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# THE HOLIDAY GIFT SHOP OPERATIONS MANUAL

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DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR MAKING YOUR EVENT A SUCCESS





## **YOU WILL NEED:**

- ☐ 4 or 5 eight-foot-long folding tables or the equivalent
- ☐ A lockable room in the school where you can display the merchandise on the tables and comfortably accommodate a number of children at one time
- ☐ 3 or 4 volunteers who are willing to spend parts of three days setting up and running the shop

## **IF YOU ARE MISSING ANY OF THE ABOVE:**

Stop! Close this booklet and call us at 1-800-665-5656 to cancel your event! Seriously, the top three items are indispensable. If you don't have enough tables, you will be unable to properly display the hundreds of different items that you will be selling. Items that are grouped too closely together will mean that the children will be climbing on each other to get a better view. Too small a room will only compound the problem, while setting up in a large open area such as a hallway would mean that you either have to put everything away between event times or take your chances that nothing will be disturbed or stolen.

Absolutely the most important need is for reliable volunteers. With sufficient help the program will be a breeze and your volunteers will only remember how much their young customers enjoyed themselves. However, if you end up with people dropping out at the last minute, the remaining volunteers will be forced to do too much and what could have been a great experience will be reduced to an unwelcome burden.

We at Fun Services tell you these things not to discourage you, but to present an accurate picture of what you can expect when running the Holiday Gift Shop. We do not like to be on the receiving end of irate phone calls. We are doing everything we can think of to ensure that our follow-up call to you after the event is a pleasurable experience for both of us. Please remember that we are in this together. If you do poorly so does Fun Services. We are here to assist you. Please don't hesitate to call. That having been said, on to the program!

# PROMOTION

Along with your Holiday Gift Shop shipment, you will be receiving supplies to help publicize the upcoming event. These supplies will include the following:

- 1. THE PROMOTION GUIDE** - This booklet suggests how to best bring the event to everyone's attention and even provides sample pre-printed marketing material and letters you can use.
- 2. GIFT PLANNER ENVELOPES** - These envelopes are sent home with each child. They help the child prepare for their shopping trip to the Holiday Gift Shop. With an emphasis on budgeting and saving, these children will be better prepared for the holidays than many adults.
- 3. COLOUR FLYERS AND REMINDER STICKERS** - The flyer explains the program to the children's parents or guardians. The back is blank so you can print your particular school's event dates and times on the flyer by running them through a photocopier. The reminder sticker can be placed on a student's bag or clothing as a 1st reminder a day or 2 before the shop's opening.

The most successful shops are generally ones that have been running for several consecutive years. The organizers have had the benefit of "word of mouth" advertising, and the children look forward to their annual Holiday Gift Shop. If this is your first year, you can still have a terrific response, but you will have to put in a little extra effort. As with any new idea, some people will be skeptical, so it is especially important that everyone (parents, teachers, children, etc.) be told as much as possible about the program. Reviewing the suggestions in the Promotion Guide will help, so please take the time to go through well in advance of your shop.

## YOUR HOLIDAY GIFT SHOP SHIPMENT

You need to coordinate with us regarding the arrival date of your Holiday Gift Shop shipment. Normally we try to have your shipment delivered two weeks before your event. Keep this in mind when planning your operational timings or promotional calendar. Promotional materials you receive from us can only be used once your shipment arrives so it is important that you get a head start a few weeks earlier by following the suggestions in the "Promotional Guide" you were sent.

