

Donated Gift Card Log

Gift cards are small and easy to lose - a log that tracks every card from the day it arrives to the moment a winner takes it home, with the handling routine that keeps them accounted for.

Planners & Worksheets · ultimatedonations.org/resources/donated-gift-card-log

A gift card is small, and small things go missing. It arrives in an envelope, gets tucked into a folder or a basket, and by event night nobody is sure how many there were or which basket each one went into. The card is small; the embarrassment when a donor asks about it is not.

This log follows every card from the day it arrives to the moment a winner takes it home. Use it alongside the [donation request tracker](#) for the request itself, and the [tricky tray and basket raffle planning workbook](#) if the cards are going into baskets. The rest of the library is at [free fundraising resources](#).

The handling routine

Six habits, and every one of them costs a minute at most.

1. **Log it the day it arrives.** One row per card, before it goes anywhere else. A card that is not in the log does not exist as far as the group can prove.
2. **Keep the donor's note with it.** If the card came with a letter or a note, keep that with the card; it tells you who gave it and anything they said about it.
3. **Store them together, in one place.** One sealed envelope or lockable box, never loose in a basket, a folder or a car.
4. **Give one person custody.** One named volunteer holds the cards until the event. If custody changes, the log says when and to whom.
5. **Read the card, not your memory.** Record what is printed on the card or its carrier - where it can be used, and any expiry or restriction the issuer states. Do not add terms the card does not show.
6. **Record the handover.** When a card goes into a basket or lot, and when a winner takes it, the log says so.

The gift card log

One row per card. Keep the log with the cards, and a copy with the tracker.

Company	Donor contact	Date received	Where it can be used (as printed)	Expiry or restriction (as printed)	Stored where	Held by	Basket or lot	Winner collected	Thanked

There is deliberately no column for a value. If the donor told you what the card is for, write it in their words in the "Where it can be used" column; if they did not, do not assign one.

The custody log

Every time the cards change hands before the event, write it down.

Date	Handed from	Handed to	Number of cards	Both initials

Describing a card to your guests

- **Say what the card says.** The company, where it can be used, and any restriction printed on it.
- **Name the company accurately.** A card from one location of a chain may only be good at that location; if the card says so, say so.
- **Never state an amount you were not given.** If you do not know it, describe the card without one.
- **Do not promise what the card does not.** If it cannot be used online, or only at certain times, your description should not suggest otherwise.

On event night

- The custody holder brings the cards and the log, and nobody else handles them until they go out.
- A card placed into a basket goes in last, in a sealed envelope, with the basket number noted in the log.
- When a winner collects, the log records it before the card leaves the table.
- Any card left over at the end goes back into the envelope, and the custody log records who takes it home.

After the event

- Mark every row: collected, not collected, or not used.
- Follow the [post-event donation wrap-up checklist](#) for prizes nobody collected and items that were not used.
- Make sure every company that gave a card has been thanked, using the [donor thank-you kit](#).

Before the next round, look each company up in the [donor directory](#) - we track 4,000+ companies, and each page describes what that program has historically offered and where to check its current status.

Common questions

How should a group keep donated gift cards safe?

Log each card the day it arrives, keep them together in one sealed envelope or lockable box, and have one named person responsible for them until the event. A card that is not in the log is a card nobody can prove was ever received.

Should you check a gift card's terms before the event?

Yes. Read what is printed on the card or its carrier - where it can be used, and any expiry or restriction the issuer states - and note it in the log. If anything is unclear, ask the company that donated it rather than guessing, and never describe a card to winners in a way the card itself does not support.

How do you describe a gift card in a raffle or auction?

Exactly as it came - the company, where it can be used, and anything the card or the donor stated about it. If the donor did not tell you the amount, do not assign one.