BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Photo Printing & Photo Books

Prints, photo books, cards and calendars made simple — same-day pickup, mail-order, and getting it all on time

A plain-English guide to getting photos off the screen

Take your time — you can't break anything

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

Walgreens, CVS, Walmart, Shutterfly, Google Photos & more · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to turning the photos on your phone into prints, photo books, holiday cards, calendars and gifts you can hold. Read it in any order and at your own pace; there's no test, and you can't fall behind. Every chapter explains what each option actually does *for you*, with slow step-by-step directions. Prices and sales change often, so the prices here are the ones the stores listed in November 2026. If a screen looks a little different on your phone, the idea is the same.

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PART 1

Getting Started

Why prints still matter, the three ways to get them, and how to pick and prepare photos so they come out looking their best. Start here and the rest will feel easy.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If your phone is full of wonderful pictures that nobody ever sees, you are in very good company. Most of us take more photos than ever, and fewer of them make it onto the refrigerator, into a frame, or into a card for someone we love. This guide is about changing that, gently and without any fuss.

I'm Bill. I've spent more than 30 years helping people with their technology, and these days I help folks here in Portage County, Ohio, feel at home with their phones, computers and gadgets. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it sitting beside you at the kitchen table: slowly, in plain English, with no jargon. When a new word comes along, I'll stop and explain it.

What you'll be able to do

- Order a stack of ordinary prints from your phone and pick them up the **same day** at Walgreens, CVS or Walmart.
- Have prints and gifts **mailed to your door** from Shutterfly, Google Photos or Amazon.
- Make a **photo book**: a real, bound book of your pictures, for yourself or as a gift.
- Create **holiday cards, calendars** and simple photo gifts, and get them out on time.
- Spend wisely, avoid the scams that circle around online orders, and know what to do if an order goes wrong.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this guide does for you

Prints are how photos become part of everyday life again: a grandchild on the mantel, a year of memories on the coffee table, a card in a friend's mailbox. By the end of this guide you'll know the quickest, cheapest and nicest way to get each of those, and you'll feel confident doing it yourself.

The big promise: you can't break anything

Every service in this guide lets you look, try and change your mind before you pay. Nothing is printed until you press the final order button and confirm. If you get lost, close the app and open it again; your work is usually saved as a draft. So relax and explore.

A word about money: prices and sales for prints change almost weekly, so I give you the prices I saw on the stores' own websites in November 2026 and tell you plainly when to

check. I don't take any money from these companies, and I'll tell you honestly when something isn't worth it.

If you'd ever like a hand, I'm a phone call away at **(330) 200-8042**. My help is $49 remote · $99 in your home, and there's no such thing as a silly question.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

Your Three Choices at a Glance

There are really only three ways to turn a photo on your phone into something you can hold. Each is good at different things. Once you see them side by side, choosing gets simple.

	Same-day store pickup	Mailed to your door	Your own printer
Best for	A few prints today; last-minute gifts	Photo books, cards, calendars, big orders	One quick print right now
Where	Walgreens, CVS, Walmart	Shutterfly, Google Photos, Amazon Prints, the stores' websites	At home
How fast	Often about an hour for prints	Usually several days to two weeks	Minutes
Quality	Good, consistent	Very good; best for keepsakes	Varies with printer, ink and paper
Cost	Low for prints; you pay at pickup or online	Low to high; shipping may apply	Ink and photo paper add up

A simple rule of thumb

- **Need it today?** Order same-day prints from a drugstore or Walmart (Part 2).
- **Making something special?** Use a mail-order service and allow time for shipping (Parts 3, 4 and 5).
- **Just one picture for a frame right now?** Your home printer can do it, though a store print usually looks better and costs less than you'd think.

GOOD TO KNOW

Where home printing fits

This guide focuses on getting prints made for you. If you'd like to print photos on your own printer, the companion guide on home printers and scanners walks through it, including which paper to buy. For most people, a 4x6 print from the drugstore costs less than the ink and paper to make it at home.

CHAPTER 3

What Makes a Good Print

A photo that looks lovely on a small phone screen can look a little different on paper. A few simple ideas will help your prints come out the way you hoped.

Sizes, in plain terms

Size	What it's good for
Wallet	Small prints, several to a sheet. Good for a purse or a card.
4x6	The everyday snapshot size, and almost always the cheapest. Fits most small frames and albums.
5x7	A step up. A nice size for a frame on a desk or a shelf.
8x10	The classic portrait size for the wall or the piano.
Square (4x4, 8x8)	Good for phone photos that were taken square, and for some photo books.
Posters and enlargements	Anything bigger, like 11x14 or 16x20. Needs a sharp, good-quality photo.

Sharp enough to print?

The pictures from any recent phone are plenty sharp for 4x6, 5x7 and usually 8x10 prints. Trouble only comes from photos that were made small along the way, such as a picture someone sent you through a text or social media, a screenshot, or a photo you zoomed into a lot.

- Use the **original** photo whenever you can, not a copy that was texted or posted.
- If a family member sent it, ask them to send the original by email or a shared album.
- Most print services warn you when a photo is too small to print well. Take that warning seriously for anything bigger than 4x6.

