

Shopping Statistics

Find out the latest statistics on shopping trends in the UK



*Analysis
conducted by*

Every year the improved ease, safety and reliability of shopping online encourages more people to move their retail activities online. Nothing has triggered this cultural shift faster than the temporary closure of physical stores during the COVID-19 response. Here, we break down the latest statistics on online shopping, COVID-19's impact on shopping, and shopping fraud, to name a few.

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Quick facts

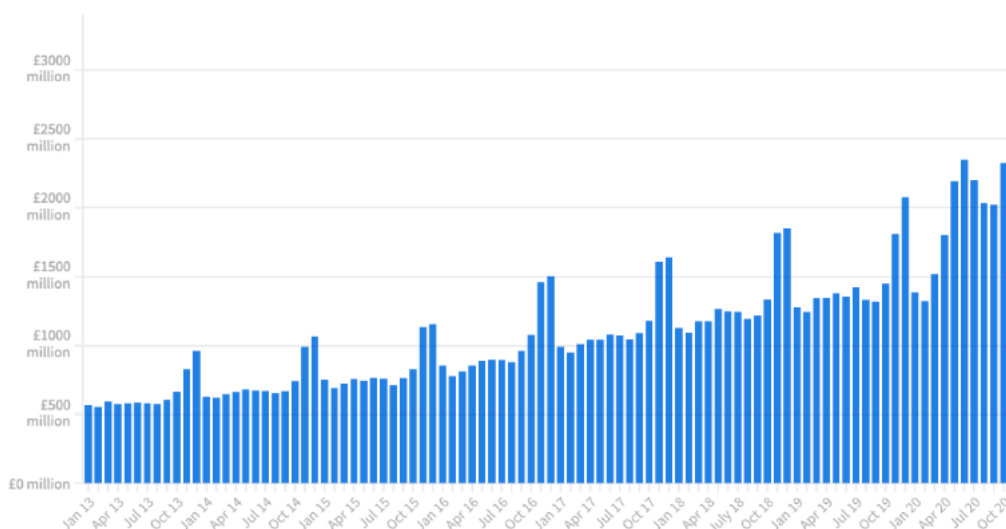
- **UK internet retail sales** reached their highest value since January 2013 in November 2020, at **£3.26 billion**.
- This spike in online retail sales represents an **80% increase** on the previous year.
- The most popular online purchase was **clothing**, with **55%** of people buying clothing items online in 2020.
- The market value of supermarkets reached its peak in 2020, at **£205 billion**.
- That means the average Brit spent **£3,020** on their supermarket shopping during 2020.
- In 2020, **Tesco** was the UK's favourite supermarket, with a **60%** positive response rate.
- Tesco also holds the **greatest market share** of supermarkets in the UK, with a **27% share**.
- **Marks & Spencer** was the UK's highest-rated department store in December 2020, with a **75% positive rating**.
- The average student receives **£131.31 per month** from their parents to help bolster their budget.
- **74%** of all students have found an extra job to help cover their bills.
- People in their **20s** are most likely to be a victim of online shopping fraud, making up **29%** of the total reports so far in 2020.
- Average online shopping and auction fraud loss in 2020 was **£726**.
- The most popular buy now pay later company in 2020 was **Klarna**, with **986,000 downloads** from January to July of 2020.
- The generation using BNPL the most is **millennials (1981-1996)**, with **54%** using this online payment method.
- **Over half (52%)** of BNPL users are using these services **more** during the COVID-19 period.
- The greatest percentage increase and decreases for online traffic during lockdown are **supermarkets (34.8%)** and **tourism (-43.7%)**, respectively.



Online retail trends in the UK

Internet sales reached their highest value in November 2020, at £3,251 million. This spike in online retail sales represents an 80% increase from the year before. While this November peak is predominantly explained by the arrival of Christmas, the previous peak of £2,349 million in June 2020 is explained solely by the increase in demand for online shopping following the first UK lockdown imposed only four months before.

The value of online retail sales over time



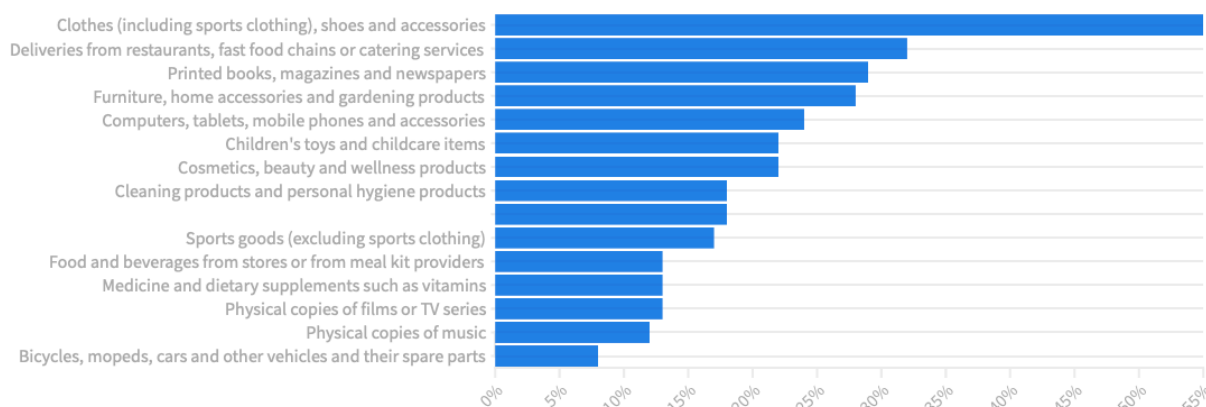
Source: Office for National Statistics



Most popular goods and services to buy online

The most popular online purchase was clothing, with 55% of people buying clothing items online in 2020. Food deliveries were the second most popular thing to buy, with a third (32%) of people ordering food online in 2020. Closely following this were printed books, magazines and newspapers.

