

Savings for Teachers

Arts, Crafts, and School Supplies:



A.C. Moore: Teachers who sign up for the A.C. Moore discount program qualify for 15 percent off every purchase they make.



Academic Superstore: Academic Superstore offers discounts on school supplies, computers and tablets, electronic accessories, and more.



Ben Franklin Crafts and Frames: Ben Franklin Crafts and Frames offers a flat 15 percent discount on all purchases made by teachers, educators, and schools.



Classroom Direct: Classroom Direct offers free shipping on orders of \$49 or more, along with special discounts on classroom and art supplies.



Crayola: Crayola's Gold Star Teacher's Program offers special discounts and savings opportunities for teachers.



Discount School Supply: Discount School Supply offers myriad discounts for educators who buy online. Right now, you get free shipping for orders of \$99 or more, a low price guarantee, and rotating discounts that change every month.



FedEx Office: My FedEx Rewards makes it easy to earn gift cards good for shipping and in-store purchases. Currently, you can earn a \$10 Amazon gift card after you complete 10 shipments with FedEx Office.



Hobby Lobby: Hobby Lobby offers a flat 10 percent discount to schools. To qualify, however, you need to pay with a school check or credit card.



InkJets.com: InkJets.com offers drastically discounted ink and toner for school and home printers. Right now, teachers can save 15 percent or more along with free shipping.

JOANN

JoAnn Fabric: JoAnn Fabric offers a special rewards program specifically for teachers who need to save on supplies. Currently, this program lets teachers earn 15 percent off every purchase, every single day. You do need to sign up and create an account to qualify.



Lakeshore Learning Teacher's Club: Lakeshore Learning offers monthly discounts for teachers along with a flat 15 percent discount for participants.



Michaels: Michaels offers teachers and other educators an ongoing discount for each purchase they make. Right now, you'll save a flat 15 percent on all Michael's purchases after you create an account. This discount is good for in-store purchases only, however.



Office Depot and Office Max: Office Depot and Office Max tend to offer a special sale for educators right before fall school season. Last year's Teacher Appreciation Days came with a 25 percent discount on all purchases, along with special sales geared at educators. Make sure to check the timeline for this year's Teacher Appreciation Days before you shop.

Party City

Party City: Party City offers an organizational discount good for educators and schools. Currently, the discount is for 10 percent of all purchases made in-store.



Pencils.com: Save 10 percent off your entire purchase with their educator discount program.

STAPLES

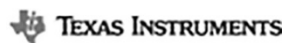
Staples: Staples Teacher Rewards offers special discounts and rewards dollars for money spent in the store or online. Educators can also qualify for free shipping on Staples.com orders. Currently, teachers earn 5% back on all purchases and 10% back on teaching and art supplies.



Teacher Store at Scholastic: The Teacher Store at Scholastic offers special discounts on books and other classroom supplies.



Teacher Storehouse: Get special discounts, free shipping, and loyalty rewards for purchases made online.



Texas Instruments: Texas Instruments offers discounts on calculators and other supplies commonly used in math and science classrooms. As they note, however, "the Pre-service Teacher Discount Program is available only to pre-service and pre-credentialed students who plan to teach math or science in the United States and Canada."



The Container Store: The Container Store offers an innovative discount program for teachers angling to organize their classrooms. You need to sign up for an account and have a valid school ID to qualify for this program and its exclusive discounts.



Western Digital Store: Teachers and school administrators get a 20 percent discount when creating an account with a valid school email.

Books:



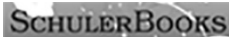
Barnes & Noble: Join Barnes & Noble Educators Club to get 20 percent off purchases for classroom use, along with a 25 percent discount on special Teacher Appreciation Days.



Book Warehouse: Book Warehouse offers an educators club for teachers, home-schoolers, librarians, and professors. Currently, those who join get a flat 15 percent discount on all purchases.



Half Price Books: Teachers get a year-round 10 percent discount on all Half Price Books purchases.