TIP

The low-resolution warning

Google Photos, for example, tells you when a photo is low-resolution. You can still print it, but it may come out blurry. For a small print that may be fine; for an enlargement or a book cover, choose a different photo.

The cropping surprise

Phone photos are a slightly different shape from a 4x6 print, so a thin strip is usually trimmed off the top and bottom or the sides. The print service shows you a preview with the crop. Look at it before you order, especially if someone's head or feet are near the edge, and drag the picture inside the frame if you need to.

Glossy or matte?

Finish	What it looks like
Glossy	Shiny, with rich colors. Shows fingerprints and glare a little more.
Matte	A soft, non-shiny finish. Less glare behind glass and easier to handle.

Neither is wrong. Some services choose for you; others let you pick. For example, Google Photos says its mailed prints are matte, while same-day prints picked up at CVS and Walgreens are glossy and at Walmart are matte.

CHAPTER 4

Choosing & Preparing Your Photos

The hardest part of printing photos isn't the ordering. It's choosing. With hundreds or thousands of pictures on a phone, it's easy to give up before you start. Here's a calm way through it.

Make a "To Print" album first

Before you open any print service, gather your choices into one album on your phone. Then, when it's time to order, you just pick that album instead of scrolling through years of pictures.

1. Open your photos app (**Photos** on an iPhone, **Google Photos** or **Gallery** on Android).
2. As you scroll, tap a photo you love and add it to an album. Call the album something simple like **To Print**.
3. Do a little at a time. Ten minutes over coffee is plenty.
4. When the album has what you want, you're ready to order.

> **TIP**
>
> **Use your favorites**
>
> If you've been tapping the heart on photos you love, you already have a head start. Your Favorites album is a ready-made shortlist.

Quick fixes before you print

Every phone's photos app can brighten, straighten and crop a picture in a few taps, and so can most print services. It's worth a moment for anything going in a frame or a book:

- **Brighten** a dark indoor photo a little. Prints usually come out a touch darker than the screen.
- **Straighten** a tilted horizon.
- **Crop** away clutter so the faces fill more of the picture.
- Edits on your phone don't harm the original. Most apps let you go back to it later.

Where your photos actually are

Every print service needs to get your photos from somewhere. Usually that's simply your phone's photo library, and the app asks permission to see it. If your photos are stored in Google Photos, iCloud or Amazon Photos, they're still available on the phone as long as

you're signed in. Older photos on a computer can be uploaded through the service's website.

STAY SAFE

Permission to see your photos

When an app asks to see your photos, your iPhone or Android phone may let you choose between all photos and only the ones you select. Choosing only the selected photos is a perfectly good, private option for a one-time order.

PART 2

Same-Day Prints at the Drugstore & Walmart

Order from your phone in the morning, pick up your prints on the way home. How same-day pickup works at Walgreens, CVS and Walmart, straight from Google Photos, and at the store kiosk.

CHAPTER 5

Same-Day Prints: How Pickup Works

Same-day pickup is the quickest, friendliest way to get ordinary prints. You choose your photos on your phone or computer, pick a nearby store, and the store prints them on its own machines. When they're ready, you get an email or text, and you collect them at the photo counter.

The whole process in five steps

1. Open the store's app or website (or Google Photos) and choose **Prints**.
2. Pick your photos, then choose the size and how many of each.
3. Choose **Same Day Pickup** (or store pickup) and pick the store nearest you.
4. Enter your name, email and phone number so the store can tell you when the order is ready. Pay online or at pickup, depending on the service.
5. Wait for the "ready" message, then pick up your prints at the photo counter.

What to expect

- **Timing:** Walgreens advertises prints ready in about an hour. Timing varies by store and by how busy it is, so wait for the ready message before you drive over.
- **Cutoff times:** CVS says same-day pickup applies to orders received by 7 p.m. local time, and only to select products.
- **Not everything is same-day:** prints, many cards, calendars and some simple books can be; fancier items are often mailed or take longer. The store's site labels which items offer pickup.
- **Bring your order number** or the name on the order. The ready message usually includes it.

TIP

Order before lunch

For the least waiting, place your order in the morning on a weekday. Before holidays, stores get busy and an hour can stretch to several. Order a day or two early if it's for a party or a gift.

GOOD TO KNOW

Why the official app matters

When you search the app store for "same day prints," you'll find many apps made by other companies that send orders to Walgreens or CVS. Some are fine, but you're sharing your photos and contact details with one more company. The simplest and safest choice is the store's own app or website, or Google Photos. More on this in Chapter 23.

CHAPTER 6

Walgreens Photo

Walgreens Photo prints at thousands of Walgreens stores. You can order from the Walgreens app (look for Photo), from the Walgreens Photo website at photo.walgreens.com, or from Google Photos.

What you can get the same day

In November 2026 the Walgreens Photo site listed free same-day pickup for prints and enlargements in sizes from 4x4 up to 8x10, plus wallet prints, posters, collage prints, small "PrintBook" flip books, cards, calendars, magnets, puzzles and more. It also said glossy and matte finishes are now both available for same-day pickup.