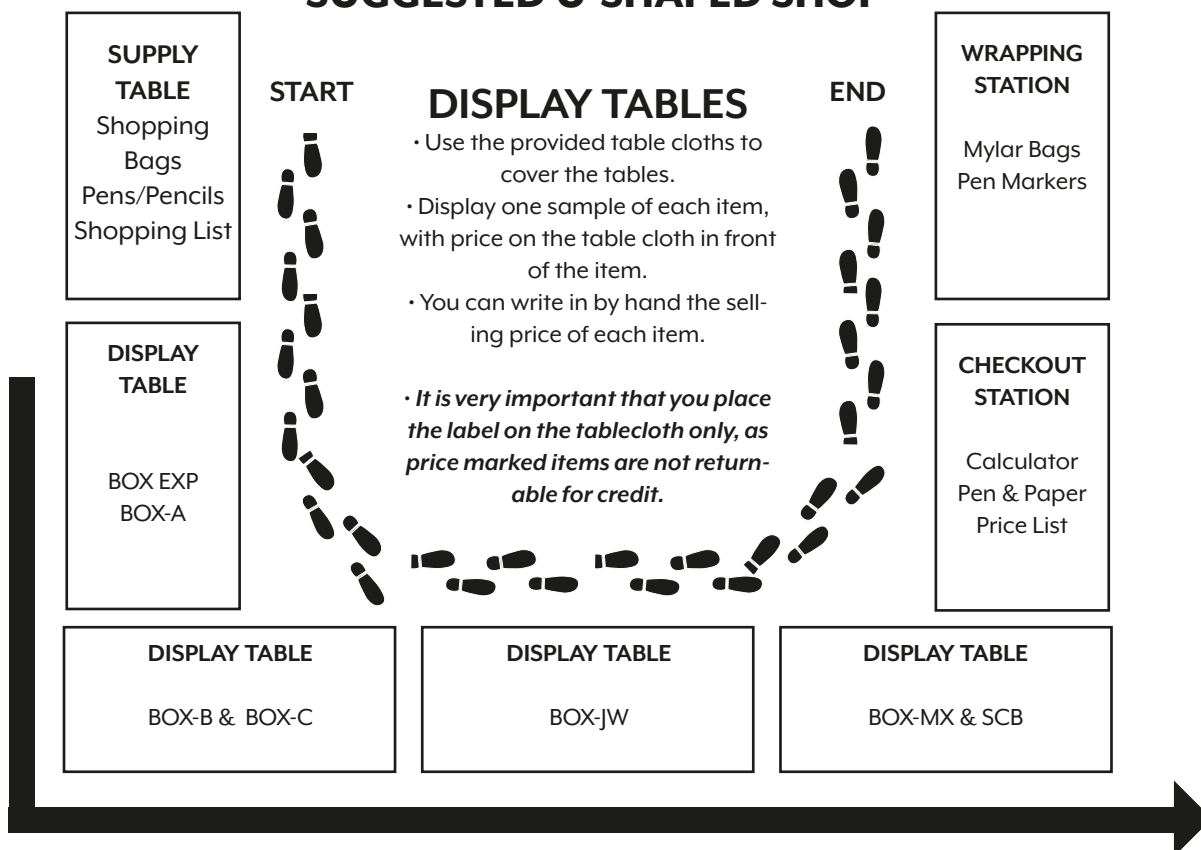
## PREPARING THE SHOP

The easiest way to set up your shop requires that you have the exclusive use of a room for 2-4 consecutive days. If that isn't possible please adapt these plans to your own situation.

## STEP 1: ROOM AND TABLES

Position your tables so that you can create a counter between your volunteers and the children, just like you would see in any jewelry store. This will allow you to wait on the customers without being overwhelmed. Make sure to leave enough room behind the tables so you can move freely and have space to store your extra stock. After the tables are in place cover them with the HGS tablecloths.

## SUGGESTED U-SHAPED SHOP



Arrange items according to value and the box they were shipped in. Start with the most expensive items (EXP) and end with the inexpensive items (STAR ITEMS) .