The goods and services that people bought online in 2020



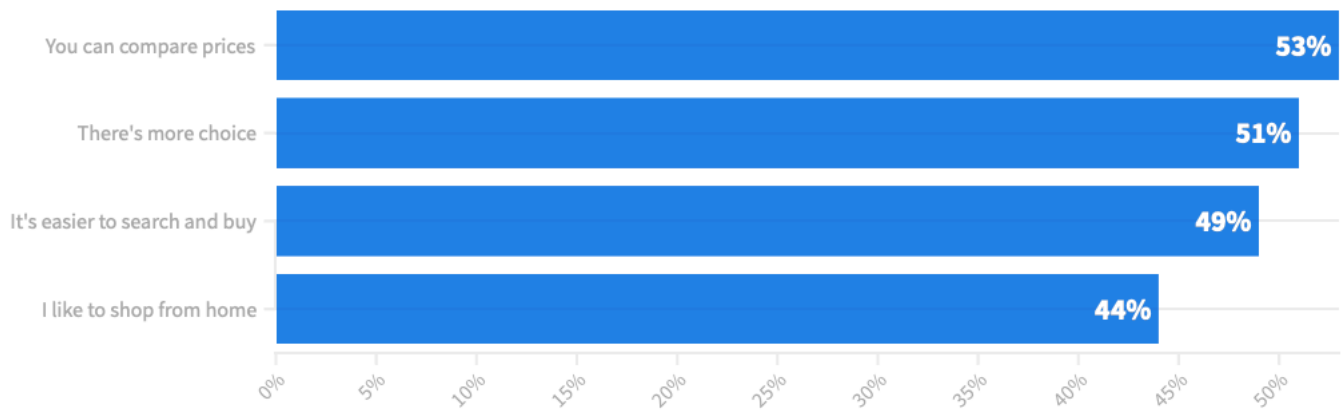
Source: Office for National Statistics



Consumer motivations for shopping online

We explored people's reasons for shopping online. According to the latest statistics, most people (53%) liked to compare the prices of products or services online. 51% of people also liked that online shopping allowed them to explore more choices.

Shopper's reasons for shopping online



Source: Royal Mail, Trinity McQueen



Quick facts

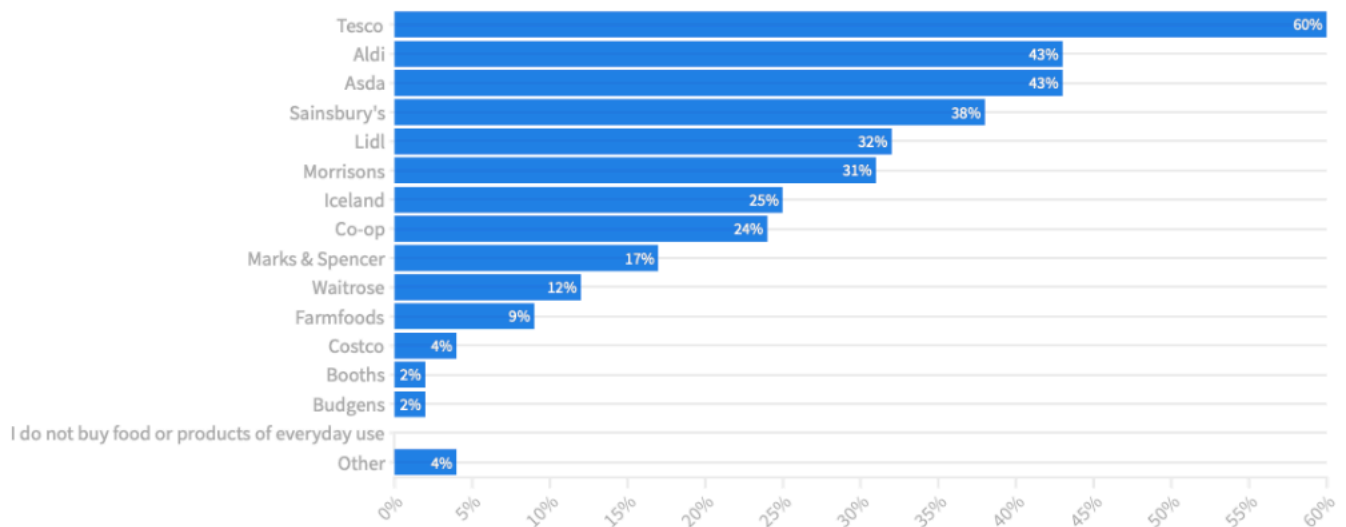
- The market value of supermarkets reached its peak in 2020, at **£205 billion**.
- This represents an **increase of 6.7%** on the previous year (£192 billion).
- That means the average Brit spent **£3,020** on their supermarket shopping during 2020.



The UK's favourite supermarkets

When asked which store they shopped at regularly to buy food and products for everyday use, 60% of respondents replied Tesco. Aldi and Asda came up in joint second place, with a 43% response rate.