Item (Walgreens list price, Nov. 2026)	Starting price
Prints & enlargements (4x4 to 8x10)	From $0.29
Wallet prints	$0.99 each
Collage prints	From $0.49
PrintBook (4x4 or 4x6)	$9.99 each
Posters (11x14 to 24x36)	From $12.99

Walgreens runs sales constantly; the week I checked, the site offered 50% off photo with a promo code. List prices are a starting point, so look for the current offer at the top of the Photo page before you check out.

Ordering prints, step by step

1. Open the **Walgreens** app and look for **Photo**, or go to **photo.walgreens.com** in your web browser.
2. Sign in to your Walgreens account, or create one.
3. Choose **Prints**, then upload or choose your photos.
4. Pick sizes and quantities, and check each preview for cropping.
5. Choose same-day pickup and confirm your store.
6. Add any promo code, review the order, and place it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Menus move around

Store apps are redesigned often, so the buttons may be named a little differently on your phone. The pattern stays the same: Photo, then Prints, then choose photos, size, store and checkout.

CHAPTER 7

CVS Photo

CVS Photo works much the same way. Order from the CVS app or at cvs.com/photo and pick up at your local CVS, or have many items delivered.

What CVS offers

- Photo prints starting at **$0.32**, wallet prints from **$0.99** and collage prints from **$0.42** (CVS list prices, November 2026), with pickup or delivery.
- Same-day items that, according to CVS, range from photo books, photo cards and calendars to banners and more.
- Same-day pickup applies to select photo products, for orders received by **7 p.m.** local time.
- Weekly offers. The week I checked, CVS offered free 4x6 prints with a larger 4x6 order, and percentage discounts on other items, each with a promo code.

Ordering prints, step by step

1. Open the **CVS** app and look for **Photo**, or go to **cvs.com/photo**.
2. Sign in or continue as a guest, then choose **Prints**.
3. Upload or choose your photos and pick sizes and quantities.
4. Choose **pickup** and select your store, or choose delivery.
5. Add the week's promo code if there is one, then place the order.

TIP

Check the offers first

CVS lists its current photo deals at the top of the Photo page, with an end date. Copy the promo code before you start, and paste it at checkout.

CHAPTER 8

Walmart Photo

Walmart's Photo Center is still going strong. You order online through the Walmart Photo website (you can reach it from walmart.com) and pick up in the store, or have items shipped.

- Walmart lists **1-Hour Prints** and enlargements, same-day posters, cards, calendars, wall art and even same-day photo books and flip books.
- The Walmart Photo site said **free same-day pickup**, and free shipping on orders over $35, when I checked in November 2026.
- Walmart+ members get **25 free 4x6 prints every month**. Order 4x6 prints, then open the Walmart app, go to the Walmart+ benefits page and use the barcode there before you check out.

GOOD TO KNOW

Photo-center hours

Same-day pickup depends on the store's photo department being open and staffed. If an order is for a specific time, call the store first. Ask for the photo center.

CHAPTER 9

Same-Day Prints Straight from Google Photos

If your photos already live in Google Photos, on an Android phone or an iPhone, you can send them to a nearby CVS, Walgreens or Walmart without opening any store's app. Google calls this same-day pickup, and it's available in the United States.

The rules, from Google

Pickup detail	What Google says
Sizes for pickup	4x6, 5x7 and 8x10
Finish	Glossy at CVS and Walgreens; matte at Walmart
Most per order	200 of 4x6, 11 of 5x7, 7 of 8x10
How you pay	At the store when you pick up. In-store coupons and promo codes can't be used.
When it's ready	Google Photos sends you an email with the store's address.

Ordering, step by step (Android)

1. Open **Google Photos**.
2. To print several photos: touch and hold one photo, tap the others, then tap **Order photo** > **Photo prints**. For a single photo: open it, tap **More** (the three dots) > **Order photo** > **Photo prints**.
3. Preview each photo. To change a size, tap the size at the bottom left of the photo, pick a new one and tap **Apply**.
4. Tap **Next**.
5. Choose store pickup, pick your store and place the order.

From an album, tap **Collections** > **Albums**, choose the album, then **Order photos** > **Photo prints**. On an iPhone the Google Photos app works the same way, though a button may sit in a slightly different spot.

TIP

Let it find the nearest store

Google Photos uses your location to suggest nearby stores. If it can't find one, check that Google Photos is allowed to use your location in your phone's settings, or type your ZIP code.

HEADS UP

Coupons don't carry over

Because you pay the store at pickup but ordered through Google, Google says in-store coupons and promo codes can't be used. If there's a big sale on at Walgreens or CVS, ordering through the store's own app may be cheaper.

CHAPTER 10

Using the Photo Kiosk in the Store

Many photo counters still have a self-serve touchscreen machine, usually called a kiosk, where you can make prints on the spot. Kiosks differ from store to store, so here's what to expect in general rather than button-by-button directions.

- Many kiosks can take photos from a phone as well as from a memory card or USB drive. The screen explains the choices that machine offers.
- You choose photos, sizes and quantities on the touchscreen. Some prints come out right away; larger orders are sent to the counter's printer.
- Pay at the counter or register.
- Walmart+ members can use the monthly free prints at a Walmart Photo Center kiosk, showing the barcode from the Walmart app.