**PLACE EXTRA STOCK HERE (AND/OR UNDERNEATH YOUR DISPLAY TABLES)**

## STEP 2: INVENTORY

Although Fun Services makes every effort to ensure that your merchandise is packed correctly, mistakes sometimes occur so it is recommended that you check your order against the packing lists. Each carton will be clearly labeled with a code such as Box A-S, Box B-S, Box C-S, Box JW-S, etc. Every carton will have a packing list inside on top of the merchandise. This list should correspond exactly to the contents of that box. Simply open the box, check items inside against the list and set aside. If you run across a broken item simply count it as being there and return it when the event is over.

Sometimes a large school will be shipped 2 identical cartons (2 each of Box MX-M for instance) to give you more product to sell. In that case you would repeat the check-in procedure for the second box since it will have its own packing list. Once you have gone through every box, gather up all of the packing lists and compare them to your **Master Invoice**. This document will list every pre-pack box that you were shipped and will give you a complete list of every item in the program and its total quantity regardless of which box or boxes they were packed in.

For example, let's say that you received a total of 3 boxes, one Box JW-L, and two Box JW-S. Box JW-L had 3 each of the "Virtue Necklace" and each Box JW-S had 1 each of the "Virtue Necklace". The Master Invoice will indicate that you received one Box JW-L and two Box JW-S's. It will also list the items like this:

ITEM #	ITEM DESCRIPTION	TOTAL ITEMS RECEIVED	TOTAL ITEMS RETURNED	TOTAL ITEMS SOLD	GROUP COST EACH ITEM	TOTAL COST ITEMS SOLD	SUGGESTED RETAIL		
							10% PROFIT	15% PROFIT	20% PROFIT
12345	Virtue Necklace	5			2.40		2.60	2.80	2.90

As you can see, the Master list shows 5 Virtue Necklaces because it added the amount in the JW-L box to the items in the two JW-S boxes received. Once you have matched your individual box packing lists to this **Master Invoice** you may throw them away if you wish. All the information you need is on this one document. (Guard it with your life!) When the shop ends all your calculations will be done on this paperwork, but we will get back to that in a few minutes.

### STEP 3: DISPLAYING THE MERCHANDISE

At this point you should have your tables in place with tablecloths on, and the boxes of your merchandise. Generally speaking, the items are packed with the most expensive items in Box A, and with the items descending in cost through B, C, D, etc. Jewelry is an exception with all items grouped together in one pre-packed box, usually labeled JW-L or JW-S. We strongly suggest that you follow this same format in setting up your display tables to help the children find gifts in their price range. This will also make it easier for you do an inventory at the end of your shop when you are preparing to return your overstock.

Start at your first table with the items from Box A. Place only one of each item on the table arranging them in an attractive fashion. When an item is available in more than one colour or style then one of each should be displayed. All remaining stock should be placed behind the tables where only the volunteers can select items as they are purchased. While this may seem overly controlled, the first wave of 20-30 excited young shoppers will convince you it's the way to go. Another important point to remember is to remove the display items from their boxes. Many items are much nicer than they appear on the box pictures. Displaying both the empty box and the product side by side gives the customer a really good look and minimizes handling which may result in breakage. Finally, once you are happy with your display, stick the **Product Description Label** (A complete set will be enclosed with your Master Invoice) on the tablecloth next to the corresponding gift and write in your sale price for the item in the space provided on the label.

***It is very important that you place the label on the tablecloth only,  
as price marked items are not returnable for credit.***

Repeat the above procedure for boxes B, C, D, etc. and then set up a section for your jewelry in the same way. As you move to the less expensive items many of them will be packed a dozen or more in a display box. For example the "Small Painted Wood Box" comes packed in a display tray of 12. In this case you would set out the whole tray of 12 since the display tray will make the item more attractive.

The finished shop should now be ready for the first eager customer. Upon entering the room they can be directed to gifts in their price range. A sample of every item for sale is on display and price marked so they can freely shop and compare without assistance, leaving your volunteers available to deal with those that have made their decisions.

