

holiday helpbook

**Top techno
tamers for kids**

**Snap happy!
Digital photo
dos and don'ts**

**Ditch the
festive frenzy!
7 ways to save
time online**

20+

Canadian shopping sites,
gift ideas and more!



**set a sensational
holiday table**



Staying home for the holidays



Nothing spreads holiday cheer like spending time with the ones you love and a little help from digital technology can create that perfect environment to bring you and yours closer together.

The latest trend to sweep the family home is the digital living room — a space where everything you need for digital entertainment is in an easily accessible area.

With a sleek brushed aluminum finish, the Digital Entertainment Center looks great in any family room with the ability to connect to other home theatre and consumer electronic devices such as HDTVs, digital projectors, stereo receivers, cable and satellite set-top boxes, camcorders, music players and digital cameras.



Enjoy more together

Traditional family room fun like watching your favourite TV shows or the latest DVD releases, listening to classic carols or showing a slide show of family photos for relatives and friends can now be done in one central spot. New technologies, such as the HP Digital Entertainment Center, offer a fun and easy way to access and enjoy various types of multimedia content. The HP Digital Entertainment Center enables you to record, pause and rewind live TV so you can easily program the recording of favourite shows to watch when it's convenient. Transfer all your CDs to digital and use the remote control to easily browse your whole collection on your TV screen. Also enjoy digital photos and home movies wherever and whenever you want in your home.

Unwrap your new HP experience

Going from drab to digital is easier than you think. All-in-one devices help create that comfortable space and keep you and your family entertained, whatever the occasion. This holiday, let the latest in Digital Entertainment technology help you get reacquainted with the people you love to share the holiday spirit and joy. Visit www.hp.ca/entertainment for lots of fun ideas to help kick start the festivities.



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Celebrate the season with Holiday Helpbook's festive ideas!

It wasn't long ago that your home computer was relegated to the office or the basement. It was used for word processing or playing games and most people felt it belonged in the workplace. Today the home computer has become a part of our everyday life, moving into the family room as an entertainment centre to listen to music and share photos or into the kitchen to access recipes and manage the household budget.

So this holiday, why not think of your computer as a tool to plan your seasonal festivities? Create beautiful table décor items, make personalized gifts and holiday cards or follow our simple time-saving tips to avoid the frenetic pace of this time of year. You'll be amazed at the innovative ways your computer can lend a helping hand.

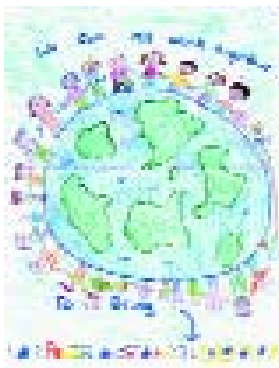
We hope you enjoy these ideas and visit Microsoft Home Magazine online (www.microsoft.ca/home) for more fabulous articles on how to do something new with your computer.

Happy Holidays!

Anjali Kapoor

Editor, Holiday Helpbook/Microsoft Home Magazine

www.microsoft.ca/home



Inspirational cards

Last year, Kimberlee Gibeault, 15, from Pembroke, Ont., won the annual Holiday Greeting Card Contest held by Microsoft Canada and the Boys and Girls Club of Canada. Her entry, based on a "believe in your dreams" theme, appeared on more than 10,000 greeting cards sent out by Microsoft Canada. Find out more about the Boys and Girls Club and this year's winner: www.bgccan.com

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be generous

If you want to donate money or time to those less fortunate, go online. The web provides access to a wealth of charities, making it fast and simple to research organizations that could benefit from your help. Some organizations that accept online donations:

- Kids Help Phone www.kidshelp.sympatico.ca
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind www.cnib.ca
- Right To Play www.righttoplay.com
- UNICEF Canada www.unicef.ca
- War Child Canada www.warchild.ca

You can also donate Air Miles, Canadian Tire money and Shoppers Optimum Points. If time is what you'd like to give, visit Charity Village (www.charityvillage.ca). – *Natalie Bahadur*

all I want for christmas

Many Canadian retail websites, like Chapters.Indigo.ca (www.chapters.indigo.ca), Toys R Us (www.toysrus.ca) and The Bay (www.shop.hbc.com), now offer wish lists and online gift registries, where children and adults alike can surf the merchandise and pick which presents they'd like to unwrap this season. You can even e-mail your wish lists or registries to family and friends, just to make sure all your hard work hasn't gone to waste. – *Tara Nolan*



hear ye...

top 10 holiday song downloads

The Prayer

Céline Dion with Andrea Bocelli
(These Are Special Times)

O Holy Night

Josh Groban
(Josh Groban in Concert)

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Barenaked Ladies and Sarah McLachlan
(A Winter's Night)

Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas

Ella Fitzgerald
(Ella Wishes You A Swinging Christmas)

Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow

Michael Bublé
(Let It Snow)

I Won't Be Home For Christmas

Blink 182
(I Won't Be Home For Christmas)

Christmas Blues

Matt Dusk
(Christmas Blues)

Back Door Santa

Jet
(Back Door Santa)

Ave Maria

98°
(This Christmas)

I'll Be Home for Christmas

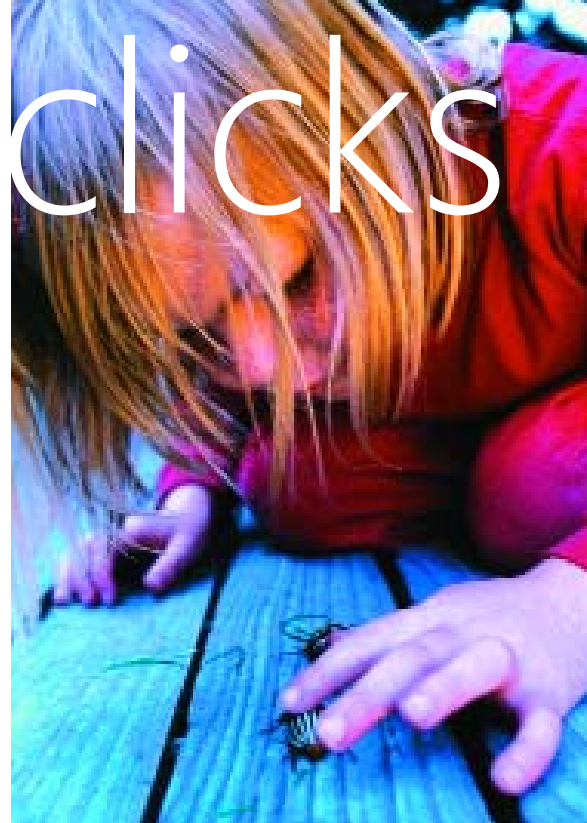
Harry Connick Jr.
(Harry for the Holidays)

Source: From Puretracks.com, 2003.

quick clicks

it's bug season

It's that time of year when e-mail inboxes fill up with holiday greetings, photos and jokes, and websites are overrun with pop-up ads showcasing festive gifts. Manage your e-mail by downloading the new Service Pack 2 from Microsoft. The Attachment Manager feature can help to prevent harmful viruses and unsafe e-mail attachments. Plus, the pop-up stopper eliminates those pesky pop-up windows. To find out more, go to www.microsoft.ca/protect – *Anjali Kapoor*



greetings!