FROM BILL

Just ask at the counter

Kiosks are the one place where I'll say: don't struggle alone. The photo-counter staff walk people through them all day. Ask for a hand, and watch what they tap; next time you'll do it yourself.

STAY SAFE

Don't leave your photos behind

If you plug in a memory card or USB drive, remember to take it with you when you're done.

PART 3

Prints & Gifts by Mail

Shutterfly, Google Photos, Amazon Prints, the Costco arrangement, and what to do if your photos live on an iPhone or a Mac. Take your time, order from your chair, and let the mail carrier do the rest.

CHAPTER 11

Shutterfly: Getting Started

Shutterfly is one of the biggest names in mail-order photo products: prints, photo books, holiday cards, calendars, wall art and gifts. You can use its website at shutterfly.com on a computer, or the free Shutterfly app on a phone or tablet. Your projects are saved to your account, so you can start on the phone and finish on the computer.

Setting up an account

1. Go to **shutterfly.com** or install the **Shutterfly** app from your phone's app store. Check that the app is made by Shutterfly before you install it.
2. Create a free account with your email address and a password you don't use anywhere else.
3. Add photos by uploading them from your phone or computer. The app asks permission to see your photos.
4. Browse a product, such as prints, a card or a photo book, and tap or click to start.

Things Shutterfly does well

- **Saved projects:** Shutterfly keeps your unfinished work under **My Projects**, so you can stop and come back.
- **A free designer service for photo books.** Upload your photos and Shutterfly's designers lay out the book for you within 24 hours. You pay only for the book. Look for **FREE 24-Hour Designer Service** under Photo Books.
- **Address book and envelope printing** for holiday cards, plus an optional service that stamps and mails them for you (Chapter 19).
- **Unlimited photo storage** for Shutterfly customers, according to the Costco offer page.

About Shutterfly prices

Shutterfly's regular prices are higher than the drugstores', but it almost always has a sale running. The week I checked, the site showed 50% off holiday cards with free shipping on cards, and free shipping on larger orders above a set amount, each with its own promo code and end date. Sales like these come and go every few days.

FROM BILL

Never pay full price at Shutterfly

If you're not in a hurry and you see a price that feels high, save your project and wait a few days. A new offer almost always comes along. Just don't wait so long that you miss a holiday shipping date (Chapter 21).

CHAPTER 12

Prints & Photo Books from Google Photos by Mail

Besides same-day pickup (Chapter 9), Google Photos can mail prints and photo books to your home. This is handy because your photos are already there; you don't upload anything.

Mailed prints

Detail	What Google says
Sizes	4x6, 5x7, 8x10, 11x14, 12x18, 16x20 and 20x30
Finish	Matte
Economy shipping	9-12 business days to the contiguous U.S.
Standard shipping	5-9 business days
Priority shipping	4-6 business days
Cancel	Within 2 hours of ordering, in Google Photos

You order mailed prints the same way as pickup prints (Chapter 9); you simply choose a delivery option instead of a store. To check on an order later, open the **Print store** in Google Photos and scroll to **Past orders**. Different print sizes may arrive in separate packages.

Photo books from Google Photos

Google Photos offers a 7-inch softcover and a 9-inch hardcover photo book, each with 20 to 140 pages. Chapter 17 walks through making one.

GOOD TO KNOW

Promotions

Google says it may show you print offers tied to local celebrations, and that it doesn't use your photos for advertising or sell them. Prices show in the app before you pay.

CHAPTER 13

Amazon Prints

If you already use Amazon Photos, the photo storage that comes with Prime, you can order from **Amazon Prints** right from your Amazon Photos account. Amazon says you can order prints, photo books and gifts and have them shipped to your door.

- Amazon Prints is for U.S. customers, and orders ship only to U.S., APO and FPO addresses.
- Prime members get unlimited full-resolution photo storage in Amazon Photos, plus 5 GB for videos; everyone else gets 5 GB free. (That's storage, not free prints.)
- You'll find it on the Amazon Photos website or app; look for the option to print or create a print project.

TIP

When Amazon makes sense

Amazon Prints is most convenient if your photos already back up to Amazon Photos, for example from an Echo Show or Fire tablet household. If they don't, a drugstore or Shutterfly is just as easy.

CHAPTER 14

Printing from an iPhone, iPad or Mac

Here's something that surprises many Apple users: Apple doesn't print photos for you anymore. Years ago the Mac's Photos app could order books and cards straight from Apple; that service has ended. Today you have three good options.

1. Use a print service's app on your iPhone

The Walgreens, CVS, Walmart, Shutterfly, Amazon Photos and Google Photos apps all run on iPhone and iPad. Each one asks permission to see your photo library, and then you order just as described in the rest of Part 2 and Part 3.

2. On a Mac: Photos projects from other companies

Photos on the Mac can hand your pictures to print apps made by other companies. Apple's own example apps are Motif and Mimeo Photos.

1. Open **Photos** on your Mac and select the photos you want.
2. Choose **File** > **Create**, then a type of project (for example **Prints** or a book), then **App Store** to see apps that work with Photos.
3. Click **Get** next to an app and install it.
4. Back in Photos, choose **File** > **Create**, the project type, and now the app you installed. Follow its instructions to design and order.
5. If the app doesn't appear, choose **File** > **Create** > **Other**. Still missing? Choose **File** > **Create** > **Manage** and make sure it's turned on next to Photos Projects.

