



## Our guide to the One of a Kind Show and Sale Chicago 2012

By [Alaina Buzas](#)



The One of a Kind Show and Sale Chicago has returned to Merchandise Mart this holiday season with over 600 artists showing off their work. We stopped by when the show opened yesterday and after weaving our way through all of those booths, we've come up with a shopping guide full of our favorite goods and secrets to the show.

Located on the 8th floor of The Merchandise Mart, the show is open today through Sunday. Tickets are \$12 per person and provide admission for all days of the show. Seniors are \$9 and children 12 and under and free. For more information, visit [OneOfAKindShowChicago.com](http://OneOfAKindShowChicago.com).

Our tips:

- Don't miss the [Toyota Retreat](#), where you can get a free tote bag, drink tea, make [a notebook](#) and get a back massage.
- Skip the food and beverages on sale for high prices within the show-there are plenty of cheaper places to eat downstairs in the Merch Mart.
- Bring a sturdy reusable bag to carry all your purchases.
- Make your rounds through the entire show (we know, it's huge but just do it) before making a purchase. You might find another booth has similar items at a lower price or in a style you like better.

- Spend the \$2 to check your coat as it gets pretty toasty in the show when the crowds show up.
- Check [the show schedule](#) to see performers and enjoy music.



### **For your girlfriends**

If you're searching for gifts for your girlfriends, especially those that are hard to buy for, we found two booths you must stop by. First is [d'Marie](#), booth 9047, where you can purchase their "[Party in a Bag](#)". The [gift bag](#) includes your choice of flavored triangle crackers, an herb blend and, most importantly, a Frappe Vino mix.

We also liked the [fun socks](#) (pictured) created by [Wendy Costa Studio](#), booth 3105. Wendy also sells colorful make-up bags and purses to go along with her socks, all of which your daughter will be trying to steal when you're not working.



### **For the clean freak**

For the person in your life who needs everything spic-and-span, visit [Chel Domestic Goodies](#) in booth 3032A. Michelle Dortch creates and sells a variety of colorful rubber gloves, aprons and fun cleaning accessories (yes, those exist). She also sells patterns and sizes for both men and women.



## Purses and bags

There are definitely a lot of vendors selling purses and bags this year, but a few really stood-out to us above the rest.

First were the hand printed textiles (pictured) by [Chomp Industries](#) in booth 8062. They sell totebags, quilts and more, covered in beautiful and fun patterns that kids will love as well as adults. We also liked the clutches and purses by [Brynn Capella](#) in booth 8108. Designs from her last collection are on sale, with clothes buy one, get one free.



## Jewelry

There are also dozens of jewelry booths at the show, making it hard to commit to just one artist. One of our favorites is [Smart Glass](#), a collection by Kathleen Plate in booth 8121. Kathleen uses glass from recycled bottles to create beautiful necklaces that stand-out with the original colors from the glass.

For trendier statement pieces, check out [Lily Dawson Designs](#). Necklaces, bracelets and earrings are made from materials such as deerskin leather, crystal and plated chains.

[Nomadic Ant](#) offered a nice variety of jewelry and accessories that would make great gifts. Our favorites were the nest earrings (pictured) to give to moms.



## For the art collector

There is certainly plenty of art to choose from at the show, but we could imagine either of these two artists' work hanging in a family home.

Visit [Andrea Harris](#) in booth 3136A for landscape paintings created with a variety of media, including beeswax. Her paintings remind us of Midwest roadtrips and made us wish for some Chicago snow.

Chicago artist [Ezra Siegel](#)'s paintings would be a perfect addition to a family home (pictured, booth 1079). His Building Blocks series were inspired by a vintage set of children's blocks he discovered and are fun and geometric without being too elementary. We also liked his smaller canvas works that were more colorful and would look great in a kid's room.



## For boys

In booth 8047 you'll find [Nerfect](#), where Berwyn-based artist Britton Walters has adorably-illustrated shirts, art prints and plush creatures. We love the Diaobolical Hot Dog and Tricky Pug toys for gifts for boys (pictured).

For tweens and teen boys, check out [VAYA BAGS](#) in booth 8083 where you'll find messenger bags, wallets, belts and more. All products are made from scrap and surplus canvas from local sailboat factories, as well as recycled bike tubes.



### **For teachers**

Looking for the perfect gift for your child's teacher? Check out the [Pencil Lady](#) in booth 7043. You can buy picture frames, clocks and wastebaskets to help decorate their classroom, or go for a simple pair of pencil earrings (pictured).

[The Peapack Mitten Company](#), booth 8093, can keep Chicagoland teachers' hands warm on those early-morning commutes or during recess duty. All mittens, and fingerless gloves, are made from 100% recycled wool and are sold in a variety of colors and patterns.



### **For the decorator**

For that person in your life who seems to always be rearranging the furniture and decor in their home, we found two booths you should visit.

[Melissa Z. Monroe](#)'s pottery, in booth 2086, would make nice gifts. Our favorite piece was a butterdish but there are plenty of plates, vases and more to choose from.

If you're willing to spend a little more cash, stop by [Twice by Kelly Rauch](#) in booth 7048 (pictured). Twice takes antique and vintage furniture and gives it a unique touch with custom upholstery and paint. You can schedule a visit to the shop, but pieces are significantly marked down just for the show so don't miss the sales.



## For the men

You may not be up for dragging your husband around a craft show, but you can certainly find gifts for him here.

For cufflinks, tie clips or money clips, try [Davin and Kesler](#) in booth 1083. Their artisan woodwork puts a rustic touch on these more corporate gifts.

If you're looking to help decorate a "Man Cave", visit [Woodsport](#) in booth 4088 (pictured). There are plenty of manly decorative items and small pieces of furniture to choose from but our favorite is the small side table that also serves as a bottle opener.



## For babies or baby mamas

There were hundreds of custom onesies, bibs and more at the show but a few booths were definitely our favorites.

[Megan Lee Designs](#) in booth 7078 is Berwyn-based and we love that her love for the Midwest shows through in her work. Buy mama and baby a matching "IL love you forever" tee and onesie for absolute Illinois cuteness.

In the Etsy corner we found [Little Hip Squeaks](#) in booth 1EP. You can choose from a variety of super-soft baby goods including blankets, hats and leggings (pictured).