



# UK Consumer Spending Habits

**Festive Season 2024**

**GXO**

Providing our customers with the best logistics services involves more than industry leading warehouse and transport solutions. It includes a whole package of services, advice and insight from our expert teams to help them thrive in a competitive marketplace.

We've conducted this research to provide our customers with additional insights into the likely spending patterns of consumers in the UK between now and Christmas 2024. We hope this latest view from consumers will enhance our customers' existing market research and demand planning for Christmas.

The research provides the latest view on how, when and how much consumers intend to spend over the festive period and reinforces different spending behaviour across gender and age groups, that can provide valuable insights retailers can exploit. The findings point to the increasing importance of Black Friday in the UK as well as other factors that are influencing spending behaviour this year.

This information not only provides the opportunity to tailor offers and maximise sales, but for logistics suppliers, like GXO, it adds to our existing demand

planning so we can right size appropriately for the significant increases in demand expected from mid-November until mid-January.

Given the increasing importance of same day and next day delivery, getting the right logistics services is critical to servicing increased demand. This data further helps us plan the additional logistics support required, from correct pick layouts, to increased labour, back-office support and the critical availability of onward transport right up to Christmas Eve.

The data highlights that customers increasingly value a variety of modes to return their goods including high street and store drop offs. This is why our Clicklink™ Click & Collect services on high streets across the UK is proving so popular with a number of retailers.

We hope that this data helps retailers of all sizes and wish them a successful 2024 festive season.



**Gavin Williams**  
Managing Director,  
GXO UK&I

With half of Brits relying on Black Friday for Christmas shopping, retailers need to be fully prepared for a huge surge in demand that goes beyond a typical weekend sale. This year, even more so than previous years, consumers have an appetite for value-driven deals, particularly in the 25–34 age group, where anticipation for Black Friday is at its peak. Retailers who meet these expectations head-on - with well-stocked inventory, smooth logistics, and exceptional online and in-store experiences - stand to benefit most from this seasonal opportunity.

It's also critical to account for the surge in last-minute shopping, particularly among men, who often shop later in the season. Retailers need to ensure they have robust delivery, gift-wrapping, and gift card services in place to accommodate this last-minute demand. Tailoring these services for ease and speed will be key to capturing

sales from this segment and ensuring customer satisfaction even as the clock ticks down.

Moreover, it's not just about the offers; it's about delivering a seamless experience from purchase through to returns. With 21% of shoppers expecting the option to pick up online orders in-store and over half rating the ease of returns as a key purchasing factor, retailers must think omnichannel. Ensuring the returns process is efficient and user-friendly is as crucial as the initial sale. If retailers can nail these aspects, they'll not only see increased sales but also heightened customer loyalty well into the new year.



**Martin Newman**  
Consumer Champion

**Survey methodology:** The research was conducted by Censuswide with a sample of 2,003 Nationally Representative UK Respondents (aged 16+). Quotas were applied to nationally representative proportions for age, gender and region aged 16+. The survey fieldwork took place between 01/11/2024 - 04/11/2024. Censuswide abide by and employ members of the Market Research Society which is based on the ESOMAR principles and are members of The British Polling Council.

# Christmas Shopping Plans

- <sup>1</sup> Q1, All 'yes' answers combined.
- <sup>2</sup> Q1, All 'No' answers combined.
- <sup>3</sup> Q2, All 'Yes' answers combined.
- <sup>4</sup> Respondents who will shop for Christmas this year and have not yet finished their shopping.
- <sup>5</sup> Q2, All 'No' answers combined.
- <sup>6</sup> Mean: (%).

At the start of November, **almost half (46%)** of Brits surveyed said yes<sup>1</sup>, they have started their Christmas shopping for this year, while **over half (54%)** of Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> said yes<sup>3</sup>, they will wait for special deal days such as Black Friday or Cyber Monday to get their Christmas shopping done this year.