The supermarkets Brits shop at most frequently



Source: Statista Global Consumer Survey

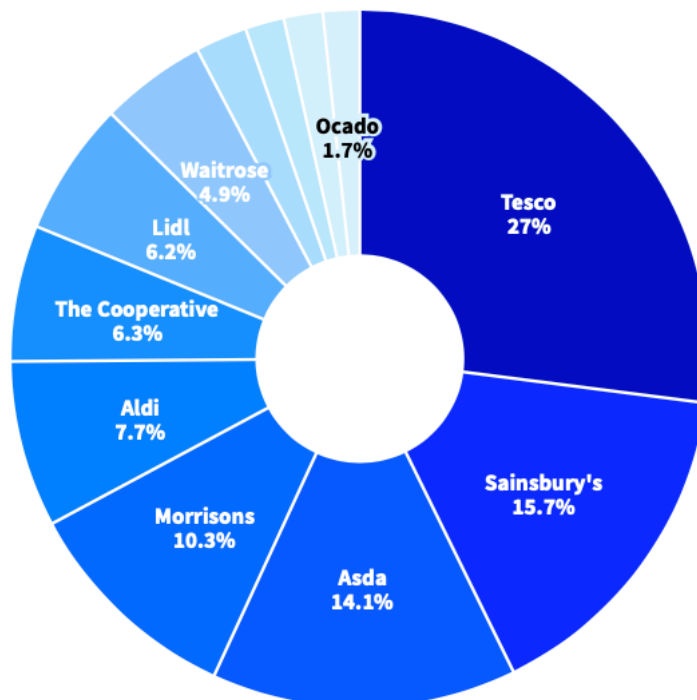


Supermarket market share

As of December 2020, Tesco holds the greatest market share among British supermarkets (at 27%), which aligns with being the nation's favourite supermarket. Contrastingly, Sainsbury's was the fourth most popular supermarket as voted above (with a 38% positivity rating) but has the second greatest market share of grocery stores in Great Britain (15.7%). Being less popular than, say, Asda but having a greater market share could indicate that Sainsbury's makes more money per individual shop.

The market share of British supermarkets

■ Tesco ■ Sainsbury's ■ Asda ■ Morrisons ■ Aldi ■ The Cooperative ■ Lidl ■ Waitrose ■ Iceland ■ Other multiples ■ Symbols and independent ■ Ocado



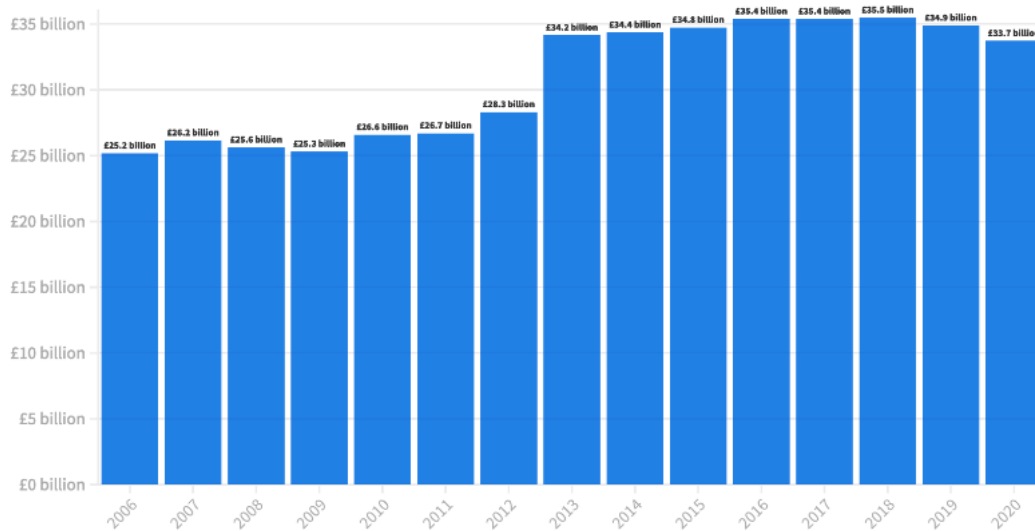
Source: Kantar Worldpanel



Popularity of department stores in the UK

The popularity of shopping at department stores (as calculated by the revenue made yearly) rose significantly (21%) from 2012 to 2013. From 2013 to 2018, the monetary success of department stores continued. In 2019 and 2020, revenue has decreased: decreasing by 1.68% in 2019 and 3.36% in 2020. This decrease is likely due to changes caused by coronavirus: in-person shopping being limited and people having less disposable income.

Department store revenue



Source: Office for National Statistics



The UK's favourite department stores

Marks & Spencer, a Britain-based store specialising in high-quality clothing, homewares and food products, was ranked as the UK's highest-rated department store in December 2020, with a 75% positive rating. Following this, IKEA (Swedish furniture giant) and B&Q (DIY and home improvements store) both gained a 74% positivity rating.