GOOD TO KNOW

Old Apple projects

If you made a book or card in Photos years ago with Apple's old print service, some third-party apps can convert it. Select the project in the Photos sidebar and look for a **Convert** button.

3. Print at home with AirPrint

If you have a printer that supports AirPrint, Apple's built-in way of printing without extra software, you can print a photo straight from the Photos app on an iPhone: open the photo, tap the **Share** button, scroll down and tap **Print**, choose your printer and tap Print. Your iPhone and printer need to be on the same Wi-Fi.

CHAPTER 15

If You Belong to Costco

Costco used to run its own photo centers, and many members still look for one. Costco closed its photo service and now sends members to Shutterfly instead. The good news is that the member discount is generous.

- Costco's Photo page says members get **51% off regularly priced Shutterfly orders**, applied automatically at checkout, plus **free shipping on orders of $30 or more**. Some restrictions apply.
- Start from the **Photo** page on costco.com, which links to Shutterfly's prints, photo books, cards and gifts.
- There's no in-warehouse pickup. Orders come by mail, so leave time.

HEADS UP

"Regularly priced" matters

The member discount applies to regular prices. If Shutterfly is already running its own sale, compare the totals before you check out and pick whichever is lower.

PART 4

Photo Books

A photo book is a real, bound book of your pictures. It's one of the loveliest gifts you can give, and easier to make than it looks. Here's how to plan one and build it, start to finish.

CHAPTER 16

Planning a Photo Book

A photo book can be a year in the life of the family, a trip, a wedding anniversary, a baby's first year, or a tribute to someone you've lost. The ones people treasure most aren't the fanciest. They're the ones with a clear story and the right handful of pictures.

Five decisions, in order

1. **The story.** One trip, one year, one person. A clear theme makes every other choice easier.
2. **The photos.** Gather them into one album on your phone first (Chapter 4). Aim for your favorites, not every picture.
3. **The size and cover.** Softcover is lighter and cheaper; hardcover feels like a keepsake. Square books suit phone photos well.
4. **How many pages.** Most services start around 20 pages. More pages cost more.
5. **When you need it.** Count backward from the date, allowing for printing and shipping (Chapter 21).

How many photos?

A comfortable rule is one to four photos per page. A 20-page book holds roughly 20 to 80 pictures. If you've picked 300, it's time to choose again: fewer, bigger photos look better than many tiny ones.

Words make it special

- Add a **title** on the cover, such as "The Smiths, 2026" or "Grandma's Garden."
- A short **caption** under a photo: who, where, and the year. Future generations will thank you.
- A **dedication** on the first page, a few warm sentences.
- Check spelling of names twice. A typo is printed forever.

TIP

Let someone else design it

If arranging pages sounds like too much, Shutterfly offers a free designer service: you upload the photos and its designers lay out the book within 24 hours. You review it, change anything you like, and pay only for the book. Look for **FREE 24-Hour Designer Service** under Photo Books on shutterfly.com.

Where	Good for	Notes (Nov. 2026)
Google Photos	Quick books from photos already in Google Photos	7-inch softcover or 9-inch hardcover; 20 to 140 pages; mailed
Shutterfly	The most styles and options; free designer service	Mailed; frequent sales
Walgreens, CVS, Walmart	Last-minute books and small flip books	Some books offered for same-day pickup; check the label
Amazon Prints	If your photos are in Amazon Photos	Mailed to U.S. addresses

CHAPTER 17

Making a Photo Book in Google Photos

If your photos are in Google Photos, this is the simplest photo book there is. Google picks a layout for you, and you can adjust it.

The two choices

Book	Details
7-inch softcover	20 to 140 pages. A title on the spine is possible for books over 48 pages.
9-inch hardcover	20 to 140 pages. A spine title can be added to any hardcover.
Price	Google says pricing varies; start an order to see the price and shipping.

Making the book, step by step (Android)

1. Open **Google Photos** and make sure you're signed in.
2. At the top, tap **Create** > **Photo books, prints, & more** > **Photo books** > **Make a photo book**.
3. Select at least 20 photos. (If you pick more than 140, some pages become collages.)
4. Tap **Done**. The book is saved as a draft automatically.
5. Look through the pages and make changes: swap photos, change the order, add a title.
6. When you're happy, tap the **Cart** to buy it, choose shipping and pay.

From an album: tap **Collections** > **Albums**, open the album, then tap **Order photos** > **Photo book**. On a computer, go to photos.google.com and use the **Print store**. Your drafts and past orders are in the Print store, too.

Timing

Step	What Google says
Printing and packing	2-4 business days after you buy
Economy shipping	8-11 business days (continental U.S.)
Standard shipping	6-10 business days
Priority shipping	5-7 business days; not to PO boxes

HEADS UP

Drafts don't last forever

Google deletes a photo book draft you haven't edited for 90 days. If you're working on one slowly, open it now and then. You also have only 2 hours after buying to cancel an order.