## Q1

### Preparing for Christmas shopping: Have you started your Christmas shopping for this year yet?

First, the research was conducted to explore how Brits are preparing for Christmas with regard to shopping. **Almost half (46%)** of Brits surveyed said yes<sup>1</sup>, they have started their Christmas shopping for this year. **2 in 5 (40%)** have made a start, and just over **1 in 20 (6%)** have already finished.



- Yes<sup>1</sup>, started shopping (46%)
  - Made a start (40%)
  - Already finished (6%)

More female than male Brits surveyed said yes<sup>1</sup>, they have started their Christmas shopping for this year (**51% vs 40%**). Brits surveyed aged 35-44 are most likely to say yes<sup>1</sup>, they have started their Christmas shopping for this year, compared to those aged 55+, who are least likely to say the same (**55% vs 40%**).

However, **almost half (46%)** of Brits surveyed said no<sup>2</sup>, they haven't started their Christmas shopping for this year yet. Almost **3 in 10 (29%)** haven't started yet but do have some ideas for gifts, while **over 1 in 6 (17%)** haven't started and have no ideas for gifts. Just **1 in 12 (8%)** of respondents won't be shopping for Christmas this year, compared to just over **9 in 10 (92%)** who will be.

Continuing the trend, male Brits surveyed are more likely than female Brits surveyed to say no<sup>2</sup>, they haven't started their Christmas shopping for this year yet (**51% vs 42%**). Brits surveyed aged 16-24 are most likely to say no<sup>2</sup>, they haven't started their Christmas shopping for this year yet (**52%**), while Brits surveyed aged 35-44 are least likely to say no<sup>2</sup> (**40%**).

## Q2

**Black Friday and Cyber Monday:** Are you planning to wait for any special deal days such as Black Friday or Cyber Monday to do your Christmas shopping this year?

**Over half (54%)** of Brits surveyed who will shop for Christmas this year and have not yet finished their shopping said yes<sup>3</sup>, they **will wait for special deal days such as Black Friday or Cyber Monday** to get their Christmas shopping done this year.

**Over 2 in 5 (42%)** Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> will do some of their Christmas shopping on special deal days, while 1 in 8 (12%) will get all/most of their Christmas shopping on special deal days.

Slightly more female than male Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> said yes<sup>3</sup>, they will wait for special deal days such as Black Friday or Cyber Monday to do their Christmas shopping this year (55% vs 52%).

However, there are slight differences when this data is broken down further. For example, more female than male Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> said they will do some of their Christmas shopping on special deal days (45% vs 39%). However, the trend reverses when it comes to doing all/most Christmas shopping in these periods, with more male than female Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> saying they will do all/most of their Christmas shopping on special deal days (13% vs 10%).



**80%**

**25-34 year old** Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> are most likely to say yes<sup>3</sup>, they **will wait for special deal days** such as Black Friday or Cyber Monday to get their Christmas shopping done this year (80%), while Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> aged 55+ are least likely to say yes<sup>3</sup> to this (30%).

**5%**

Only 5% of 55+ year old Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> are likely to do all or most of their Christmas shopping on deal days.

Continuing the trend, male Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> are more likely than female Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> to say no<sup>5</sup>, they will not wait for any special deal days such as Black Friday or Cyber Monday to get their Christmas shopping done this year (58% vs 45%). Likewise, Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> aged 55+ are most likely to say no<sup>5</sup> to this (70%), compared to those aged 25-34, who are least likely to say no<sup>5</sup> (20%).



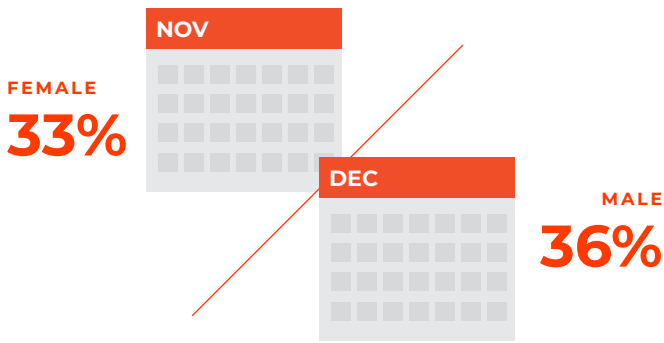
# Q3

# Q4

## When do Brits buy Christmas presents?

What percentage of your Christmas presents, if any, have / do you plan to buy during the following times this year?