Positivity rating for different department stores



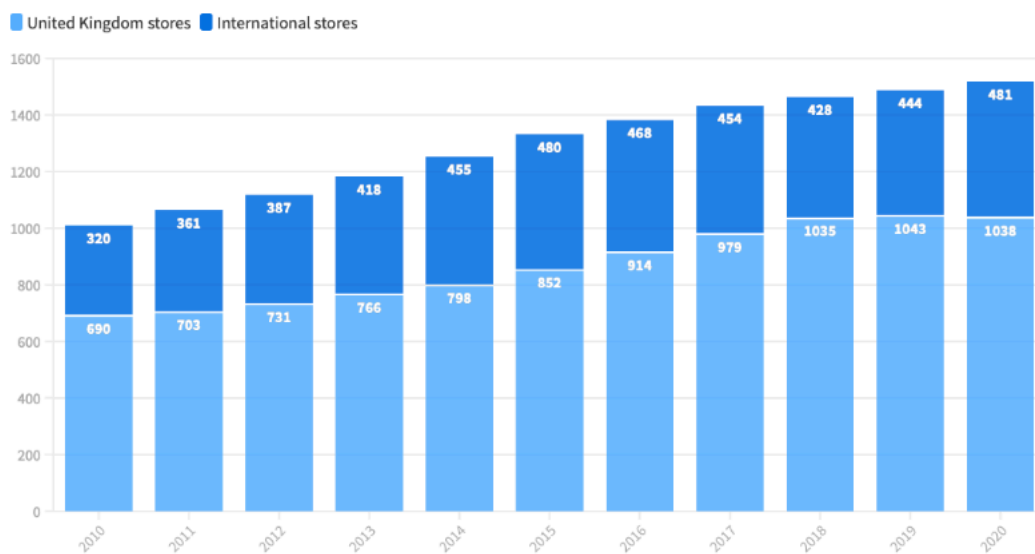
Source: YouGov



Marks & Spencer: Number of stores

Despite being classically British (in heritage and offerings), Marks & Spencer has seen success opening stores outside of the UK. In fact, the growth of store openings in the UK and internationally is equal, both seeing a 50% increase over the 10-year period.

Number of Marks & Spencer stores



Source: Marks & Spencer



In November 2020, **online sales** from department stores accounted for **38.1%** of all online sales.

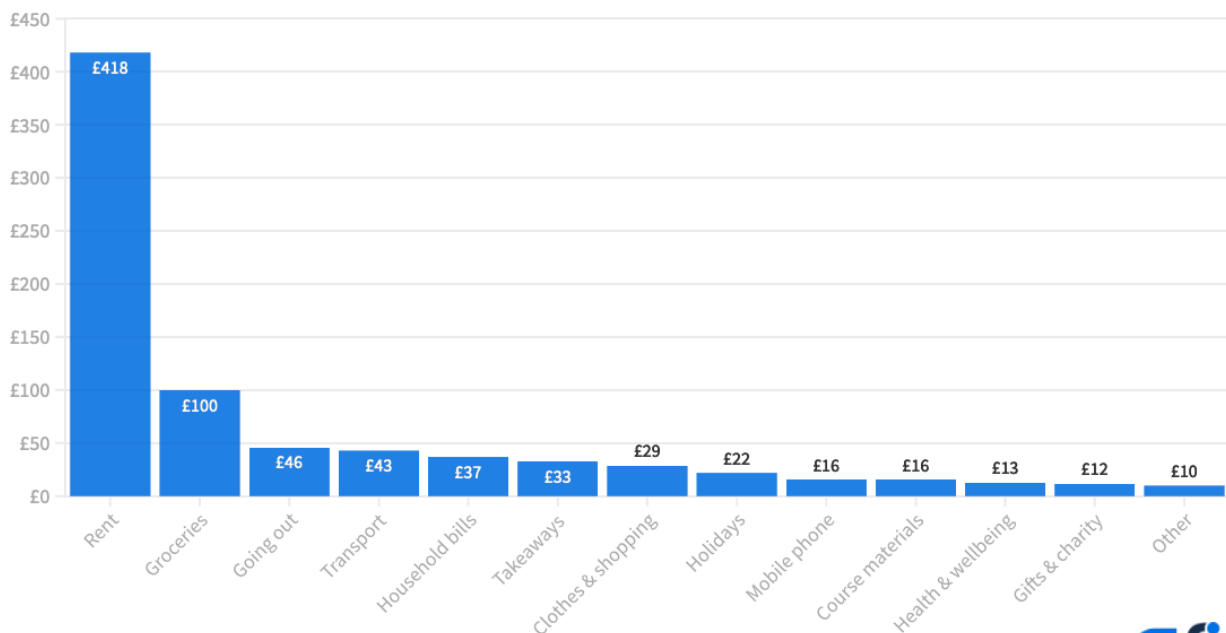
Quick facts

- **Clothes and accessories** are the most popular item for students to buy online, with **64%** admitting to have bought them in a regular month.
- **Two thirds** of students reported they wouldn't buy something if it had been **tested on animals**.
- **Only one in every ten students** felt they were getting value for their money during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Where students spend their budgets

Unsurprisingly, rent is the largest expense for students and makes up 53% of the average student's total expenses. The second biggest expense is groceries, which comes in at £100 per month – a budget far from extravagant. The next largest expenses are social events, transport and household bills, while one-off purchases, such as clothing and mobile phones, are treated as luxury items.

Average living costs for students 2020



Source: Save the Student

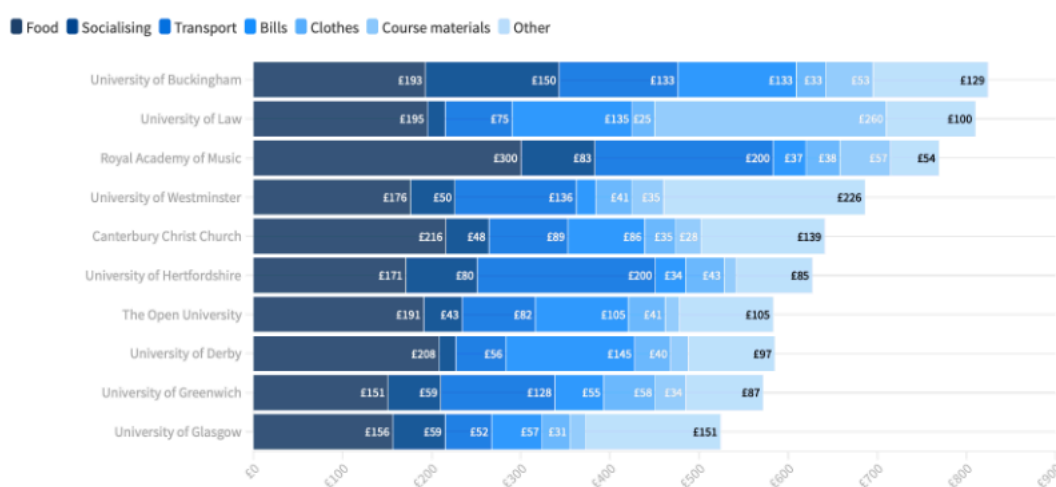


The UK universities with the highest living costs

Other than rent, is London also the most expensive place for other living costs? The maintenance loan in 2020 was £572, which means that students are already on a very strict budget.

