

Pre-shopping checklist, complements of best selling author Elaine St. James:

- Do I need it?
- How many do I already have?
- If I have more than one, why will this one be necessary? What's different about it?
- How much will I use it?
- How long will it last?
- Am I able to clean, repair and maintain it myself?
- Am I willing to?
- If not, how much will it cost to have someone else maintain it?
- Will I need to insure it?
- Do I have a place to store it?
- Are the resources that went into it renewable or non-renewable?
- What will happen to it when I have lost interest in it?
- Will someone else be able to use it?
- Will it end up in the landfill?
- Can I borrow one from a friend or family member?
- Is there anything I already own that I could substitute for it?
- Can I get along without it?
- What's the worst that will happen if I don't buy this now?
- Can I wait a month for it? Six months? Even longer?

With electronics (especially for kids):

- Is it educational?
- Does it add anything of quality to their lives?
- Will it isolate them from family and friends?
- Do they really need it?
- Can we acquire it without going into debt?