GOOD TO KNOW

Shipping time isn't guaranteed

Google says so plainly. For a holiday or birthday, add the printing days to the shipping days, then add a few more for good measure.

CHAPTER 18

Making a Photo Book in Shutterfly & Store Apps

Shutterfly and the drugstore apps give you more choices of size, cover and style. They all work the same basic way, so once you've made one book, you can make them anywhere.

The general steps

1. Choose **Photo Books** and pick a size and style. A theme sets the colors and decorations.
2. Add your photos. Upload them from your phone or computer, or pick an album you made earlier.
3. Let the app **fill the pages automatically** if it offers that, or drag photos onto pages yourself.
4. Go page by page: rearrange, enlarge your best photos, and add captions.
5. Design the **cover**: a strong photo and a title. Many hardcovers also let you add spine text.
6. **Preview** the whole book from front to back, slowly. Look for cut-off faces and spelling mistakes.
7. Add it to the cart, apply any promo code, and choose shipping or pickup.

TIP

Save as you go

Shutterfly keeps unfinished projects in **My Projects**, so you can stop and pick up later on any device. Name your project something you'll recognize.

Same-day books for a last-minute gift

When time is short, the stores can help. In November 2026, Walmart Photo listed same-day photo books and flip books, Walgreens listed same-day pickup books and its small PrintBook ($9.99 each), and CVS listed photo books among its same-day products. These are simpler books than the fancy mail-order kind, but they're ready in hours, not weeks.

Choosing among styles

Style	What it means
Softcover	Lightest and least expensive. Good for a casual trip book or many copies.

Style	What it means
Hardcover	Sturdier and more of a keepsake. A printed photo cover is the most popular kind.
Layflat	Pages open completely flat, so a photo can spread across both pages with no dip in the middle. Costs more.

FROM BILL

Make two copies

If a book is for someone else, think about ordering a second copy for yourself or for another family member at the same time. Reprinting later means finding the project again, and holiday sales may be over.

PART 5

Cards, Calendars & Gifts

Holiday photo cards, calendars for the grandparents, ornaments and mugs, and the dates that decide whether they arrive in time.

CHAPTER 19

Holiday Photo Cards

A photo card is a card with your own picture printed on it, usually with a greeting and your names. Every service in this guide makes them, from the drugstores' same-day cards to Shutterfly's large selection.

Making a card, step by step

1. Choose **Cards**, then the occasion, such as Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year or simply "Holiday."
2. Pick a design. Filter by how many photos it holds if you have one favorite or several.
3. Add your photo or photos and drag them into place in each frame.
4. Type the greeting and how you'd like to sign it, for example "Love, Bob & Mary."
5. Choose the paper, the card shape and how many you need. Order a few extra.
6. Preview carefully, front and back, then order.

The addressing shortcut

Writing out dozens of envelopes is the slow part. Shutterfly offers a free online address book and free printing of recipient and return addresses on your envelopes. You can collect addresses from family with a quick text or email through its Easy Address Collector, or fill in a spreadsheet template and upload it.

Shutterfly's **Mail for Me** service goes one step further: it stuffs, stamps and mails your cards for you. Shutterfly says this is available only with plain white envelopes. Check the cost at checkout before you choose it.

TIP

Postage for cards you mail yourself

A Forever stamp costs 82 cents after the July 12, 2026 increase, and it covers a standard one-ounce letter whatever the price later. Square, unusually thick or very stiff cards can need extra postage, so if your card isn't a regular rectangle, ask at the post office counter before you buy stamps.

STAY SAFE

Think before you print your address

A return address on an envelope is normal. Be a little more careful putting your full home address, or your grandchildren's school or full names and ages, on a card design that might be shared on social media.

CHAPTER 20

Photo Calendars

A photo calendar is a year of family pictures, one for each month, and a gift that gets looked at every single day. It's a favorite present for grandparents, and the drugstores and Walmart can often make one the same day.

Making one, step by step

1. Choose **Calendars** and pick wall or desk style, and a size.
2. Choose the **starting month**. Most people pick January, but you can start any month.
3. Pick 12 photos, one per month, plus one for the cover. Match photos to seasons: snow for January, the garden in June.
4. Add **family dates**: birthdays and anniversaries print right on the calendar grid. Some services remember them for next year.
5. Preview every month, then order.

> **TIP**
>
> **Start a list now**
>
> Write down the family birthdays and anniversaries in one place before you start. It's the step that takes longest, and once you have the list, next year's calendar takes minutes.

In November 2026, Walgreens and CVS both listed calendars among their same-day pickup items, and Walmart listed same-day calendars and small 4x8 desk calendars. Mailed calendars from Shutterfly and others offer more sizes and paper choices.

CHAPTER 21

Holiday Timing: Order-By Dates & Postage

Most holiday photo disappointments come from timing, not from the photos. Every mail-order company publishes "order by" dates each season for delivery before the holidays. Those dates move every year and depend on the shipping speed you pick, so check the company's own shipping page.