Half of the universities in the top 10 universities with the highest living costs are based either entirely or have at least one campus located in London. Despite this, students at the University of Buckingham have the highest living costs before rent, at £827 per month. See the breakdown below.

Top 10 UK universities with the highest living costs



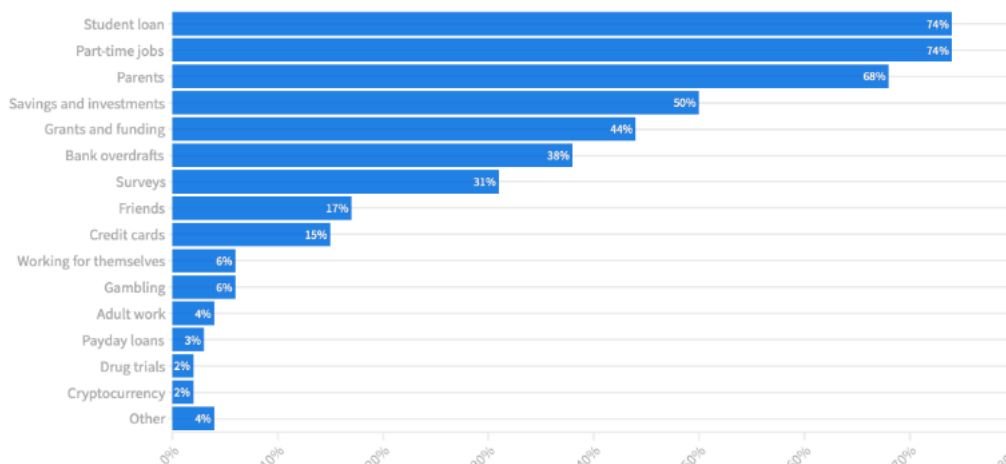
Source: Save the Student



How students fund themselves

71% of students worry about making ends meet, but a lucky few (68%) are getting some extra funds from their parents. The majority of students will find themselves using a combination of sources, as the maintenance loan often doesn't cover all student living costs.

Sources of income for students



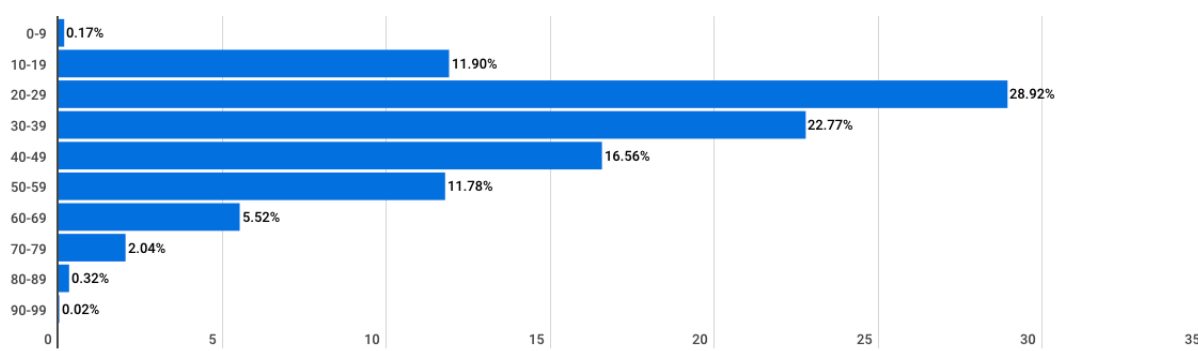
Source: Save the Student



Who is most susceptible to online shopping and auction fraud?

People in their 20s are most likely to be a victim of online shopping fraud, making up 29% of the total reports so far in 2020. They are followed by people in their 30s (23%), 40s (17%) and teens (12%). As a result, 80% of all online shopping fraud victims were under the age of 50.