Sending a holiday message can be more than just a generic card in the mail. Here are a few original ways to personalize your seasonal salutations:

- **Scan original artwork and photos** Instead of the usual holiday images and greetings, use your child's artwork or a favourite photo as the backdrop to your cards.
 - **Make a magnetic card** Create a family memory that will stick around long past the holidays. A family photo or message in the form of a magnet ensures your greetings will find a place of prominence on the household refrigerator. These magnets can be printed just as easily as cards since the magnetic paper can be run through the printer. Try HP printable magnetic paper, available at most office supply stores.
 - **E-mail your seasonal message** Too late to send a card by mail? E-mail your holiday greeting to friends and family. Many e-mail programs, such as MSN Designer E-Mail, allow you to use special stationery, attach photos, add coloured text and even insert sound right into your message. Or, send your holiday greetings in the form of a photo slide show composed of snapshots documenting the past year. You can also create a brief family newsletter to send as an attached file or choose from a wide variety of pre-designed holiday cards on the web.
- *Kama Lee Jackson and Anjali Kapoor*



Magnetic memories:
A baby photo magnet is a perfect holiday greeting.



Making Memories

Come together



It's the holidays, the time of year where families and friends gather to share good wishes and hand-picked treasures wrapped in shiny ribbon. And what better way to get caught in those joyful moments than with digital products that give you instant results? Turn moments of a lifetime into memories of a lifetime.

Share the joy

The best part about taking pictures is sharing them with friends and family. Digital technology makes sharing instantaneous. This holiday season, avoid the photo lab lineups. Print your own images with new compact portable printers like the HP Photosmart 375, which weighs less than three pounds and is ideal for printing borderless colour and black & white 4x6 inch photos virtually anywhere. For rich, true-to-life colour photos that rival traditional photo processing print quality and resist fading for generations use HP's Premium Plus Photo Paper with your HP photo printer.

Capture the moment

Get snap-happy at your holiday office and dinner parties and scoop candid shots of the kids in the snow. New innovations are making it much easier to take perfect pictures every time, such as the Real Life Technologies built into the HP Photosmart R707 digital camera. Remove red-eye directly on the camera or use HP Adaptive Light technology to capture the image the way you remember it.



Snap what you like, print what you love

Print your favourite holiday snapshots for your relatives as a memento of the holiday, or personalize gift giving by presenting each of your gal pals with a framed photo, just the girls! Whatever the occasion, www.hp.ca/homefun is a great choice for all your digital photography needs.



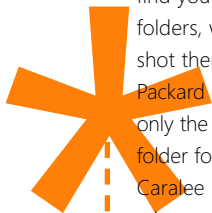


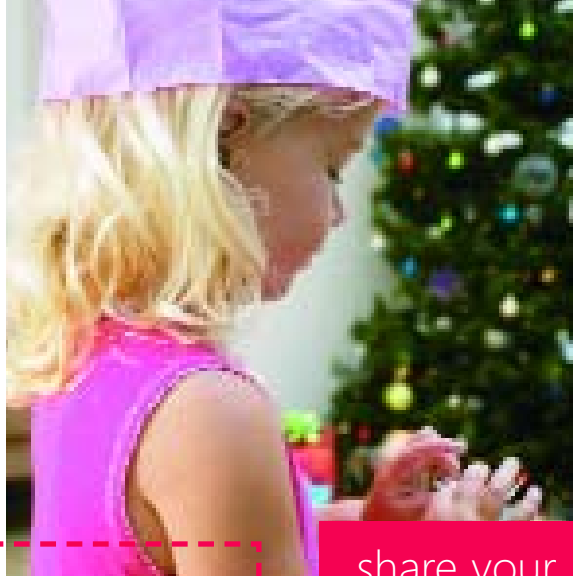
photofinish

organizing and fixing your precious pictures is a snap

sort your photos into folders

The first thing you should think about is creating an organizing system so you can easily find your photos. Some digital cameras come with software that sorts images into folders, which works well if you get into the habit of uploading images right after you've shot them, says Lori Abbott, category business manager for digital imaging at Hewlett-Packard Canada. As your collection grows, you'll want to weed out the bad shots; keep only the pictures that are in focus, have a compelling subject and tell a story. Then create a folder for each year with category subfolders, such as home, work and vacation, suggests Caralee McLellan, a media lecturer at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. If you have a large amount of photos and want more options for sorting, opt for a photo-organizing program, such as Digital Image Suite 10, which has sophisticated searching and archiving options, like arranging by date, event or assigning your own keywords. Regardless of the software you use, always archive your photos on a CD, just in case your computer crashes.





perk up your pics

Now that you've saved your favourite shots, it's time to clean them up. Cropping, a basic tool in most photo-editing software, is the simplest way to improve the composition of your photograph, allowing the viewer to focus on the subject. For photos that are too dark or too light, tweak the contrast by adjusting the levels in small increments to achieve the most natural effect. If by changing the contrast your colours have muted, or if you want to give your photo a colour lift, use the Hue and Saturation tool to adjust the colour balance.



share your photos with others

With your photos organized and perfected, tap into your creative side and discover new ways to share them with friends and family. After all, says Abbott, the primary motivation for buying digital cameras is to e-mail pictures. Newer cameras offer the option of taking lower-resolution images, perfect for e-mailing and not crashing the recipient's PC. If you plan to change the resolution, remember that the larger the dots per inch (dpi), the bigger the file. For onscreen viewing, 72 dpi is acceptable.

When you have a mass of photos you want to share, consider posting them on the web or having them printed. Many websites like HP Photo (www.hpphotos.com) allow you to share images, while London Drugs Photo Station (www.ldphotostation.com) and Futurephoto.ca (www.futurephoto.ca) will take you through the step-by-step printing process. If your settings in Windows XP are Canadian, then you can go to the My Pictures folder to order prints. If you are a subscriber to MSN Premium Internet Software, you can have an instant messenger conversation while displaying your photos in a slide show through MSN Photos Plus.