Work backward from the date

What	Typical time to allow
Same-day prints and many cards	A few hours, longer before holidays
Google Photos prints, mailed	4-12 business days, depending on shipping speed
Google Photos photo book	2-4 business days to print, then 5-11 business days to ship
Cards you mail yourself	Add the Postal Service's own mailing time

The Postal Service's 2026 dates

For delivery before December 25, 2026, the Postal Service recommends mailing within the lower 48 states by **December 17** for First-Class Mail (cards and letters) and Ground Advantage, **December 18** for Priority Mail, and **December 19** for Priority Mail Express. Alaska, Hawaii and the territories need a little more time, and international and military mail much more. These are recommendations, not guarantees.

FROM BILL

My calendar trick

Put two reminders in your phone each fall: one in early November to start the cards, and one the week before Thanksgiving to order them. That way the holiday rush never catches you.

HEADS UP

Holiday shipping texts

This is also the season of fake "your package is delayed" texts and emails. If you're waiting on an order, check its status in the company's own app or website, never through a link in an unexpected message (Chapter 23).

CHAPTER 22

Photo Gifts: Ornaments, Mugs, Canvas & More

Almost anything can carry a photo these days: ornaments, mugs, magnets, puzzles, blankets, canvas wall art and more. A few are especially good for gift-giving.

Gift	Why it's nice
Ornaments	A photo ornament for the tree, dated with the year. CVS and Walmart both listed them in November 2026.
Magnets	Small and inexpensive; good for the refrigerator and easy to mail.
Mugs	A daily reminder for someone far away.
Puzzles	Fun with grandchildren; a family photo becomes a rainy-day project.
Canvas and wall art	A favorite photo, big enough to hang. Needs a sharp original photo.
Blankets	A cozy throw with a family photo; popular for grandparents.

TIP

Check the photo size first

The bigger the product, the sharper the photo needs to be. For canvas, posters and blankets, use an original photo from a phone or camera, not one that was texted or downloaded from social media (Chapter 3). If the app warns you about low quality, pick another photo.

GOOD TO KNOW

Same-day gifts exist

If you've left a gift until the last minute, check the store's Same Day section. In November 2026, CVS, Walgreens and Walmart each listed photo gifts such as magnets, mugs, puzzles or ornaments for same-day pickup. Availability varies by store.

PART 6

Staying Safe, Saving Money & Fixing Problems

The scams that follow online orders, keeping your family's photos private, spending sensibly, and what to do when an order arrives wrong or not at all.

CHAPTER 23

Staying Safe: Scams, Fake Apps & Privacy

Ordering prints is safe when you use the real companies. The trouble comes from people pretending to be them, especially around the holidays, when everyone is expecting packages.

SCAM ALERT

"Your package is delayed" texts and emails

The Federal Trade Commission warns that scammers send fake delivery messages saying you missed a delivery or need to update your shipping details, with a link. The link leads to a look-alike website that steals what you type, or it can install harmful software. Don't click. If you really are waiting on an order, open the company's own app or type its website yourself and look up the order there.

SCAM ALERT

Too-good-to-be-true photo deals

Ads on social media for "free photo books" or impossibly cheap canvas prints sometimes lead to copycat stores that take your money and send nothing. Order from the companies you know, by typing their address yourself: photo.walgreens.com, cvs.com/photo, walmart.com, shutterfly.com, or the Google Photos and Amazon Photos apps.

Choosing the right app

Search an app store for "photo prints" and you'll find dozens of apps. Some are made by other companies that pass your order to Walgreens or CVS. Before you install anything:

- Check the name under the app's title. You want the real company, such as Walgreens, CVS, Walmart, Shutterfly, Google or Amazon.
- Be wary of apps that ask for a subscription, or for payment details before you've even picked photos.
- If in doubt, skip the app and use the company's website in your web browser.

Keeping family photos private

- Your projects and uploads live in your account. Protect it with a strong password you don't use anywhere else, and turn on two-step sign-in if the service offers it.

- When an app asks to see your photos, choosing only selected photos is fine for a one-time order (Chapter 4).
- Think twice before sharing a project link publicly if it shows children's faces and full names.
- On a shared computer, sign out of the print website when you're finished.

STAY SAFE

Never pay with gift cards or a wire transfer

Real photo services take normal payment methods at checkout or at the counter. Anyone who asks you to pay for prints with gift cards, a wire transfer or a payment app is not who they say they are.

If you think you've been scammed, call your bank or card company right away, and report it to the FTC at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

CHAPTER 24

Saving Money the Easy Way

You don't need to become a coupon expert. A few habits keep photo printing inexpensive.

- **Look at the top of the Photo page first.** Walgreens, CVS and Shutterfly all post the current offers there, with promo codes and end dates. In mid-November 2026 there were sales of up to 50% off.
- **Copy the code before you start** and paste it at checkout.
- **Use store pickup** to avoid shipping charges on prints. Walgreens, CVS and Walmart offer free pickup on many items.
- **Mind the shipping threshold.** Shutterfly and Walmart offer free shipping above a certain order amount, and the Costco member offer includes free shipping over $30. The thresholds change, so check at checkout.
- **Walmart+ members:** 25 free 4x6 prints every month Use the barcode on the Walmart+ benefits page in the Walmart app before checkout.
- **Costco members:** 51% off regularly priced Shutterfly orders (Chapter 15).