## THE HOLIDAY GIFT SHOP SALE DAYS

If you have done a good job planning and setting up your room layout, the sale itself should be a lot of fun! The only operational matter you have to decide on is how to collect payment for the gifts. One way is to set up a checkout counter like a grocery store. This way you can assign a volunteer who is fast on the calculator and have all your cash in one place.

To assist the checkout person the other volunteers could list a child's purchases on a sheet of paper that would be given to the cashier. We have provided a Sales Tally List on the next page which can be used to list down a child's purchases. Simply make photocopies and distribute them as the students enter the shop.

There are many ways to handle this issue but whatever you decide make sure that everyone knows the system so things will go smoothly.

***This is Important: Please schedule your shoppers so that the youngest children are the first to visit the Holiday Gift Shop!***

Because of their age, the younger children will benefit the most from this program. Older children are more likely to be able to shop on their own in town, but for the little ones this shop will be their only opportunity to shop a like grown up. Letting them go first will give them the best selection and the older kids will still have many items to choose from.

We also recommend that you run your shop over 2 days. This will allow for those shoppers who, in spite of your intense advertising campaign, forgot to bring their money. It will also allow them to pick up those gifts they still might need after thinking about it.



# SALES TALLY

FOR: \_\_\_\_\_  
(STUDENT'S NAME)

GIFT #1 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #2 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #3 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #4 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #5 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #6 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #7 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #8 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #9 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #10 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #11 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #12 \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**CASHIER:** Enclose this slip with student's merchandise as a cash receipt



# SALES TALLY

FOR: \_\_\_\_\_  
(STUDENT'S NAME)

GIFT #1 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #2 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #3 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #4 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #5 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #6 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #7 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #8 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #9 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #10 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #11 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #12 \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**CASHIER:** Enclose this slip with student's merchandise as a cash receipt



# SALES TALLY

FOR: \_\_\_\_\_  
(STUDENT'S NAME)

GIFT #1 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #2 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #3 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #4 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #5 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #6 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #7 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #8 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #9 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #10 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #11 \_\_\_\_\_

GIFT #12 \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**CASHIER:** Enclose this slip with student's merchandise as a cash receipt



## RE-ORDERS

You have been shipped an assortment of merchandise to provide your shop with a large selection of items. The decision as to how many total dollars of product to ship you was based on your last year's sales (if available) or by comparing your school to one of last year's customers with a similar location, enrollment, etc. Ideally, we expect you to sell all but 20% of the merchandise sent, but we ship you 25% more than we expect your total sales to be. In a perfect world you have exactly the right number of every item so that everyone could buy the gift they want, but unfortunately, we are faced with making educated guesses to meet your needs.

I'm sure everyone has experienced the frustration of shopping for a popular new toy just advertised on TV. Sometimes we get lucky, but more often that not we pick another suitable gift which is appreciated just as much. Please keep this in mind as your shop progresses. You may run out of some gifts but you will still have a pretty good selection, so don't let it bother you. For those rare instances where you absolutely must have more of an item, you will be covered, but with certain restrictions. Fun Services will ship you re-orders with the following conditions:

1. Re-ordered items are not on consignment. You may not return them or any of the original items for credit. (We assume that you would not re-order an item unless the original stock was sold out.)
2. Fun Services will pay for our regular service shipping charges. Quicker methods of transportation are the sole cost of the customer. Please note that unless you live in a major metropolitan city Next Day Service is unavailable at any cost. Two day service is the norm for rural Canada, even though you pay Overnight rates. We will be more than happy to let you know the cost of shipping your re-order via these quicker services and you can then decide what you'd like to do.

We regret that this is the best we can do, but the cost of Overnight and 2nd Day Service leaves us no choice. Remember, the one way around this is to hold your shop early enough so that we can ship your re-order by our regular service. In any case please keep these restrictions in mind when you start to make promises to your young customers.