To print your pictures from home, consider purchasing a photo ink jet printer, like HP Photosmart 7660 (\$200), which will produce crisp and clear images. With special photo paper, you can print 4 x 6-, 5 x 7- or 8 x 10-inch pictures easily!

touch up facial features

Red-eye is a common problem when shooting indoors or in low light, says Rohan Laylor, president of Phat Dog Visuals Inc. A simpler way to eliminate those glowing eyes is to use the red-eye tool in a photo-editing program, such as Digital Image Suite 10. You'll also find tools to touch up facial flaws like blemishes and wrinkles.





don't freeze up

Those magical, frozen landscapes may inspire you to keep your digital camera handy, but make sure you protect it from the cold, harsh elements. Keep the cold weather from harming your digital camera this winter by:

- Always keeping your camera dry.
- Using a lens hood to keep snow off the front of your camera.
- Not taking your cold camera inside a warm building for short periods of time. Condensation could form on its exterior and freeze when you return outdoors.
- Keeping your camera and equipment inside your camera bag with the zippers closed when you're not taking photos.
- Choosing lithium batteries and rechargeable Ni-MH cells as they last longest in cold temperatures. – *Tara Nolan*

PILLOW PHOTO BY SHUN SASABUCHI. PILLOW IMAGE BY ROBERT ZEMBAL. CRAFT BY JULIE STOYKA.



Pillow talk: Use black and white images to dress up a cushion.

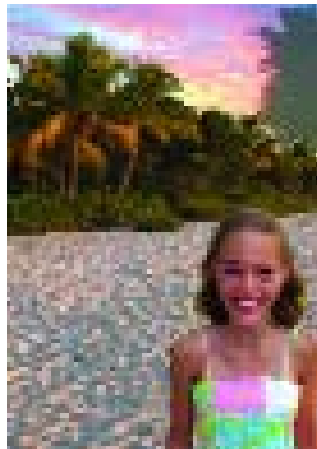
snappy ideas

Make memorable gifts out of fun family photos. All you need are some basic supplies and your computer to whip up these easy crafts. Consider creating:

- A decorative throw pillow
- A 12-month photo calendar
- Colourful scrapbook pages
- Funky fridge magnets
- Sensational stationery

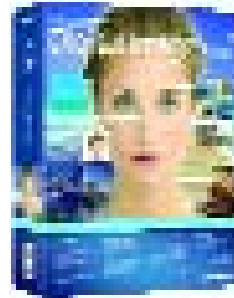
Find step-by-step instructions at www.holidayhelpbook.com/photos

Fit your photos together in one easy step!

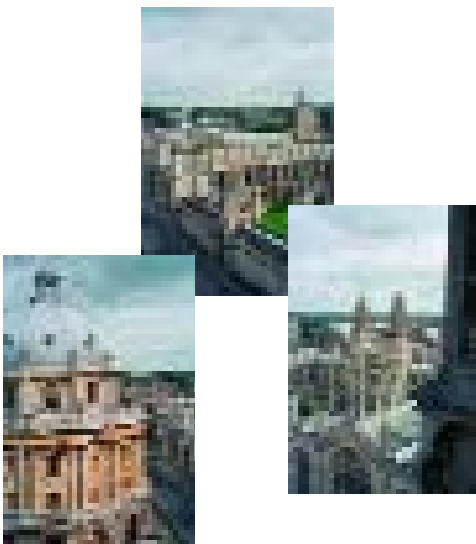


fun tricks and editing tools

Create collages and projects combining your photos with designer templates and special effects. Digital Image Suite 10 makes it easy to achieve artful, creative results you'll be proud to share with others.



Enhance, edit, share and organize your photos with the easy-to-use, one-click tools from **Digital Image Suite 10** – just **\$144.95*** with a \$45 mail-in rebate.



produce perfect panoramas

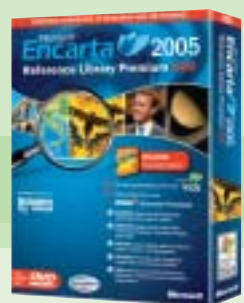
Take two or three shots of that European cityscape and stitch them together into a panoramic portrait. It's very simple – one click of a button produces a seamless photo without the Scotch Tape!

Is learning really about answering questions or about asking even more?



Kids are born explorers. The challenge is keeping their adventures focused. That's why every project should start with Microsoft® Encarta® Reference Library Premium 2005. Highly organized content makes searching for answers simple and direct, with articles, videos, photos, maps, editorially reviewed Web sites and more. Add homework help, plus a new section for young learners, and your kids will have everything they need to find what they're looking for quickly and easily, without the irrelevant side trips.

Because there's more to life. Discover it.





playtime

keep the children
occupied at
holiday parties

Whether you're throwing a holiday party or attending one with your children, these computer-based ideas are guaranteed to entertain during this hectic holiday season.

be crafty

For inspired arts and crafts projects for any age group, hit the web. "I always check the Internet first when I'm looking for creative things to do because it's so convenient," says Lorraine Pittman, a mother of three in Wellington, N.S. Create some personalized holiday crafts for each of your children to work on; visit www.holidayhelpbook.com/family for instructions on colouring books, thank you cards (for all those gifts!), storybooks and more. You can also have the children help dress up the holiday home by making their own ornaments and decorations. Use a basic word-processing program to create holiday shapes like a tree, dreidel or snowman. Print the images onto heavy cardstock and use a fun hole puncher (some are shaped like stars) to hang. Have plenty of markers, stickers, ribbon and sparkles for children to express their creativity.

put on a show

If you're looking for some imaginative fun to brighten up the holidays, turn to a tradition that's been around for centuries – shadow puppetry. Shadow puppetry is the art of using two-dimensional shapes to cast shadows on a wall or backlit screen. While older kids will be able to download the parts and assemble the puppets, younger kids can help by colouring in black and white images. Then it's time to dream up a storyline; shadow puppetry requires less attention to formal scripts than other forms of theatre. "Choose a story you know and make all the characters and props, and then just improvise," says David Powell of the Puppetmongers Theatre and the Toronto School of Puppetry. This unstructured approach is great for younger puppeteers who can't read or write. The older set may want to draft a script or later document the one improvised. Schedule a time for the performance at your holiday party and enjoy the show.

