affirm

An ode to the eldest daughters who make the holidays happen

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First to organize. First to pay. Last to relax. If that sounds familiar, this one's for you.



We worked with Talker Research to ask 2,000 U.S. eldest daughters and only daughters with siblings about the work behind the holidays. Here's to the plans you make, the details you remember and the celebrations you help bring together.

Mom mentioned a gift she'd love back in July. By November, you've spotted it on sale, texted your siblings, and put in the order. When she opens it and says, "You remembered," that's the moment you were shopping for.

The tag says "from all of us." This is for the person who remembered, ordered, and wrapped it.
If you're the one keeping the group chat moving, finding a date everyone can make, and remembering the tradition that would feel strange to skip, you have company: among those surveyed, 66% say they take on more holiday planning and organizing than their siblings.

And if everyone comes to you for the plan, 61% of those surveyed say the same. For 62%, there's also the familiar feeling: "If I don't do it, it probably won't happen." For 28%, or more than a quarter, that feeling goes even further: they say that the holidays would fall apart without them.

You know how many decisions happen before everyone arrives. Where to gather. What to cook. Who's bringing what. Whether the gift will arrive in time. For 30% of the daughters surveyed, planning, shopping, and coordinating take six or more hours a week during the holiday season.

By the time the door opens, a lot of your work is already done. Everyone gets to walk into the celebration you helped put together.

And the celebration matters. Asked to choose between meaningful experiences and physical gifts this holiday season, 69% of respondents would prioritize the experiences.

Sometimes, getting those plans moving means putting the money down, too. A gift signed "from all of us." A shared meal. A place to stay. Among the daughters surveyed, 72% say they pay upfront for shared holiday expenses. Behind the shared plan can be one person making the first payment.

There can be real satisfaction in making it happen. Among respondents who identify as the person who makes the holidays happen, 40% say they love being relied on or enjoy taking the lead, even when it's a lot of work.

There can also be room to share it. Another 19% say they like being involved but wish the responsibilities were divided more evenly.

You can enjoy choosing the gift and welcome someone else handling dinner. You can care about keeping a tradition alive and let someone else make the arrangements this year.
And to the siblings reading this: choose something you can take responsibility for from beginning to end.

"I'll handle dinner Saturday. I'll check who's coming, sort the food and clean up afterward."

"I'll get Mom's gift. I'll check the budget with everyone, order it and bring it wrapped."

For the 73% of daughters surveyed who say they're usually the last person to relax, let's save them a seat this year. And give them a chance to stay in it.

About the research: Talker Research conducted this Affirm-commissioned survey from October 22–30, 2026. Findings reflect 2,000 U.S. women ages 21–61 who celebrate a winter holiday, have siblings and identify as the eldest or only daughter. Findings about feelings toward taking the lead are based on 1,276 respondents who agreed they make the holidays happen.