## CLOSING THE SHOP

Here's where having followed our planning suggestions will really pay off! You will need your **Master Invoice** and some of the boxes you received your merchandise in. If you set up your display based on the value of the items, you can now start packing up your returns by starting at the table with the most expensive items and following the tables around the room. The Master Invoice also lists the items in descending value, so they will be easy to find when listing your returns.

Select a box and carefully pack your returns into it to minimize breakage in transit. As you place the items in the box, list the total number of each item you are returning (pack and list the damaged items also) on the Master Invoice. Continue the process until the box is **completely filled** and then start a new box. As a general rule, pack heavy items on the bottom, leave as few gaps between items as possible and fill the box completely. This will keep things from getting crushed or shifting around which is the usual cause of breakage. You may find this hard to believe, but we have seen boxes come back where the person packing them must have literally swept the merchandise off the table into the box with their arm. Needless to say, the contents were largely unusable when we received them. Please pack with the same care that you would expect from us.

**Before you close the last box, put a copy of the Master Invoice inside and seal the box.** Make sure that you do this! We cannot process your returns if we do not have your Master Invoice.

Fill out a return address label attached to the for each of the boxes that you are returning, and stick one on the top of each returning box. They are attached to the neon green paper that came with the envelope that included your Master Invoice. The Neon Green sheet is name the Holiday Gift Shop Merchandise Return Form. Please follow the instructions for returning unsold merchandise. Don't forget to tell someone in the office that UPS is coming to pick up the cartons, and make sure the office knows where to find them.

Finally, with your Merchandise Return Form in hand, call Fun Services at **1-800-665-5656** and request a pickup. You will be given serial numbers that you will need to write down on the form. We will also give you a reference number and instruct UPS to pick up your boxes the next day. **You must call us to arrange shipment, as UPS will demand payment for freight charges unless the return request comes from our office.**

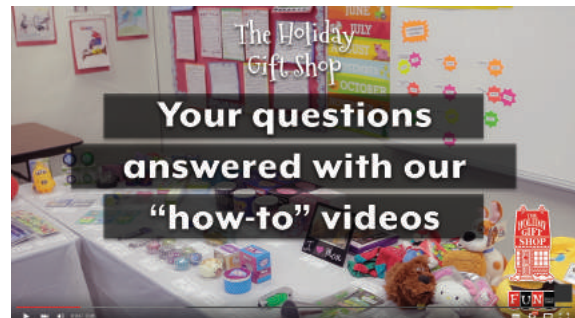
The final step to wind up your shop is to do the calculations on your Master Invoice to figure your bill. **To make things simpler, you can call us with your Master Invoice and our computer will tally the totals for you.** Once the total bill is determined, place a copy of the Master Invoice and your cheque (**PAYABLE TO FUN SERVICES**) in the pre-posted envelope provided and put it in the mail. If the cheque will be sent using your own postage and envelope please make sure to contact us first and ask for our current address.

You should still have one copy of the Master Invoice for your files. Make sure to include this with your cheque in the pre-posted envelope we provided. All payments should be in the mail no later than 5 days after the end of your shop or before your school closes for the Christmas Break.

**Remember, to avoid being billed for the return freight costs or late payment interest costs, you must have completed everything within 5 days of the end of your shop or before your school closes for Christmas!**

## HOW-TO VIDEO SERIES

We now have a complete, easy to follow “how-to” video series to guide you through the process of setting up your shop! All of the material in this Operations Manual is covered, as well as instructions for using our Holiday Gift Shop Point of Sale system if your school opted to receive one. Visit [theholidaygiftshop.ca/how-to-videos](http://theholidaygiftshop.ca/how-to-videos).







Remember, we're here to assist you every step of the way! Please don't hesitate to call if we can be of help.

FOR ASSISTANCE CALL:  
**FUN SERVICES CANADA**



**1-800-665-5656**  
**8:30 – 4:30 PM PST**

Fun Services is on Pacific Coast time so remember, if you are calling from the East (e.g. Toronto), your 12:00 Noon is our 9:00 AM.