search for treasure

A scavenger hunt is a fun way to get kids working together for a common goal and to teach them about researching on the web. To get started, create two lists – relative to the age of the children – about the holidays; the first should involve questions that can be answered with a bit of Internet sleuthing, such as what country is the real St. Nicholas from? What event does Hanukkah commemorate? Or, which holiday features banana custard with raisins? The second should get kids searching the house for particular items, like candles for the menorah or a stuffed animal in the shape of a rooster to celebrate Chinese New Year. If you

cool sites

- Build a snowman and send it to friends with Sympatico/MSN Kids (<http://kids.sympatico.msn.ca>), a site filled with kid-friendly activities.
- Turn your kitchen into a laboratory with simple science experiments, recipes and brain teasers at Funology (www.funology.com).
- Learn about the holidays and find fun crafts at Kids Domain (www.kidsdomain.com/holiday).
- Surf safely with tips from web AWARE (www.bewebaware.ca).

want to get really creative, add items that the kids have to make, like ornaments or cards. Don't forget to have prizes on hand for all the children who participate.

get into the games

Collect some fun and educational games to play on the computer. Many games allow several players to participate at once and can create a team-like spirit with each side rooting for the other. When it comes to divvying up computer time, parenting expert Ann Douglas has the following advice: "With four kids in our house ranging in age from six to 15, we use a stove timer to block off turns into 20-minute segments. That way everyone gets to work on the computer for the same amount of time without spending the whole night in front of the monitor." You should also have a sign-up sheet, she says, otherwise you're going to have everyone swarming one another.

press play

What would the holidays be without the Grinch? The newest and easiest way to rent or buy DVDs is online – it takes only a few minutes and you won't have to worry about return dates when you have other things on your mind. "When you order online, you don't have the kids fighting over which movie to see in the store," says Melissa Jaillet of Keswick, Ont. "We order them on Monday, and they just show up in the mail. It's a nice surprise for the kids." Try Movies For Me (www.moviesforme.ca), Zip.ca (www.zip.ca) or VHQ Online (www.vhqonline.ca).

games

Video games make great gifts – and not just for kids. Whether you're shopping for a strategy buff or an animal lover, entertaining games for Windows abound for just about everyone.



go wild!

Create the ultimate zoo

Get the entire family together and build the ultimate zoo with **Zoo Tycoon 2**. Manage and maintain your creation in full 3-D mode in this new version.

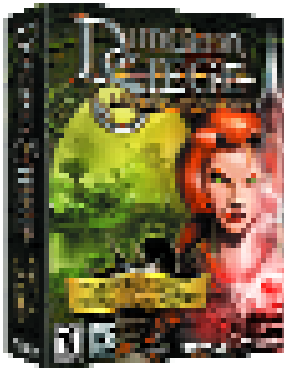
Step into the game as a zookeeper, a guest or a photographer! As a guest you can walk the same paths and observe your zoo creation through the eyes of your visitors. As a zookeeper, interact with the animals while you care, clean and feed them. And as a photographer, you'll receive random photo challenges to snap pictures of animals doing the wild things they do. Then share your photos online with friends and family! **Zoo Tycoon 2** fulfills even more of your animal dreams! Rated E for Everyone. **\$54.95***

Zoo Tycoon has won rave reviews from gamers of all ages and has earned accolades from numerous organizations including: *Child Magazine*, *Children's Software Revue* and the Parents' Choice Foundation. **Zoo Tycoon** was also honoured with the prestigious "Children's Choice Award" from the Canadian Toy Testing Council.

{ quick tip }

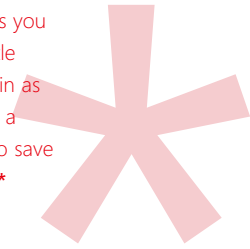
Find more gaming downloads and links Explore the details of game titles for Windows XP before you head to the store. Visit www.microsoft.com/games to find:

■ Free trial versions of games before you buy ■ Screen savers, videos, wallpaper and game reviews ■ Behind-the-scenes footage and much more.



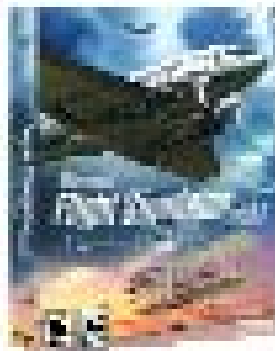
fantasy fans

Lead a heroic quest against evil! **Dungeon Siege** thrusts you into an action-packed 3-D fantasy world where you battle fantastic creatures and uncover unsolved mysteries. Begin as a humble farmer, gain powerful new skills and assemble a team of companions to help you complete your quest to save the Kingdom of Ehb from evil. Rated T for Teen. **\$34.95***



flight aficionados

Pilot your own plane from the comfort of home. Soar with **Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004!** Take flying lessons and learn about key instruments and controls. Then pilot historic aircraft like the Wright brothers' flyer or Charles Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis. Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004 is as real as it gets. Rated E for Everyone. **\$54.95***



{ quick tip

Make sure the new games will work on your computer. Can your PC handle the latest games? The Windows XP Games Advisor analyzes your system to see if it has all the requirements to play. Go to www.windowsgaming.com to test your system.



history buffs

Conquer the world with real-time strategy. With the critically acclaimed **Rise of Nations: Gold Edition**, history can be in your hands. Take on the role of historical leaders to create your own Nubian Empire or the great Mongol oligopoly! Guide powerful armies, build prosperous economies and perform diplomatic missions. 6,000 years are yours for the taking. Includes original game and the Thrones and Patriots Expansion Pack. Rated T for Teen. **\$54.95***

strategy addicts

Enter a world where legends are real. **Age of Mythology: Gold Edition** is a real-time strategy game that lets you play through 12 ancient civilizations and call on mythical creatures to help you conquer the world and gives you the power to unleash the wrath of the gods! Includes original game and The Titans Expansion Pack. Rated T for Teen. **\$54.95***



style&home

winter welcome

If you want to impress your guests with more than just a mouthwatering menu, dress the table with unique accessories you can make easily with your computer.




table runner A runner adds instant drama to any table and elegantly highlights dishes or accessories you choose to place upon it. We ironed computer-designed stars to our blue runner with T-shirt transfer paper. Keep detailing to a minimum so as not to distract from the rest of the presentation.



place cards Avoid musical chairs by arranging the seating before everyone gathers around the table. For a polished look, type names in a clean word-processing font, print each one on white cardstock and place them in a thematic holder like a pine cone or mini picture frame.

gifts Make the evening even more memorable by offering guests a small token of appreciation and good wishes. These beautiful boxes can be printed on sturdy cardstock, folded and then filled with a memento – chocolate truffles are always a hit. Personalize each gift with a printed label.

candle wraps Nothing sets a mood like candlelight. While white pillars and votives are always classic, embellishing them with simple wraps will cast a soft glow and throw festive imagery upon the table. Pick a pattern that co-ordinates with your table décor and print it on transparency paper. (Note: Do not leave candles and wraps unattended.)

napkin rings Even the most practical of items can be reinvented as attractive trimmings. Vellum paper can be easily run through a printer and produces a beautiful effect when layered around a cloth napkin and closed with a hat pin. Of course, napkin rings are only as charming as the item they hold, so keep the bulk white paper in the kitchen and opt for weightier coloured or cloth napkins.

make it yourself!