The number of online frauds reported, by age group



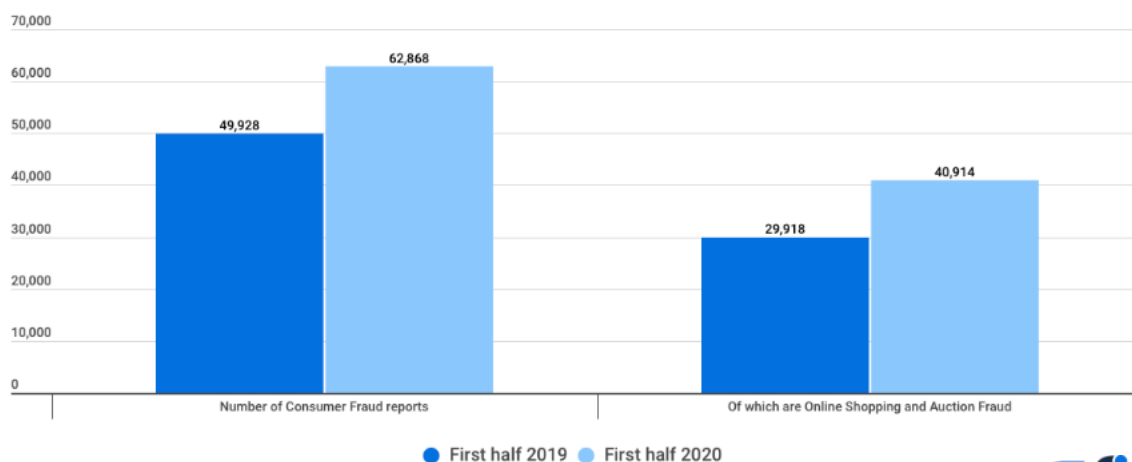
Source: Action Fraud



The number of online shopping and auction frauds in 2019 and 2020

We compared the number of online shopping and auction fraud reports for the first half of 2019 and 2020 (1st January-30th June). There were 40,914 reports of online shopping and auction frauds in the first half of 2020, up by over 11,000 reports (37%) compared to the same period in 2019 (1st January-30th June). As a result, online shopping and auction fraud accounted for 65% of all consumer fraud reports in the first half of 2020.

The number of frauds committed in the first half of 2019 vs. the first half of 2020



Source: Action Fraud



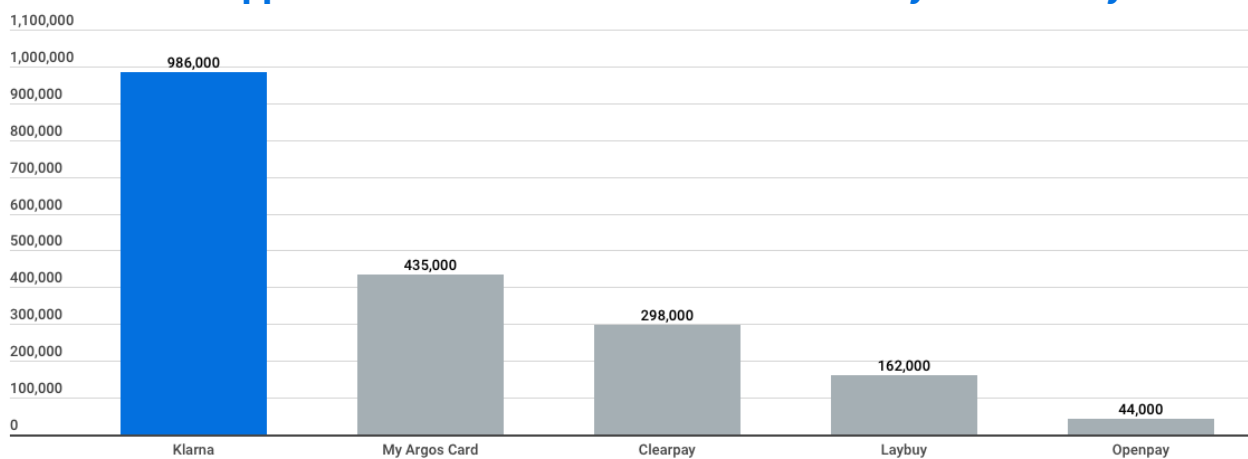
Quick facts

- **Almost 4 in 10 (37%) Brits** say they have used a buy now pay later service.
- **44%** of shoppers use BNPL for its **ease and convenience**.
- Online purchases using buy now pay later services are growing at a rate of **39%** per year.
- **Almost ten million (9.5 million) Brits** said that they **avoided buying from retailers** that don't offer BNPL options at the checkout.

The most popular BNPL companies

There are numerous different buy now pay later platforms, but which ones are the most popular? In terms of app downloads in the UK from January 2020 to the end of July 2020, Klarna was the most popular, with 986,000 downloads. This is more than double the number of downloads of My Argos Card (435,000), which was the next most downloaded BNPL app. In third place was Clearpay (298,000), followed by Laybuy (162,000) then Openpay (44,000).

The BNPL apps with the most downloads from January 2020 to July 2020



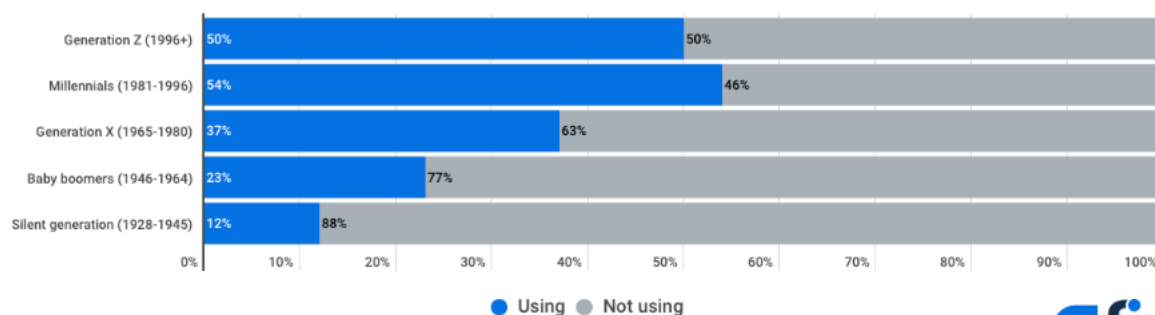
Source: Google Trends



Proportion of people using BNPL, by generation

According to our research, younger generations are far more likely to use buy now pay later services. The generation using BNPL the most is millennials (1981-1996), with 54% using this online payment method. Generation Z (1996+) is also following this same trend, with 50% saying they use buy now pay later. Older generations are also using buy now pay later methods, but not to the same extent. For example, only 23% of baby boomers and 12% of the silent generation use these services.