Almost a third (32%) of Christmas presents are bought by Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> on **Black Friday**, followed by an average<sup>6</sup> of 31% of Christmas presents being bought by Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> **throughout November**. Just over a fifth (21%) of Christmas presents are bought by Brits<sup>4</sup> **the week before Christmas**.



Breaking this down by gender, female Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> buy / plan to buy a **third (33%)** of their Christmas presents this year **throughout November**, making this the time they buy the highest percentage of their presents. In contrast, male Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> buy / plan to buy **over a third (36%)** of their Christmas presents this year in **early December**, making this the time they buy the highest percentage of their presents.

## What is most important to Brits when shopping during Christmas?

When / if shopping during the Christmas season, what, if anything, is / would be most important to you?

Price is by far most important to Brits if / when shopping during the Christmas season, with **over 3 in 5 (61%)** saying this is / would be most important to them.



Following this, 1 in 6 (16%) Brits surveyed said speed of delivery is / would be most important to them. Finally, the ability to return is / would be least important to Brits surveyed, with 1 in 10 (10%) citing this.

Both male and female Brits surveyed identified price as the most important factor to them if / when shopping during the Christmas season (59% of males and 62% of females). The same is true of age groups, however, by different percentages. Respondents aged 45-54 (72%) were most likely to say price is the most important factor, followed by those aged 55+ (63%), 35-44 (59%), 16-24 (58%) and finally, aged 25-34 (48%) who said the same. A higher percentage (32%) of Brits aged 25-34 than those in other age groups identified speed of delivery as most important to them.

# Spending

**£352**

On average<sup>1</sup>, of those respondents who will shop for Christmas this year, they expect to spend **£352**.

**£195**

On Black Friday, on average<sup>1</sup>, Brits surveyed are planning to spend **£195**.

**Q5**

**Spending:** How much do you spend over the festive period this year?

The research looked at how much Brits are planning to spend this year around the Christmas period.

Almost 3 in 5 (**56%**) Brits surveyed agree<sup>2</sup> that they have noticed an increase in the price of items they typically purchase for Christmas this year, while the same percentage (**56%**) agree<sup>2</sup> that if they were to see an increase, it would make them more likely to shop during sale periods.

On average<sup>1</sup>, of those respondents who will shop for Christmas this year, they expect to spend £352.

Almost 1 in 7 (**13%**) plan to spend £201-300, 1 in 8 (**12%**) plan to spend £151-£200, and 1 in 10 (**10%**) plan to spend £51-£100.

On Black Friday, on average<sup>1</sup>, Brits surveyed are planning to spend £195. A quarter (**25%**) of Brits surveyed are planning to spend less than £25 on Black Friday, while 1 in 9 (**11%**) are planning to spend £51-£100. However, over a fifth (**22%**) of Brits surveyed are unsure how much they're planning to spend on Black Friday.

There are some differences in Black Friday shopping between different demographics. For example, on Black Friday, on average<sup>1</sup>, male Brits surveyed are planning to spend more than female Brits surveyed (£231 vs £159). On Black Friday, on average<sup>1</sup>, Brits surveyed aged 25-34 are planning to spend the most (£315), while those aged 55+ are planning to spend the least (£90).



# Q6

**Price increases:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I have noticed an increase in the price of items I typically purchase for Christmas this year'?