Visit www.holidayhelpbook.com/style for complete instructions and templates to make these table accessories.

www.holidayhelpbook.com/style

WRITTEN BY HEATHER CAMLOT. CRAFTS BY JULIE STOYKA. STYLED BY LAURA BRANSON. PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES TSE. MILANO CHAIR, FLUID LIVING. LINE DINNER PLATE AND SOUP BOWL. EQ3. MILAN RED WINE GLASS. CABAN. AUDREY FLATWARE. POTTERY BARN. ALL CRAFTS ON THESE PAGES CREATED WITH THE HP PHOTOSMART PRINTER. SEE WWW.HOLIDAYHELPBOOK.COM FOR MORE DETAILS.



for the avid surfer

Logging online and surfing the Internet is very simple with the Wheel Mouse Optical. Features include a scroll wheel, right- and left-hand capabilities and customizable buttons. \$34.95*



for travellers

Travelling over the holidays? Take your mouse on the go. The Wireless Notebook Optical Mouse is convenient, small and easy to carry. \$64.95*



for the design devotee

Set the style for your computer with the unique Optical Mouse by S+arck. A sleekly curved shape tailored to fit naturally in either hand takes this mouse to a new level of art. \$54.95*



pick your mouse personality

for the technology buff

Avoid the tangle of wires with the Wireless Intellimouse Explorer for Bluetooth. This top-of-the-line mouse uses Bluetooth technology to connect to other wireless devices such as keyboards and printers. \$129*

For more information on these great mouse picks visit www.microsoft.com/hardware



for the home office

Jazz up your office space with a mouse that suits your spirit. The Wireless Optical Mouse comes in a variety of colours and includes an ergonomic design, tilt-wheel technology and extended battery life. \$64.95*



for game lovers

Enhance your gaming skills with precise movement in every direction. The Intellimouse Explorer offers tilt-wheel technology that reacts smoothly to your speed. \$64.95*

*Estimated retail price. Resellers' pricing may vary.



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healthy holiday hints

The holidays are supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year, but for many of us they can be full of stress, overindulgence and illness. Take the time to take care of yourself this season – we promise the festive meal will still get cooked and the gifts will still get wrapped.

pamper yourself To lower blood pressure and promote peace and tranquility, indulge in a warm bath. Add a few drops of essential oil, prop a bath pillow behind you, light some scented candles and play your favourite soothing music to transform your bathroom into a meditative retreat.

boost your mood with food Combat what ails you with the right foods – high-potassium snacks like bananas help relieve stress and anxiety, sunflower seeds fight tiredness and irritability, oats calm the nerves.

turn on the light Cutting calories doesn't mean cutting taste. Experiment with new foods and flavourings – try roast turkey with pineapple salsa or mango chutney instead of gravy; offer baked potatoes instead of mashed; substitute applesauce for a third of the butter in cakes and cookies.

do your research Search the Dietitians of Canada site (www.dietitians.ca) to learn about becoming a health-conscious shopper, Health Canada (www.hc-sc.gc.ca) for food guide servings and *Cooking Light* magazine (www.cookinglight.com) for lower-fat versions of your favourite recipes.

stay active Whether you have 15 minutes or an hour to

spare, there is a workout that's right for you. Sign up with a personal trainer (www.myfitnessexpert.com), join a running clinic (www.runningroom.com) or do yoga (www.mydailyyoga.com).

stick to your training As the holidays approach, there seems to be less and less time to hit the gym or follow that aerobics video. Not only does exercise keep you trim during the holidays (or at least keep weight gain to a minimum), it helps relieve stress and anxiety.

write it down Keep a log of your exercise and food intake. By maintaining a journal, you can see where you overindulge, where you cut corners and where you are in terms of your long-term health goals.

care for the kids When the kids take ill, your nerves get frazzled, your time is usurped by travels to the doctor and your own health is on the line. Try family-friendly medical site www.parentcenter.com.

get some sleep Yes, you have a lot to do to make the holidays perfect, but those errands won't get done if you can't stay awake. Sleep deprivation results in a lower immune system and in poor performance, which could translate into more accidents if you're behind the wheel.

web Rx

When it comes to your health, turn to trustworthy sources, make sure any site you visit has a reputable medical advisory board and always consult with your physician about the information you find online.

- Canadian Health Network www.canadian-health-network.ca
- Canadian Paediatric Society www.cps.ca
- Health Canada www.hc-sc.gc.ca
- KidsHealth www.kidshealth.org
- WebMD www.webmd.com



time for the holidays

Sympatico

Ask children why they love the holidays and the response will melt the most miserly heart. You don't need a Gallup poll to know the answers will be delivered with excitement bordering on hysteria, and will include "presents, family fun, presents, sweet treats, and...presents!"

Lucky for them they don't see all the effort that goes into creating the magical memories of the holiday season. For many parents, it's hard work – a labour of love tempered by hours, weeks and months of planning and preparation.

But there is help for the harried – a safer and simpler way to put your computer to work to help handle all the distinctly different holiday experiences. High speed access to the Internet. It can give parents the most precious gift of all – time for the holidays.

Think about all that goes into planning the perfect holiday. Searching and shopping for gifts. Sharing stories and photos with family and friends. Preparing for the afternoons and evenings out and about. Finding appropriate activities to keep the kids occupied and entertained.

How much time is taken up on all this organization? And how frustrating is the chaos and confusion, and the inevitable lineups, as you venture out onto the busy streets and the bustling shopping malls? High speed Internet access today is a fast and simple way to avoid the stress. It really does provide access to some remarkable enhancements to the Internet experience, and to the holiday experience.

With Bell Sympatico™ High Speed Internet service, the help starts from the moment you connect. Your Sympatico.MSN.ca home page has helpful shopping tips and hints for everyone on your list. When you find the perfect present, you can buy it immediately – no lineups required. And this is just the beginning.

Let's talk about family and friends. We all look forward to spending time with them, but in today's world, it's tough to see everyone important to us in such a short period of time, especially when many of them live so far away.