Schuler Books & Music: This independent book store offers a flat 20 percent discount for all k-12 teachers and educators..



Technology & Computers:



Adobe: Adobe offers special discounts for faculty and staff at public or private k-12 schools, along with colleges and universities.



Apple Store: Teachers and educators can qualify for special discounts on Apple products purchased in-store or online. These discounts are good for Apple computers, software, and select third party products.



Bose: Bose offers up to 15 percent off qualifying products for teachers, librarians, and other school faculty.



HP: Sign up for their educator discount program to get up to 10 percent off.



JourneyED.com: Get special discounts on supplies that fall within graphic arts and design, educational tools, computer software, computers and tablets, music and video, and more.



PBS Teacher Shop: The PBS Teachers Shop offers an array of educational materials for classrooms and students. Sign up to receive 10 percent off your next purchase.



Sprint: Sign up for an account to score special discounts and pre-registered savings for Teacher Appreciation Week.



Sony: Sony offers special discounts for educators, schools, and other non-profits.



T-Mobile: T-Mobile grants exclusive deals to teachers, educators, school staff, and college students. You can save up to \$60 on smartphones and score additional discounts on monthly rates.



Travel and Entertainment:



Alamo Rent-a-Car: Alamo Rent-a-Car offers special discounts and upgrades for NEA members.



Arbors at Island Landing Hotel and Suites: This Pigeon Forge hotel offers a 20 percent discount for teachers and educators.



Art Institute of Chicago: Free admission to the Art Institute of Chicago is available to educators, teachers, teaching artists in working schools, and homeschool parents in Illinois. You must submit a request for free admission ahead of time.



Aston Hotels and Resorts: Aston Hotels and Resorts offers special discounts up to 10 percent on their properties in Hawaii, Lake Tahoe, and Las Vegas. Rates are based on dates and availability.



Boston Children's Museum: Boston Children's Museum offers free admission to teachers in MA, NH, CT, RI, VT, and ME.



Enterprise Rent-A-Car: Members of the NEA qualify for special discounts and upgrades.



Field Museum of Chicago: Illinois teachers pre-K through 12 can enter the Field Museum of Chicago for free.



Gaylord Opryland Resort: This Marriott property offers special discounts and room rates to teachers and school faculty.



Galleria Palms Hotel: Kissimmee's Galleria Palms Hotel offers a 15 percent discount for teachers with valid ID.



Hertz: NEA Members can save up to 25 percent off car rentals all year long.



Kennedy Space Center: Kennedy Space Center's educator pass offers free admission and access to teachers from Florida, Georgia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



Legoland: Legoland California offers free admission for teachers on special Teacher Appreciation Days. Advance registration is required, and free days fall on Saturdays and Sundays this year.



Medieval Times: Medieval Times, near Chicago, offers teacher discounts and discounted rates for school groups.



Museum of Science.

Museum of Science in Boston: The Museum of Science offers “educator resources, plus special discounts on workshops, store purchases, and more. The Teacher Partner Program is open to all licensed K – 12 teachers actively employed in a public or private New England school.



National Education Association (NEA): Sign up for exclusive discounts and offers on everything from travel to car insurance rates.



Preferred Hotels and Resorts: Preferred Hotels and Resorts offers a special discount and preferred amenities to teachers with valid ID. Right now, you’ll get a 20 percent discount off standard room rates along with special perks like breakfast for two and on-site discounts on entertainment and spa treatments.



Red Roof Inn: NEA members can enjoy a 20 percent discount off Red Roof Inn stays nationwide.



SeaWorld: SeaWorld offers a special Teacher Card good for complimentary admission to parks. This program is available to all active and certified K-12 teachers in Florida.



Shedd Aquarium of Chicago: Shedd Aquarium offers free tickets for educators based out of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin.



STA Travel: Get special discounts on airfare with a valid teacher ID.



