

**ABC NEWS POLL: CHRISTMAS WISH LIST**

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## **Americans' Christmas Wish List: Peace, Love and a Carpet Shampooer**

From a Ferrari to a flying saucer to a full-time job, it's wish-list time in America.

And what a list it is. This ABC News poll asked it as plainly as can be: "If you could have your choice, what one present would you most like to have for Christmas?" The answers suggest that Santa's going to be one busy dude.

How about...

"\$300,000 wrapped in ribbon" for an older man in the Miami area. (Apparently he's been very, very good.)

"A 12-inch compound miter saw" for that handy husband in Iowa. (Let's hope he'll be very, very careful.)

"A vacation home in Tahiti." (Some aim high.)

"A box of cashew nuts." (Some aim low.)

"A Springfield M1A1 rifle." (Some just aim.)

For the gals, not just earrings, but, requests a fashion-conscious woman in Indianapolis, "dangly diamond earrings." And don't pass off any paste on an even more discriminating 40-something in Ohio: "Diamond earrings – one half to three-quarter carats." If you please.

For the guys, "A beautiful six-foot brunette." (Dream on, buddy.) "A season ticket for the St. Louis Cardinal games." (\$1,134 in the bleachers, and there is a waiting list.) "A voltage detector." (Bingo! \$9.95 at Home Depot.)

The list is as varied as America itself – a roundup of wants and dreams that ranges from the prosaic to the fanciful, the material to the spiritual, the humorous to the human, and the oh-so-practical to the oh-so-weird.

Some of us, we learn, are deeply conflicted about our Christmas wishes. "No clue. A new computer. I have no clue. A new computer," said a woman in her 20s near Harrisburg, Pa. A little something for that whiplash might be nice, too.

Some are oddly equivocal. “Nothing, or maybe peace on Earth,” said a retired woman in Philadelphia. Others are more deliberative, if a tad humdrum. “I think clothes, some pantsuits perhaps. I’d like to have some church clothes,” said a woman outside Atlanta.

Others – you know the type – have trouble restraining themselves. Asked his one preferred gift, a Texan recited: “Money, a loan, a new car, a winning lottery ticket, a Bentley.” (MSRP on that is \$329,990 for the Azure ragtop – but wait, there’s an ‘01 on eBay Motors for just \$139,100.) Another double-dipper, in Chico, Calif., came in a bit lower on the cost scale: she’d like “a toaster and a cat calendar,” thank you very much.

For some, we just don’t want to know the details: “A new husband,” darkly requested a woman in her 30s on Florida’s Gulf Coast. Regarding the old husband, let’s just keep her away from the aforementioned Springfield.

Money’s on the minds of many. All told 6 percent of respondents mentioned some kind of cash or cash equivalent for their holiday gift, from a rather specific high – “10 million dollars” – to a winning lottery ticket, no sum specified. (“Lottery numbers,” one respondent said, then thought to add: “Winning ones.” Oh.)

Better yet, “financial security,” will do it for a fellow in Washington D.C., or, suggests a woman in Minneapolis, “I’d like to have all my bills paid off.” A mom in Los Angeles is experiencing college-related sticker shock: “Someone to pay for my son’s tuition” is on her list. Says another, in these credit crunch days, “Pay my mortgage.” Yet another takes his financial concerns in a policy direction: All he wants for Christmas is “tax reform.”

Ten percent of Americans would like a car or other vehicle (down from 16 percent in 2005; perhaps reflecting higher economic uncertainty, a lot more this year are undecided on what the heck they want). A fellow in Fargo, N.D., asks for “a new enclave”; we’re figuring that’s the SUV, not a change of habitat.

Six percent are up for a new TV. Computers, clothes and travel (“visit my fiancé in France this summer” or “a beautiful cruise for two”) share the list with peace, love, “anything that is made of porcelain” and “a hot tub spa.”

One enterprising homemaker pines for a carpet shampooer, another, markedly less ambitious, wants a hammock. For a man in his 30s in Portland, Ore., it’s “a 6,000-square-foot-tree house.” (Pity the poor tree.)

Other requests speak poignantly to the human condition. Plenty wish for health, healing, family and companionship. “I just need company. I am too old for presents,” said an elderly woman in Tennessee. “Get rid of lung cancer,” is a heart-wrenching request; so is this: “I am on a wheelchair and I would just like to be able to walk.”

“I’d like to get my husband back but he’s gone now. He’s deceased,” said a woman on the New Jersey coast. “To have my mother back,” said another. From a retiree: “I wish

that my grandchildren would be here.” And from a woman in Springfield, Mo.: “Just family. I want to have them around.”

There are other gifts that don’t come in a box. “My children’s happiness,” wished a man in Boston. Asked what he’d like for the holiday, a Bismarck, N.D., man put it in a single word: “Forgiveness.” So did a middle-aged North Carolinian: “Joy.” Then again, a gentleman in Los Angeles took his one-word answer in a different direction: “Teeth.” (Not just his two front teeth, apparently, but the full set.)

There were words of wisdom from an elderly man in Sacramento: “For me what I give is more important than what I get.” And there were words of down-home practicality from a homemaker in Oakland, Calif.: What she needs for Christmas, more than anything else, she said, is “Somebody to clean up the closet.”

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News poll was conducted by telephone Nov. 14-18, 2007, among a random national sample of 1,002 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abncnews.com/pollingunit>.

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Full results follow (\*= less than 0.5 percent).

1-2. Previously released.

3. If you could have your choice, what one present would you most like to have for Christmas?

	2007	2005	1958*
Car, motorbike, truck, car accessories	10	16	14
TV, plasma TV, TV projector, etc.	6	4	3
Money, lottery, etc.	6	6	5
Computer, laptop, printer, Blackberry	5	7	na
Clothes, shoes	5	6	12
Health, vitamins, medicine	3	4	2
Vacation, plane ticket	3	5	3
Jewelry, diamonds, pearls	2	5	na
Home furnishings, home renovations	2	4	8
Home, apartment	2	3	6
Home appliances, kitchenware	2	3	13
Family and friends	2	2	na
Xbox, video game	2	2	na
Peace, love	2	2	1
Stereo, music, CDs, audio equipment	1	2	1
Camera, digital camera	1	1	1
Tools, workshop equipment	1	1	2
Debt, bills, mortgage paid off	1	1	1
Gun, rifle	1	1	1
iPod	1	1	na
Sporting equipment	1	1	na
Gift certificate, gift card	1	1	na

Book	1	1	na
Other	8	11	15
Nothing	7	4	5
Don't know	24	7	5

\*1958 poll by Gallup.