So why not share photos, e-cards and long, memorable messages with everyone close to you? The generous 20MB e-mail message capability lets you send all the news and the images that add to the story. Best of all, the gigantic 2GB inbox means you don't have to worry – other people can connect with you, too. E-Mail Anti-Virus service is included, helping to protect your computer.

High Speed Internet also gives the kids a great place to play. Don't worry – MSN Parental Controls help ensure they stay where they're supposed to. They'll find special activities designed just for them, including an amazing array of holiday activities and entertainment.

This article is not big enough to include everything that's available to you in the exciting and ever-expanding world of Sympatico High Speed access. The possibilities are endless. You can even add additional services like MSN Premium™ Internet Software, with even more safety and security features, fun and useful tools, and advanced customization options.

If you're dreaming of holidays the way they used to be – that is, the way it is now for your children – give yourself Sympatico High Speed Internet service. It's about time!



Making it simple.™

Just in time for the holidays – Sympatico Internet service from Bell at a great low price!
For more details and plenty of good cheer, visit www.bell.ca/promotions

Conditions apply

the foodie

Food lovers enjoy gourmet ingredients and gadgets, so what better way to stoke their culinary cravings than with sensational gift baskets from Canadian epicurean sites like:

- BlackBear Company Store (www.blackbear.net)
- Hickory Farms (www.hickoryfarms.ca)
- Bronte Gourmet Culinary Outfitters (www.brontegourmet.com)
- Lobster Direct (www.lobsterdirect.com)

the gadget lover

If it's a CD player, new computer or digital camera they're dreaming of, visit:

- Future Shop (www.futureshop.ca)
- Best Buy (www.bestbuycanada.ca)
- Vistek (www.vistek.ca)
- CompuSmart (www.compumart.ca)

special delivery

find holiday gifts for the hard-to-shop-for person



the gardener

For those with a true green thumb, gardening doesn't stop in the winter. Find tools, seeds, plants and garden paraphernalia at:

- Lee Valley Tools (www.leevalleytools.com)
- Canadian Tire (www.canadiantire.ca)
- Stokes Seeds (www.stokeseeds.com)
- Richters Herb Specialists (www.richters.com)

the decorator

Whether it's a cosy throw, seasonal accessories or a comfy chair you're looking for, a variety of online companies can help. Most sites showcase large photos, dimensions and fabric samples. Satisfy those decorating desires at:

- Home Depot (www.homedepot.ca)
- Ikea (www.ikea.ca) ■ Sears (www.sears.ca)
- Urbane (www.urbane.ca)



the discerning soul

When you just can't figure out what to get someone, purchase a basketful of treats. Zoom right into the one thing you know they love like 1950s baseball memorabilia or opt for a gift card from a favourite store that can be used to shop directly on the site. Fulfil those unique or specific requests on:

- Hedonics (www.hedonics.com)
- eBay (www.ebay.ca) ■ Basket Tailor (www.baskettailor.com)
- Nutcracker Sweet Gifts (www.nutcrackersweet.com)

WRITTEN BY ANJALI KAPOOR. PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHUN SASABUCHI. SPOONS: BRONTE GOURMET. GLASSES: IKEA.

7 ways to save time

book a babysitter

Find a babysitter and head to your holiday office party worry-free. Websites like CanadianSitter.ca (www.canadiansitter.ca) and The Original Babysitting Connection (www.babysittingconnection.com) match parents with qualified students across the country. Be sure to ask a sitter for references as well as a list of experience and completed professional courses, like those offered by the Canadian Red Cross or St. John Ambulance.

1

print holiday card labels

Instead of painstakingly addressing every Christmas card envelope by hand, type your family and friends' addresses into a label document in Word. Don't forget to save a copy so you can update and use it next year. Printing personalized return address labels is also a great time saver. For holiday label templates and instructions, visit www.holidayhelpbook.com/planning

2

find festive food ideas

Plan your holiday menu, from appetizers to desserts, by researching recipes, ordering ingredients and getting prepped with these handy sites:

- Reader's Digest Canada (www.readersdigest.ca/food/metric.html), for quick recipe conversions.
- Butterball (www.butterball.com), for a step-by-step guide to roasting a turkey.
- Epicurious (www.epicurious.com), to search for and save delectable recipes.
- Small Potatoes Urban Delivery (www.spud.ca), for organic produce in British Columbia or search the web for other grocery delivery services in your city.

3

look up address information

Mailing out some last-minute cards? Search for Canadian residential or business phone numbers and addresses at Canada411 (www.canada411.ca). Know the address? Cut down on the time spent flipping through those mammoth postal code books by visiting Canada Post online (www.canadapost.ca) and clicking on Find a Postal Code.

4



research a winter getaway

Plan your family vacation by booking quickly and easily on the Internet. Sites such as Expedia.ca (www.expedia.ca) and Travelocity.ca (www.travelocity.ca) will help you find last-minute vacation packages, book car rentals and reserve flights. If you'd like to wake up on those crisp holiday mornings in a cosy cabin by the ski hill, head to resort sites like Mont Tremblant (www.tremblant.ca) and Skican (www.skican.com). If sun and sand are more your style, rent a villa by doing research on SouthNest (www.southnest.ca), Villas of Distinction (www.villasofdistinction.com) or International Vacation Properties (www.ivponline.com).



6

bank and budget online

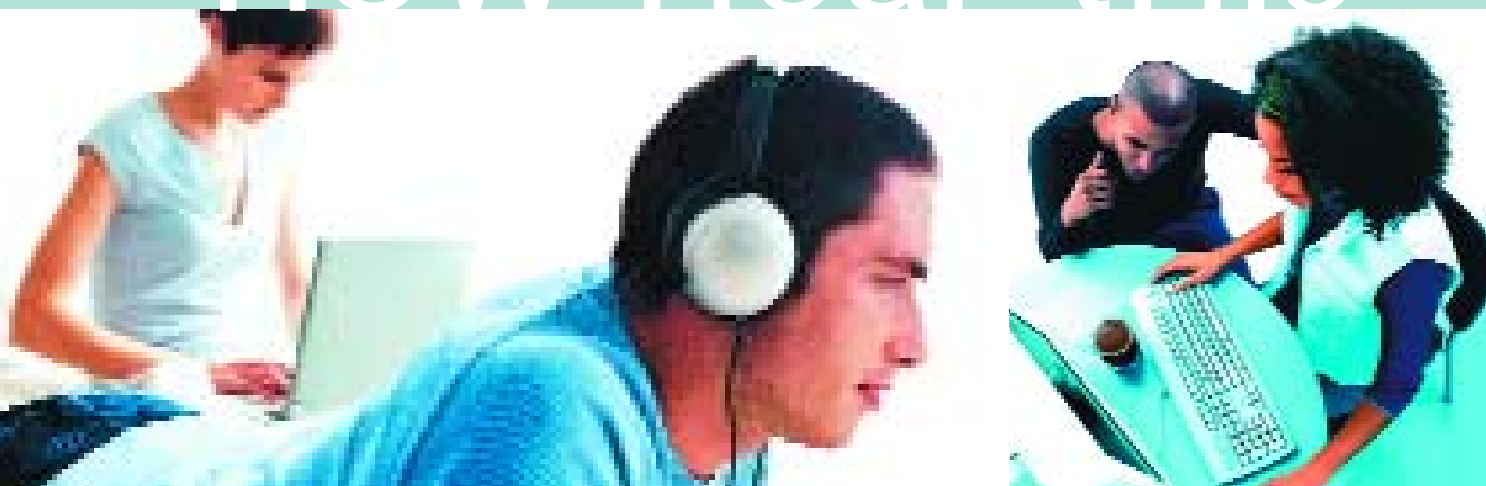
Instead of waiting around at the bank or on the phone, register your banking information on the Internet. A program like Microsoft Money 2005 will walk you through inputting your bank account information and registering your bills. You can even create a holiday budget to keep you on track with your seasonal spending.