Proportion of BNPL users, by generation



Source: Finder survey

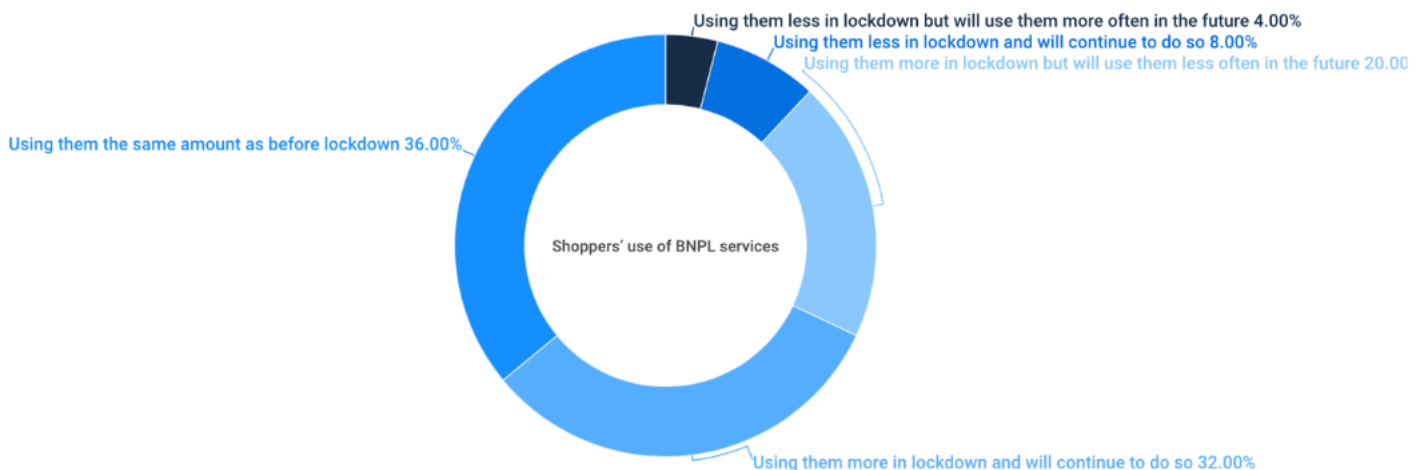


Using BNPL during COVID-19

According to our 2020 research, just under two-thirds (63%) of people are not currently using buy now pay later services. This leaves around 19.4 million people (37%) who have used or are using them.

Over half (52%) of BNPL users are using these services more during the COVID-19 period, with 32% saying they will continue to do so and 20% saying they will use them less often after COVID-19. 12% of BNPL users said they have used these services less over lockdown, but some of these people (4%) said they are likely to use them more in the future.

Shoppers' opinions of using BNPL services in lockdown



Source: Finder survey



Quick facts

- Brits spend more than **£2 billion every year** on subscription services.
- The average Brit spends **£60 per year** on subscription services.
- The average price of a subscription box is **£14**.
- The subscription box market is estimated to **grow by 77%** to be worth **over £1 billion** by 2022.
- **More than 1 in 4 Brits (27.4%)** were subscribed to at least one subscription box service in 2018.



23%

of 18-34 year olds has a subscription box



13%

of 35-54 year olds has a subscription box



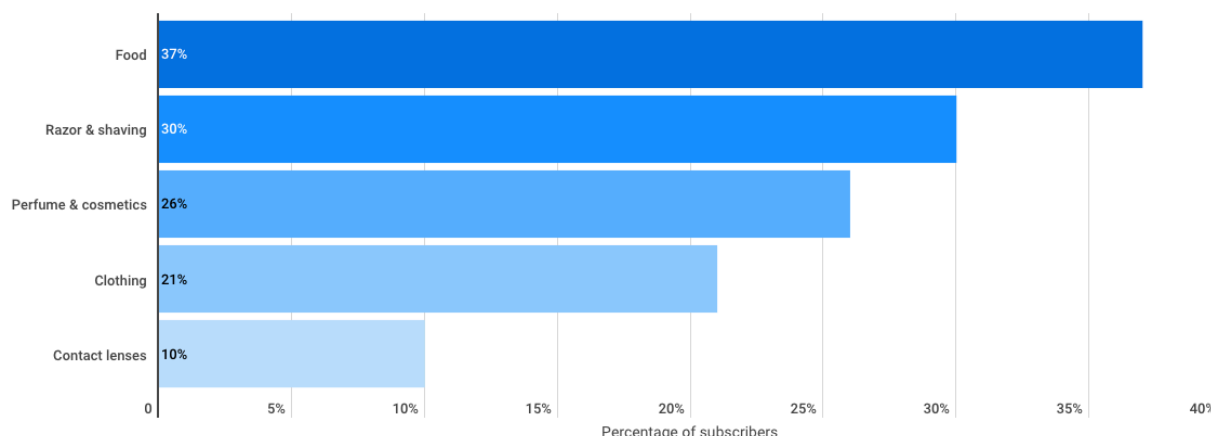
3%

of 55+ year olds has a subscription box

What kinds of subscription boxes do Brits subscribe to?

The most popular subscription boxes are those bringing us food, with 37% of all subscribers subscribing to some sort of food service. The second most popular type of box is those containing razors and shaving items, with 30% of all subscribers. On the other end of the spectrum, only 10% of subscribers see the benefit of getting contact lenses delivered to their door.

