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## Discount Diva

### Freebies for the frugal set

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Updated: July 05, 2010, 6:03 am / [0 comments](#)

Published: July 05, 2010, 12:30 am

Free stuff rules. Am I right? I can't imagine you would be reading the Discount Diva column if you disagreed. With that in mind, I'd like to share with you some awesome freebies compiled by personal finance Web site Kiplinger.com:

- There's no need to pay for directory assistance calls. Instead, try (800) FREE-411, (800) GOOG-411 or (800) JUST-DIAL. You can also text message a company name, city and state to (800) Goog-411 and get the company's phone number and address texted back almost immediately. I keep the numbers stored in my cell phone's address book and it has made life much easier.

- Lots of places will give you free stuff just for being born. All you have to do is sign up for their membership clubs, and they'll send you free coupons and vouchers each year for your birthday. You can get a free Grand Slam from Denny's, free ice cream from Friendly's, Dairy Queen and Cold Stone Creamery, even free burgers from Fuddrucker's and Ruby Tuesday. Check with the restaurants to sign up.

- Score a free personal tour guide on your next trip, courtesy of the Global Greeter Network. It's an international organization of locals who volunteer to show visitors the city in which they live. Whether you're visiting Houston or the Hague, there's a guide waiting to show you around on a two-to-three-hour walk. Not only is it free, there's a no-tipping policy! Check out [www.globalgreeternetwork.info](http://www.globalgreeternetwork.info) to learn more. • Got more mouths to feed than just your own? KidsMealDeals.com can help. Search the Web site by day of the week and ZIP code to find restaurants offering "kids eat free" deals from places such as Zebbs, Denny's and Applebee's. For the most part, restaurants will offer one or two free kids' meals per adult entree purchased on certain days of the week. Check back often, because some restaurants have running offers while others have limited-time specials.

- When traveling, consider swapping your home for someone else's through a hospitality exchange Web site such as CouchSurfing.com, HomeExchange.com or IntervacUS.com. It's an extreme way to find a free place to crash.

- Get free financial planning advice from Voyant at [ww.PlanWithVoyant.com](http://ww.PlanWithVoyant.com). You can also get free budgeting software at [www.Mint.com](http://www.Mint.com). • Get free ebooks, legally, at [www.Gutenberg.org](http://www.Gutenberg.org). The site, which is a clearinghouse for masterpieces in the public domain, has more than 30,000 classic works from which to choose. You can also check with your county's public library to see if it lends ebooks (the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library does), or search [www.Books.Google.com](http://www.Books.Google.com) for others. • Stream classic and contemporary movies and TV shows online for free without getting arrested! Most TV networks offer free, full-length episodes at their Web sites, such as ABC.com, MTV.com and TVLand.com. Hulu.com is one of the most popular aggregated sites. OVGuide.com compiles and lists dozens of other Web sites offering free streaming content, such as FanCast.com and Veoh.com.

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