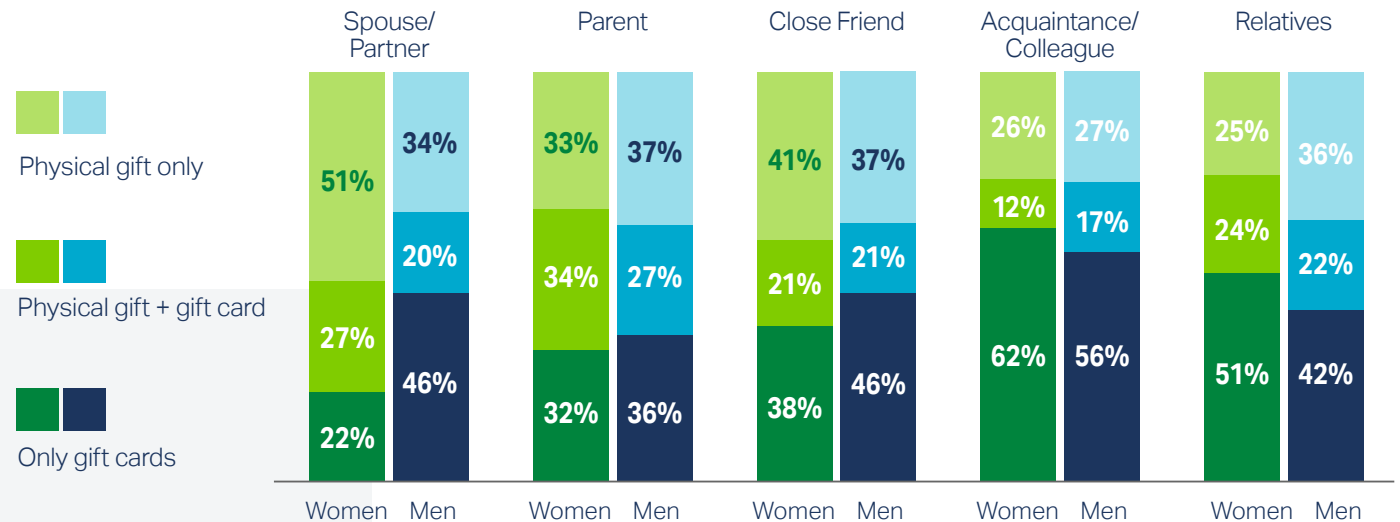




The intimacy of gifts

One aspect of our research showed that most grads are equally happy with receiving gift cards as a graduation gift. As the closeness of their relationship with the gift-giver increases, however, grads are more likely to want a gift. It's probably no surprise that these numbers track with grads' responses on page 4, where they ranked the best and worst gifters. The better a gifter is, the more likely people are to prefer a gift.

Preferred Graduation Gifts



The end result:

rather than getting a gift they won't like, most graduates would rather just get a gift card and make their own choices

OK, but which gift card is the best?

New grads have a huge range of wants and needs, but there are a few categories most likely to make them happy. Male graduates are more likely to enjoy gift cards for video game brands and fine dining. Female grads are more interested in fashion and personal care brands. Meanwhile, everyone loves the freedom and flexibility that come with Mastercard® and Visa® prepaid cards or gift cards to mass merchandisers like Target and Walmart.



Tip:

Everyone loves a shopping spree.

70% of graduates say gift cards are an opportunity to have fun shopping.



What kind of gift cards are desired? (Top 5 in ranked order)

Men

Video gaming



Visa/ Mastercard



Fast food /
takeout restaurants



Fine dining



Mass merchants



Women

Fashion stores



Visa/ Mastercard



Personal care /
beauty products



Mass merchants



Fast food /
takeout restaurants





Big money, **big choices**

Choosing a gift card solves a lot of problems, but there are still a few unknowns for the wary gifter. While graduates generally prefer the freedom of Mastercard and Visa prepaid cards, across the board they still enjoy and appreciate gift cards—whether to specific retailers or multi-brand cards that can be used at a variety of stores.

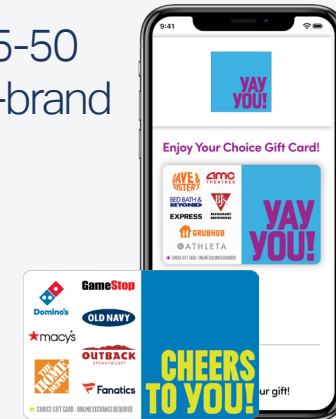
In fact, the preference for choice and flexibility increased as the dollar amount of the gift increased. At smaller denominations, grads agree, a single-brand gift card is great. At much larger denominations, many grads fear being locked into spending a generous gift at a single store.

Consumer Preference by Gift Card \$ Value

\$10
Single brand



\$25-50
Multi-brand



\$100-500
Mastercard or Visa



More money, more choice and flexibility is desired

Congratulate with choice

According to our research, the best way to please the new graduates in your life is with the freedom and flexibility of gift cards and prepaid cards. The more choices they have, the better. After all, they're adults now! Making good choices is what life's all about.



 **Ready to learn more**
about gift cards for graduates?



Talk to Blackhawk Network

Need some help with your gift cards?

**Call 866.219.7533 or visit us at
blackhawknetwork.com**

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