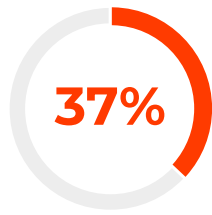
Finally, the research explored Brits' experiences with pricing. **Almost 3 in 5 (56%)** Brits surveyed agree<sup>2</sup> that they have noticed an increase in the price of items they typically purchase for Christmas this year. **Almost a fifth (19%)** strongly agree with this, while **almost 2 in 5 (37%)** somewhat agree. This is compared to **only 1 in 11 (9%)** who disagree<sup>3</sup> that this is the case. More respondents aged 25-34 than those aged 55+ agree<sup>2</sup> that they have noticed an increase in the price of items they typically purchase for Christmas this year (66% vs 50%).



Moreover, it appears that pricing impacts purchasing behaviour. For example, **Almost 3 in 5 (56%)** Brits surveyed also agree<sup>2</sup> that if they were to see an increase in the price of items they typically purchase for Christmas, it would make them more likely to shop during sales periods. **A fifth (20%)** of Brits surveyed strongly agree with this, while **almost 2 in 5 (37%)** somewhat agree. This is compared to **only 1 in 11 (9%)** who disagree<sup>3</sup> that this is the case. Again, more Brits surveyed aged 35-44 agree<sup>2</sup> that if they were to see an increase in the price of items they typically purchase for Christmas, it would make them more likely to shop during sales periods, compared to those aged 55+ who are least likely to agree<sup>2</sup> with this (68% vs 47%).

# Shopping Online

- <sup>1</sup> All 'Increased' answers combined.
- <sup>2</sup> All 'Decreased' answers combined.
- <sup>3</sup> Mean (% excl., "Unsure").
- <sup>4</sup> Respondents who will shop for Christmas online this year.
- <sup>5</sup> All 'Agree' answers combined.
- <sup>6</sup> All 'Disagree' answers combined.



Almost 2 in 5 (**37%**) Brits surveyed say that their online shopping has increased<sup>1</sup> in the past year.



Almost 3 in 5 (**56%**) Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> say they are most likely to receive their orders via home delivery any day when shopping online this Christmas.

## Q7

**Online shopping habits:**  
In the past year, have you increased or decreased the amount you do the following?



Investigating where respondents shop, almost 2 in 5 (**37%**) Brits surveyed say that their **online shopping** has increased<sup>1</sup> in the past year, with 1 in 7 (**14%**) saying it has significantly increased (by 10% or more), and over a fifth (**22%**) saying it has somewhat increased (by less than 10%). This is compared to only 1 in 8 (**12%**) who say their online shopping has decreased<sup>2</sup> in the past year, and over 2 in 5 (**45%**) who say it has neither increased nor decreased.

Being more specific, almost 3 in 10 (**28%**) Brits surveyed say they have increased<sup>1</sup> their **shopping online from multi-brand retailers rather than directly from brands** in the past year, with almost 1 in 10 (**9%**) saying this has significantly increased (by 10% or more), and almost a fifth (**18%**) saying this has somewhat increased (by less than 10%). This is compared to just over 1 in 8 (**13%**) Brits surveyed who say they have decreased<sup>2</sup> their shopping online from multi-branded retailers rather than directly from brands, and almost half (**48%**) who have neither increased nor decreased this.

However, a quarter (**25%**) of Brits surveyed said they have increased<sup>1</sup> their **shopping online directly from brands rather than from multi-branded retailers** in the past year, with 1 in 14 (**7%**) who say this has significantly increased (by 10% or more) and just over 1 in 6 (**17%**) who say this has somewhat increased (by less than 10%). This is compared to 1 in 7 (**14%**) who say they have decreased<sup>2</sup> their shopping online directly from brands rather than from multi-brand retailers in the past year, and almost half (**47%**) who have neither increased nor decreased this.



## Q8

### Online shopping habits: What percentage of the following, if any, do/will you buy online?

Taking a broader approach, the research aimed to understand what percentage of shopping Brits do online. On average<sup>3</sup>, Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> will buy **46%** of their Christmas shopping this year online. In comparison, they buy an average<sup>3</sup> of **40%** of their shopping online throughout the year (excluding groceries). In the pre-Christmas period, Brits surveyed buy **37%** of their shopping online.