The most popular types of subscription boxes



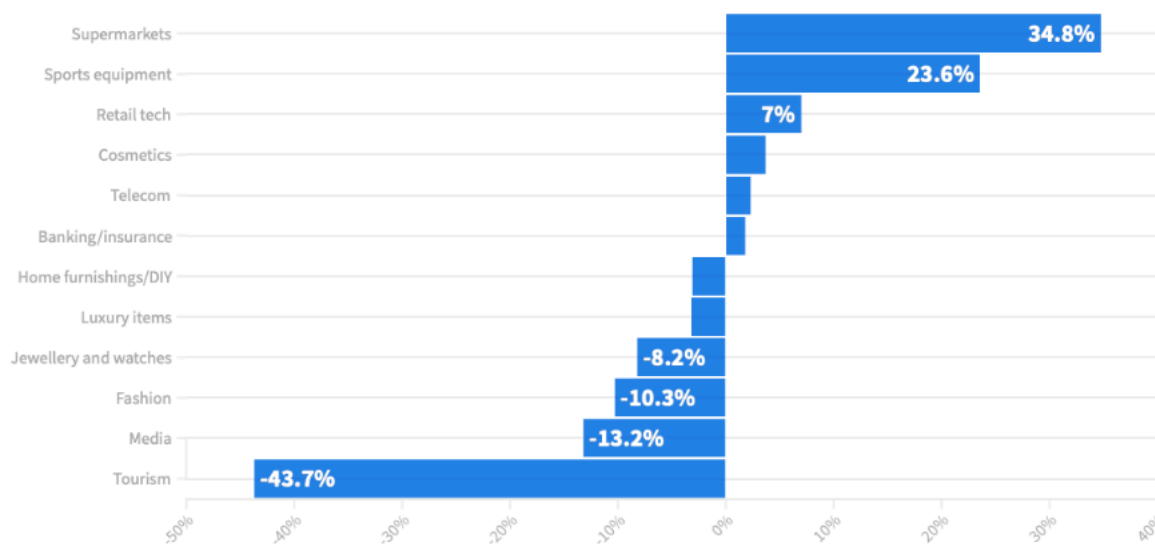
Source: Royal Mail Group, My Subscription Addiction



Impact on online shopping

Online traffic for certain online retailers has seen a huge shift since the coronavirus pandemic. The greatest increase in online traffic (34.8%) was for supermarkets, which can be expected, with a large proportion of their normal customers trying to avoid in-person shopping. Unsurprisingly, tourism searches have seen the biggest drop (-43.7%), as has the tourism industry in general. The sportswear and sports equipment industry has been particularly innovative, introducing apps, online classes and affordable home gym equipment, thus driving a 24% increase in traffic.

Difference in online shopping traffic from January 2020 to October 2020



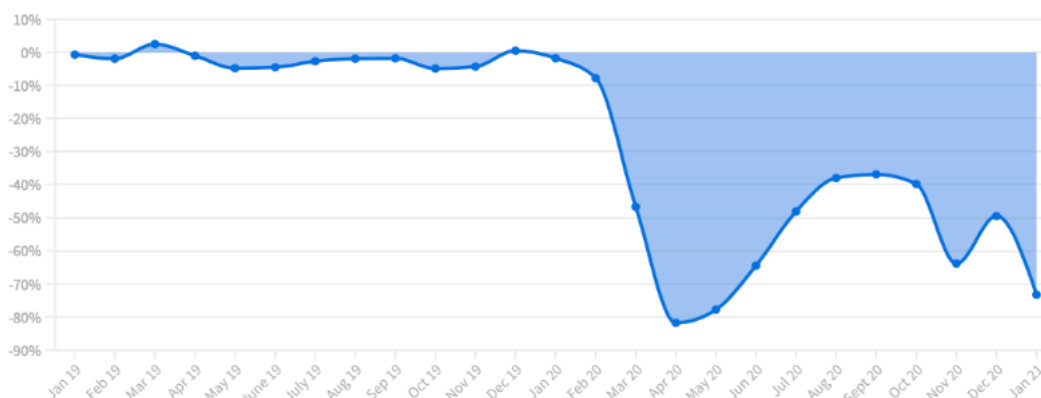
Source: ContentSquare



Impact of COVID-19 on high street shopping

Footfall in high streets has seen a significant decline from March 2020, the beginning of the first lockdown. Since then, footfall has been at an average -56.4% decline.

Change in highstreet footfall from January 2019 to January 2021



Source: British Retail Consortium, Insight DIY, ShopperTrak



- Finder survey: various nationally representative surveys of 2,000 people, commissioned by Finder.
- Office for National Statistics
- Royal Mail
- Trinity McQueen
- Statista Global Consumer Survey
- Kantar Worldpanel
- YouGov
- Marks & Spencer
- Save the Student
- Action Fraud
- Google Trends
- Royal Mail Group
- My Subscription Addiction
- ContentSquare
- British Retail Consortium
- Insight DIY
- ShopperTrak

Methodology

This document contains information and charts from our stats and facts pages. Follow the links below to read more in-depth about the topics mentioned.

[Shopping statistics](#)

[Online shopping fraud statistics](#)

[Supermarket shopping statistics](#)

[Buy now pay later statistics](#)

[Department store statistics](#)

[UK subscription service statistics](#)

[Student spending statistics](#)

Further enquiries

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About Finder

Finder is a personal finance website which helps consumers compare products online so they can make better-informed decisions. Consumers can visit the website to compare utilities, mortgages, credit cards, insurance products, shopping voucher codes, and so much more before choosing the option that best suits their needs.

finder.com/uk launched in the UK in February 2017 and is privately owned and self-funded by three young Australian hotlisters – Fred Schebesta, Frank Restuccia and Jemery Cabral – who successfully grew finder.com.au to be Australia's most visited personal finance website (Source: Experian Hitwise).

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About the author

Georgia-Rose is a publisher at Finder.com and specialises in all things shopping and travel. She has years of experience working in retail and tourism and as an avid budget traveller, she loves helping people find the best deals on everything from plane tickets to sunglasses. When she's not jetting off somewhere new you'll find her watching cake videos or befriending stray cats.