7

prepare a holiday schedule or checklist

Instead of scrambling to complete shopping lists or household chores, chart all your tasks in one place and check them off as you go. Print a monthly calendar and to-do list, or use MSN Calendar to keep you organized by entering all of your family's activities and events and then sharing those dates with family and friends through e-mail.

now hear this



Sympatico

Music has a powerful place in our lives, and that's never more obvious than during the holiday season. It would be hard to imagine this time of year without our favourite seasonal songs. This holiday season, why not give the gift of music?

Until recently, you had two choices to find the music you like, or like to give: wait in line at the record store, or turn on the radio and hope for the best. But Bell Sympatico has changed all that.

Are you looking for hot new hip hop tracks to give as gifts for the teens on your list? Visit www.SympaticoMusicStore.ca to find out how The Sympatico™ Music Store can help you find exactly what they want. It's offered in collaboration with Puretracks™ music service, Canada's leading digital download music service, so there's sure to be something for every taste you'd like to tantalize (including your own!). You can search by artist, title and genre.

Buying at The Sympatico™ Music Store is legal and is a safer way to download music online. And the days of buying a whole album just to get a specific song are long gone. At The Sympatico™ Music Store, you can download a single song from a wide variety of artists, or a whole album if you choose. The prices are very attractive, starting at \$9.99 an album and \$0.99 a song. Sympatico™ Internet access customers can also receive additional discounts.

You can choose to download the tracks yourself, and burn them to a CD, or you can buy a virtual gift certificate to let the music fans on your list pick their own favourites. They can even set up an individual Wishlist to let you know exactly what they're hoping for. Further, the Explicit Content Filter helps parents control what's coming into the house.

There's even more that your computer can do to enhance the holidays, thanks to the partnership with Musicmatch™. Musicmatch™ is a sophisticated but easy-to-use player for your digital music. You can play tunes right from your desktop, or better yet, use a simple media adapter (available from electronics stores) that lets you transform your home stereo into a 21st-century jukebox!

Are you hosting a holiday party and need music to set the mood? Subscribing to premium MusicMatch™ Radio brings personalized, fully customizable, "radio stations" designed just for you! You can pick a "station" by artist or style, including several dedicated to holiday hits and classics. You can even design your very own station that matches music to the styles and artists you like most – all delivered commercial-free in high quality sound!

Whether it's just you and the family sharing time together, or you're hosting a holiday party, it's never been easier to have your home filled with the sounds of the season.



Making it simple.™

For more details or to subscribe visit www.musicmatch.ca

*Other conditions apply. Sympatico is a trademark of Bell Canada. MusicMatch is a trademark of MusicMatch, Inc. Puretracks is a trademark of Moontaxi Media Inc.



get groovin'

hook up your computer for holiday music

There's nothing better to set the mood at a party than a soothing soundtrack or an upbeat mix – and your computer can be the perfect entertainment centre. Here's how to keep the music flowing at this year's swinging bash.

listen to non-stop radio at any time

Tap in to an Internet radio station from anywhere in the world. Whether you want salsa or hip hop, jazz or soft rock, these stations play non-stop, commercial-free music through free players like Windows Media Player 9 (www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia) or Musicmatch (www.musicmatch.ca). Try sites like Live365.com (www.live365.com) or Moontaxi (www.moontaxi.com) for free and pay-per-month access to dozens of musical genres.

download music

If you favour only a few songs from an album, download individual tracks instead of buying the entire CD. Canada has several new digital music services that allow you to download music. The process is easy – browse or search for your favourite artist, listen to the sample track, then purchase the song. Prices range from \$0.99 to \$1.50 per song, and accounts can be settled online by credit card. Check out Puretracks (www.puretracks.com), Napster (www.napster.ca) or The Sympatico Music Store (www.sympaticomusicstore.ca) for access to a wide range of music and artists. Once you have downloaded your favourite seasonal songs, assemble them in a playlist. Playlists allow you to customize the music to the mood – start with slower music for appetizers and spice up the beat with Cuban tunes, for example, as the evening progresses.

it's a wrap

Create personalized CD labels and covers. Printable CD labels and cover inserts are available at your local office supply store. Or, wrap up the CDs with innovative paper holders, such as corrugated cardboard or cardstock. Affix with some ribbon and a gift tag, and you have a distinctive gift.



make a music mix

Burning a CD – using a computer to copy music from the hard drive to a recordable disc – is a great way to take your favourite songs with you. All you need is a CD-ROM drive and burner, which may already be installed in your computer, and a CD-burning program. "I burn CDs for my car all the time because I can pick and choose the bands, the songs and the song order," explains Lisa Mazzitelli, a Grade 6 schoolteacher and mother of two in Orangeville, Ont. This season, put all your beloved holiday songs on one CD or burn a couple of party mixes to keep by your stereo for late-night dancing. For step-by-step CD-burning instructions, go to www.holidayhelpbook.com/music

www.holidayhelpbook.com/music

crafty ideas

If you're hoping to present family and friends with truly unique and memorable gifts this season, make them by hand. All you need are a few craft supplies, some specialty paper and a colour printer.

wrapping paper

Add a personal touch to small gifts by designing your own paper on your computer. Experiment with black text and images on silver or gold paper or repeat a colourful Clip Art illustration all over the page.



recipe containers

Layer dry ingredients from a traditional holiday recipe, like Grandma's shortbread, in a vibrant box or tin. Print the directions on a recipe card and affix it to the front of the container. Then attach simple accessories like cookie cutters or a wooden spoon for a decorative touch.



colourful coasters

Place mugs of hot apple cider on fun and funky coasters featuring holiday-themed Clip Art, photos or drawings. Print images in colour, trim around the edges, laminate or coat them to protect from spills and add a cork bottom.



wine labels and cards

Embellish a bottle of homemade wine, gourmet olive oil or your famous preserves with snappy, personalized labels. Play with colours and fonts to suit the gift and style, then print the text onto label sheets and loop some ribbon through a small, matching tag.