Looking at sales periods specifically, Brits on average<sup>3</sup> buy **30%** of their shopping in the 'January sales' online, while they buy just **over a third (34%)** of their Black Friday shopping online.

## Q9

### Delivery: When shopping online this Christmas, how, if in any way, are you most likely to receive your orders?

Focusing next on delivery, the top three ways Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> are most likely to receive their orders when shopping online this Christmas are:

**56%**

Home delivery any day

**29%**

Home delivery next day

**21%**

Collect in retailer store

**Almost 1 in 7 (13%)** Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> are most likely to receive their orders when online shopping this Christmas via collect from parcel pick up location, and just **1 in 9 (11%)** are most likely to use a collect from locker service.

Over half of male and female Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> are most likely to receive their orders when shopping online this Christmas via home delivery any day (**53% and 59% respectively**), but male Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> are more likely than female Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> to receive orders via home delivery next day (**32% vs 26%**). Looking at age groups, **two thirds (66%)** of Brits surveyed<sup>4</sup> aged 55+ are most likely to receive their orders via home delivery any day, compared to respondents<sup>4</sup> aged 16-24 who are least likely to say the same (**42%**). However, this is still the most popular option amongst all age categories.



## Q10

**Returns:** When returning a product to a retailer, how, if in any way, do you most prefer to make the return?

Looking next at returns, there are a range of ways Brits surveyed would prefer to make their returns. The top three ways Brits surveyed most prefer to make their returns when returning a product to a retailer are:

**33%**

Drop off in a drop off store (e.g., Royal Mail counter, Co-Op counter)

**30%**

Return to brand or retailer store

**22%**

Printing a label with collection

Just over 1 in 6 (17%) would most prefer to drop off in a locker when returning a product to a retailer. Interestingly, just over 1 in 7 (15%) Brits surveyed claim they never return products to the retailer, while 1 in 12 (8%) have no preference for the way they make their returns.

## Q11

**Returns:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'The ease of returning a purchase significantly affects whether I decide to shop with a retailer'?

**52%**

It is interesting that over half (52%) of Brits surveyed agree<sup>5</sup> that the ease of returning a purchase significantly affects whether they decide to shop with a retailer. Almost a fifth (18%) of Brits surveyed strongly agree with this, while a third (33%) somewhat agree. This is compared to only 1 in 8 (12%) Brits surveyed who disagree<sup>6</sup> that the ease of returning a purchase significantly affects whether they decide to shop with a retailer.

Interestingly, more female than male Brits surveyed agree<sup>5</sup> that the ease of returning a purchase significantly affects whether they decide to shop with a retailer (53% vs 50%), while more Brits surveyed aged 25-34 (62%) than those aged 55+ (45%) agree<sup>5</sup> that this is the case.



**Reviews:** Thinking about shopping with an online retailer or brand, which of the following factors, if any, would make you likely to leave a positive or negative review on the website?



Finally, in this section, we researched the impact of different factors on reviews. The top five factors that would make Brits surveyed most likely to leave a positive review for an online retailer are:

1. Product quality (**49%**)
2. Pricing (**36%**)
3. Time it took (**24%**)
4. Variety of products (**21%**)
5. Issue resolution from customer experience (**19%**)

A further 1 in 6 (**16%**) would be most likely to leave a positive review because of packaging, while the same percentage (**16%**) would be most likely to leave a positive review because of website usability, and 1 in 6 (**16%**) would be most likely to leave one because of the returns policy.

Alternatively, the top five factors that would make Brits surveyed most likely to leave a negative review for an online retailer are:

1. Product quality (**40%**)
2. Time it took (**24%**)
3. Issue resolution from customer experience (**23%**)
4. Pricing (**17%**)
5. Return policy (**16%**)

1 in 7 (**14%**) Brits surveyed are most likely to leave a negative review for an online retailer because of packaging, while a further 1 in 9 (**11%**) would do so because of website usability, and 1 in 14 (**7%**) would do so because of the variety of products.

**GXO**

**Logistics at full potential**