Westgate Resorts: Teachers and educators qualify for a 10 percent discount off qualified stays at Westgate Resorts. Use code "EDUCATORS10" when you make reservations online or over the phone.

12 Creative Ways for Teachers to Save Money

While teacher and educator discounts help struggling teachers save money, desperate times call for desperate measures. Teachers willing to get creative can save even more with out-of-the-box thinking and a little legwork.

Want to save even more money on school supplies? Consider these twelve money-saving strategies:

#1: Shop for supplies second-hand.

If you're able to load up on commonly used school supplies any time of the year, consider shopping second-hand. Try online auction sites, resale websites like craigslist.org, Facebook resale sites, and garage sales to find selections of used and unused school supplies.

While selection could be slim and you may not always find what you want, you may occasionally stumble onto a must-have deal from a retiring or overstocked teacher or librarian. Our best advice is this: Strike while the iron is hot!

If you want to find these deals, you must keep your eyes open, however. Make sure to check with the sites you use frequently so you don't miss out.

#2: Load up on supplies after school starts.

If you wait until the end of summer to stock up supplies, you'll find a ton of sales. But, if you can wait a little longer, you'll find clearance bargains galore.

Many retailers who stock up on school supplies are ready to unload their additional inventory once school is up and running. If you're able to swoop in at the right time, you could score huge savings on basic supplies for next year.

#3: Apply for teacher grants.

While the selection of available grants for school supplies is limited, some grants exist to help teachers stock their classrooms. The [Kids in Need Foundation](#), for example, was created to offer free school supplies for low-income kids. Teachers can apply for financial help directly through the website, and awards are based on financial need.

Target Stores has also stepped up to offer grants for teachers who aim to do educational excursions. These grants, which are worth up to \$700 each, can be used for transportation, registration for events, admission prices, and other related expenses. Check out Target's [field trip grants page](#) for more information.

The NEA Foundation also offers its own achievement grants for teachers who qualify. These grants are worth \$2,000 - \$5,000 each, and can be used for materials that help improve the achievement of students. The grant is good for 12 months, and the money may be used for resource materials, supplies, equipment, transportation, technology, and more. For more information on how to apply, visit the NEA Foundation's [application instructions](#) page.

These are just some of the grants available to teachers who need help buying school supplies. Make sure to check with your state and local government to see if any other grants are available.

#4: Ask parents for help.

Even if you're against begging financially-strapped parents for help, there's nothing wrong with letting parents know you're in need of supplies. Parents may have no idea you're short on funds or classroom essentials. And if you don't tell them, they may never know their children are going without.

A short and sweet note home to parents can alert caring adults that classroom supplies are needed. And, you never know; if you tell parents you need help, you might find a handful who are thrilled to donate.

#5: Have a fundraiser.

A fundraiser is a great way to raise money for classroom supplies and essentials. Consider having a bake sale, a garage sale, or an online auction to raise the money you

need. Tell people all proceeds go to your classroom, and you might be surprised how many people rush to help.

If you prefer to raise the bulk of the money you need online, you can also try [DonorsChoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org). With this website, teachers post project ideas and ask the public for help with funding. Whether your classroom needs simple supplies or has specific needs for a project, donors all over the world will have the opportunity to send money.

#6: Don't forget about educator tax deductions.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) offers a break for educators who spend their own money on supplies and tools. Here's how the IRS describes the educator tax credit on their [website](#):

"If you're an eligible educator, you can deduct up to \$250 (\$500 if married filing jointly and both spouses are eligible educators, but not more than \$250 each) of unreimbursed trade or business expenses. Qualified expenses are amounts you paid or incurred for participation in professional development courses, books, supplies, computer equipment (including related software and services), other equipment, and supplementary materials that you use in the classroom. For courses in health or physical education, the expenses for supplies must be for athletic supplies. This deduction is for expenses paid or incurred during the tax year."

Make sure to speak with an accountant to find out if you qualify for the educator tax credit, as well as how much you can deduct.

#7: Don't buy when you can borrow.