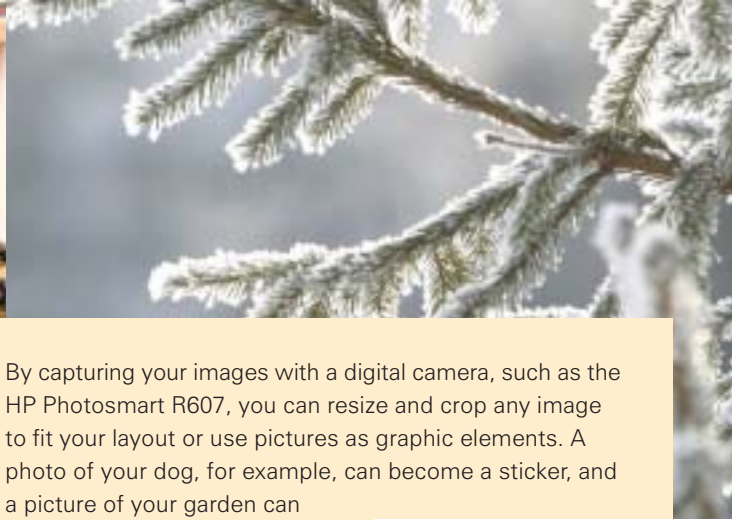
stained glass art

Take some vibrant photographs or hand-drawn designs and turn them into fantastic works of art. Print the image onto transparency paper twice to ensure the best colour saturation. Frame it and hang it in the window to catch the sun or sparkling holiday lights.



make it yourself!

Visit www.holidayhelpbook.com/projects for instructions and templates to make these and other great holiday crafts.



The Gift of Sharing

Personalized gifts always go over well and digital technology makes crafting a breeze this holiday season. Capture images at a party and print them out instantly to send home with guests; scan a scenic photo and print it on iron-on transfer paper to make a throw pillow; – the options for creativity are endless. In addition to the helpful ideas and templates you can find on: www.hp.ca/homefun, the following ideas will help you make a lasting impression on family and friends this year.

By capturing your images with a digital camera, such as the HP Photosmart R607, you can resize and crop any image to fit your layout or use pictures as graphic elements. A photo of your dog, for example, can become a sticker, and a picture of your garden can become the background for a whole page in your scrapbook.



With an all-in-one, such as the HP Photosmart 2710, you can scan, copy, and print as many items as you need. Scan old stacks of photos into digital format. You'll save room in your scrapbooking workspace too. Ensuring your projects remain bright and beautiful for years to come is vital. HP Premium Plus Photo Paper resists fading so your memories will be preserved for generations.



Print an HP Holiday Tree



If you don't have room for a full-size tree or if you are traveling for the holidays, you can still enjoy the look of a holiday pine tree. At www.hp.ca/holidaytree, follow an easy step-by-step guide to download the holiday tree, print it out,

organize it, mount it on the nearest wall, and then decorate it with pictures of friends and family. And don't forget to save it for next year!

Digital Party Chic

Let's face it: there are a lot of parties at this time of year and you want yours remembered. With a digital camera and photo printer, such as the HP Photosmart R607 digital camera and HP Photosmart 8450 photo printer, create personalized invitations, photo thank you cards and unique place settings.

There is no limit to what you can do. All you need is the right equipment and a little imagination.

The Digital Scrapbook

Scrapbooking has been a popular pastime for generations. Now, technology has made it easier.



gifts that click

Microsoft®

wrap up one of these picks for the PC



never ask for directions again

Get rid of your big unwieldy maps. Type in your starting point and your destinations and Streets & Trips 2005 will produce a map and detailed driving directions. You can even find restaurants and attractions along the way! Use it for road trips, to map out carpool routes or to enclose with invitations to your next party. \$39.99* (After \$15 mail-in rebate)



type away on a time-saving keyboard

Instantly open your programs by pressing one-touch buttons that are right on your keyboard. Access to your favourite music, video clips, websites and e-mail is at your fingertips with Digital Media Pro keyboard. Zoom in and out of web pages, or edit and view your digital photos quickly with the new zoom slider lever.

PC and Mac compatible. \$44.95*



track your spending

If sticking to a budget is one of your New Year's resolutions, get ready to save with Money 2005. Input all your accounts and bills in one central location. Consolidate your debt and track your spending with a helpful pie graph. \$29.95* (After \$15 mail-in rebate)



stay connected on the move

Never miss another appointment again! Sync your calendar and receive reminders from Outlook®, get personal messages and obtain up-to-the-minute news headlines, weather reports, stock quotes, sports and horoscope information. Various models range from **\$199.99***.

The PC with entertainment that tunes into you!

Put all your home entertainment in one central location. With a single remote, the Media Center PC allows you to easily watch TV, play movies and music, look at photo slide shows, listen to the radio and access e-mail. For more information visit www.microsoft.ca/home/mediacenter



fix photos fast

The new Digital Image Pro 10 makes working with digital photos easy and fun. Its powerful editing tools let you manage colours, fix red-eye and get creative with filters, effects and templates for crafts like cards and calendars. No digital camera owner should go without! **\$74.95*** (After \$60 mail-in rebate)



get organized!

Get your computer to help around the house! Organize your household with templates and checklists for all your chores using Works Suite 2005. Keep track of your family (and pet!) medical records, print signs for your garage sale and organize your address book. Six programs in one box = value! **\$109.95*** (After \$40 mail-in rebate)

Looking for more gift ideas from Microsoft? Check out pages 10, 14, 15 and 18.



***win**

a fabulous home
entertainment package
worth over **\$12,000!***

Enter the Holiday Helpbook Mega Contest!

www.holidayhelpbook.com

See the website for full contest rules and details.

Happy Holidays from



*No purchase necessary. Contest open to residents of Canada (excluding Quebec) who have reached the age of majority in his or her province of residence. The contest runs from November 1, 2004 to January 2, 2005.