HEADS UP

Google Photos pickup and coupons

Same-day prints ordered through Google Photos are paid for at the store, and Google says in-store coupons and promo codes can't be used on them (Chapter 9).

FROM BILL

Don't let the email flood you

Signing up with a photo service brings frequent sale emails. If they pile up, scroll to the bottom of one of them and tap Unsubscribe, or change your email preferences in your account. You'll still get your order and shipping messages.

CHAPTER 25

When an Order Goes Wrong

Most orders arrive just right. When one doesn't, the fix is usually simple, as long as you act soon.

Common problems and what to do

Problem	What to do
Prints are blurry	The photo was too small for that size. Reorder smaller, or find the original photo (Chapter 3).
Heads cut off	The crop wasn't checked. Reorder and adjust the crop in the preview.
Colors look dark	Brighten the photo a little on your phone first, then reorder.
Same-day order not ready	Call the store's photo counter. Busy days and machine problems happen.
Mailed order hasn't arrived	Look up the order in the company's own app or website and check the tracking. Google Photos lists orders under Print store, Past orders.
Damaged or wrong item	Contact the company's customer service through its own website or app. Have your order number and a photo of the problem ready.

Changed your mind? Act fast

Cancellation windows are short. Google Photos, for example, lets you cancel a mailed print or photo book order within **2 hours**. Same-day orders may already be printing within minutes. If you spot a mistake, cancel or call right away.

TIP

Keep the confirmation email

Every order sends a confirmation email with an order number. Don't delete it until the order has arrived and looks right. If you need to contact customer service, that number is the first thing they'll ask for.

STAY SAFE

Contact customer service the safe way

Find the company's help page by going to its website yourself. Don't call a "support number" from a search ad or a pop-up; scammers buy look-alike ads for well-known companies.

PART 7

When to Call Bill & Your Cheat-Sheet

An honest word about when a hand is worth it, and a one-page summary of everything in this guide.

CHAPTER 26

When to Call Bill

I've written this guide so you can handle photo printing on your own, and most people can. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand saves you time, money or frustration. Here's my straight advice, with no pressure.

Times it's well worth a call

- **A photo book for a big occasion**: an anniversary, a milestone birthday or a memorial. We can choose the photos together, set up the book and get it ordered in time.
- **Gathering photos from everywhere**: an old phone, a computer, a memory card, a relative's shared album. Getting them all in one place is often the hardest part.
- **Holiday cards and the address list**: setting up an address book once so next year takes minutes.
- **Printing at home** when the printer won't cooperate or the colors look wrong.
- **Old prints and slides** you'd like to scan and reprint. The companion guide on digitizing old photos covers this, and I'm glad to help with it.
- **A message or charge that worries you**, such as a delivery text you're unsure about or an order you don't recognize.

What working with me is like

I work at your pace, explain what I'm doing in plain words, and tell you honestly when something isn't worth your money. I can help over the phone or by remote connection, or come to your home here in Portage County. It's been my way through 30+ years of professional experience.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call or text **(330) 200-8042**, or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. If I'm with someone, Sophie, my AI receptionist, will answer and help you set up a time. My help is $49 remote · $99 in your home. The guides themselves are free to read.

Thank you for letting me help you get your favorite photos off the screen and into your hands. Take your time, enjoy choosing, and remember I'm only a phone call away.

— Bill

CHAPTER 27

Your Photo Printing Cheat-Sheet

Print just this page and keep it by your computer. The whole guide, boiled down.

Which service for which job

If you want	Use
A few prints today	Walgreens, CVS or Walmart same-day pickup, or Google Photos to one of those stores.
A photo book	Google Photos (simplest), Shutterfly (most choices, free designer service) or a store's same-day book.
Holiday cards	Any of them. Shutterfly can print the addresses and even mail the cards.
A calendar	Same-day at Walgreens, CVS or Walmart, or mailed from Shutterfly.
You're a Costco member	Start at costco.com Photo for 51% off regular Shutterfly prices.
You have Walmart+	25 free 4x6 prints every month.
Photos on a Mac	Photos > File > Create, with a third-party print app.

Before you press Order

1. Use original photos, not ones that were texted or posted.
2. Check every crop in the preview.
3. Check names and spelling twice.
4. Look for the current promo code at the top of the Photo page.
5. Choose pickup or shipping with your date in mind.
6. Keep the confirmation email until the order arrives.

Holiday dates for 2026

- Mail cards within the lower 48 states by **December 17** (First-Class Mail) for the Postal Service's recommended delivery before December 25.
- Mail-order books and cards: check each company's order-by dates, and allow extra time.
- Same-day prints: order a day or two before you need them during the holiday rush.

Stay safe

- Never click a link in an unexpected delivery text or email. Check the order in the company's own app.

- Install only the real company's app.
- Never pay for photos with gift cards or a wire transfer.

Keep handy

Item	Mine
Photo service I use most	
Account email	
My nearest photo counter (phone)	
Family birthdays list kept in	

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

You've got this

You can now order prints for the same day, make a photo book, send holiday cards, spend sensibly and steer clear of scams. That's everything you need to bring your favorite photos back into everyday life. And if you'd like a hand, call me at (330) 200-8042.