While it's tempting to buy every items you could potentially need for your classroom, you can save money – and desperately needed counter space – by borrowing specific items you may not use all the time.

For example, you may only laminate paperwork infrequently. If that's the case, you could get away with borrowing your neighbor's laminator instead of buying your own. Perhaps you could share a paper cutter with several teachers in the same hallway. If

there's anything you can borrow without too much hassle or stress, you'll save money over time.

#8: Ask local businesses for donations.

Here's an idea: Try asking local businesses for classroom donations. In exchange for their donations, you can send out a classroom email advertising the company's services and thanking them for their help

Many local businesses want to get their name out in front of potential customers, and may be willing to purchase school supplies or important classroom tools in exchange for a mention. Like nearly anything else in life, you'll never know unless you ask.

#9: Search those clearance bins.

You never know when you'll run across an epic clearance deal on pens, construction paper, glue sticks, or some other school supplies. By checking clearance bins regularly, you can get your hands on some pretty amazing deals.

Also remember to check your local Dollar Tree or discount store. When everything in the store is \$1 or less, you can find some shocking deals of classroom supplies you desperately need.

#10: Buy in bulk when you can.

No matter what you're buying, it almost always pays to buy in bulk. If you can buy a giant ream of printer paper instead of one small package at a time, for example, you could save 50 percent or more.

Here's a good example: Right now, Staples.com offers a 500-sheet package of multi-purpose printer paper for \$11.79. However, they offer the same brand and type of paper in a 5,000-sheet ream for \$14.79. The bottom line: Sometimes it pays to stock up.

#11: Use coupons and discount codes.

Any time you buy something online, it's smart to check around for discount codes. Websites like RetailMeNot.com are notorious for offering discount codes for nearly every store online, and all you must do to qualify is check for the code then enter it in the shopping portal.

While discount codes and sales can change all the time, it's common to find \$20 off \$100 or 10 – 30 percent off popular online stores like Staples and Barnes&Noble.

#12: Keep your receipts!

This final tip is a good one, mostly because it gives you superior flexibility. Whether you want to apply for an educator tax credit or need to have the option to return school supplies you never use for a refund, keeping receipts is key.

Perhaps your goal is tracking your school purchases throughout the year so you know exactly how much you spent. Either way, it's smart to keep receipts for all your purchases. You never know when you will need them.



Q. What are some of the best teacher discounts available? What is your top advice for teachers who want to save money on supplies?

David Cahill: There are so many teacher discounts available that it makes my head spin just thinking about it. Most of the best non-supply discounts are available to teachers through local and national union membership. For example, National Education Association members can save 20% off the list price on books at Barnes and Noble, get the lowest possible rates on magazine subscriptions, and even receive special pricing offers on certificates to dine out from Restaurant.com. AT&T cellphone users should also ensure that they are receiving their 15% discount.

NEA members can also save on school supplies through the following discounts: 15% of art and school supplies at A.C. Moore, 15% at Jo-Ann Fabrics, 15% on all items at Michael's, and 10% cash back on teaching and art supplies at Staples. The Apple Store also offers education pricing on most items.

Your local union may negotiate other rates, as well. For example, my local union negotiated a 20% discount for teachers at GAP, Banana Republic, and Old Navy. When

in doubt, ask about teacher discounts everywhere and be prepared to show your staff ID or union membership card.

When it comes to strictly buying school supplies, I have found that it is best to wait until right before school starts in your local area. If you can hold off and are willing to risk missing out on certain brands, you can often catch the best deals of the season at this time.

Dave Grant: *Teachers can get discounts at a variety of places, not just school supplies. Teachers can get discounts at places like Barnes & Noble on books for pleasure or work. Teachers can get discounts on their cell phone plan, upgrading their technology, going on vacation and visiting fun places during their breaks from teaching. Teachers can even get discounts in stores like Ann Taylor loft, Eddie Bauer, and Banana Republic. While these places can provide great clothes to wear at work, it doesn't stop the discounts from being utilized for personal use as well.*



Q. What is your best advice for teachers who want to save money in unconventional ways?

David Cahill: *The best way to save money beyond discounts is by relying on your own creativity and collaboration with colleagues. Most of the best teaching resources I have are non-consumable resources I created myself or received from a colleague. Don't be afraid to start a supply/resource swap group at your school.*

Also, planning ahead for the next year at the end of the school year is crucial. When students clean out their desks and lockers at the end of the year, many of them throw away perfectly good (or sometimes new) supplies for no reason. I've seen many teachers collect and keep these extra supplies rather than letting students throw them out.

Dave Grant: *The best way to save money as is to always ask. If you're at the store looking online or even visiting someplace, take your teacher ID and ask if they have an active educator discount. If you don't ask, you don't get!*



Q. What are some ways teachers shouldn't try to save money? Are there any strategies that don't work?

David Cahill: The worst way to try to save money as a teacher is by sacrificing quality to save negligible percentages. For example, I bought a cheap electric pencil sharpener for my classroom and it died after one month. I saved about \$10 initially, but I ended up losing money when I replaced it with a better sharpener – all because I sacrificed quality. The next year, I had to spend some of allotted classroom budget on the replacement.



Q. What resources can teachers pull from if they need help affording classroom supplies?

David Cahill: The best resource to find help with purchasing supplies is your local Parent Teacher Association. Most of the time these groups have money that they want and need to spend and are just waiting for teachers to make requests that will benefit students. For example, my parent association just approved a very large purchase that I requested on behalf of our music department because I took the time to craft a well-worded proposal.

Another great way to gain help is by creating a project on Donors Choose, a site started back in 2000 to connect public donors to schools and projects in need of funding. So far, teachers in 75% of US public schools have used the platform. Any teacher can create a project request, and Donors Choose vets the proposal, collects all donations, purchases the needed supplies, and connects teachers with donors so appropriate thank-you notes and photos of the supplies in use can be sent. (More info available at [DonorsChoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org))



Q. What are the best creative ways for teachers to save money? Have you heard any success stories you want to share?

Dave Grant: Sign up for virtual garage sales and see what pops up on those to see if you can use them in the classroom. Head to Goodwill and see what they have. Make sure to follow other teachers on social media to see what they're doing or where they

may be buying supplies. Follow teaching organizations online as they will sometimes be the first to know about discounts and limited coupons that are available.



Q. What are the best resources for teachers hoping to save money? Where can they go for help?

David Cahill: Other than local PTAs and Donors Choose, teachers can also reach out to local small businesses to seek their sponsorship. This tends to work best if you are looking to purchase non-consumable supplies for your classroom, as the local donors can be sure that their contributions will have a lasting effect on students.

For example, a local dentist office sponsored my wife's choir program and purchased hundreds of dollars of sheet music for the students. Their name and logo was featured prominently in the printed concert programs that year, and it was a win-win for everyone.

Resources:

If you're interested in learning more about educator discounts, check out the following resources:

[Library of Congress Teacher Resources](#) – The Library of Congress offers a vast array of resources for personal development and other creative endeavors.

[United States Environmental Protection Agency](#) – The EPA offers lesson plans, teacher resource guides, and online resources for teachers and educators.

[MyMoney.gov](#) – The federal government's MyMoney.gov offers a collection of resources intended to help teachers portray smart money lessons to students.

[U.S. Department of Education](#) – Grants.gov offers information on grants available to teachers and educators.

[**U.S. Department of Education Classroom Resources**](#) – The federal government offers free educational resources for the classroom, plus details on grants and student loans.

[**Teacher Loan Forgiveness**](#) – Learn how you can have your student loans forgiven with various loan forgiveness programs created specifically for educators.

[**Kids.gov**](#) – Access free activity plans, worksheets, and lesson plans created by the federal government.

[**National Educator Association**](#) – Learn about NEA member benefits and how they improve the lives of teachers across the nation.