

Shopping nation

Task 1 – Town Centre

Think of the centre of your town or choose one shopping street or area. What types of shops are there? Work in pairs and think of six different types of shop and three things you can buy in each one. Then compare your answers with other pairs.

Shop:	Shop:
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)
Shop:	Shop:
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)
Shop:	Shop:
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)

Task 2 – Shopping find someone who

Ask questions to complete the table. Remember to ask for extra information.

Find someone who...	Name	Extra information
...bought something new last week		
...hates shopping		
...goes shopping every weekend		
...has worked in a shop		
...would like to work in a shop		
...has a favourite shop		
...has bought something on the internet		

Task 3 – A nation of shopaholics?

A radio programme interviewed shoppers in the centre of Manchester to ask them, “Are we turning into a nation of shopaholics?” Here is what they said:

Zoe – I love shopping and I would say it’s one of my favourite hobbies. I think it’s great that shops open all weekend. I used to get bored on Sundays now I meet friends and we look around the shops. So, I guess you could call me a shopaholic.

Anita – I’m not a shopaholic. I only go shopping when I have to buy something. I don’t understand the obsession with shopping but I think British people are turning into shopaholics. You can buy almost anything you want, whenever you want these days. There’s a 24 hour supermarket near my house. I feel sorry for the people who work there all night.

Ben - I’m not a shopaholic. I hate the way all the shops in every town centre are the same. It’s impossible for small businesses to survive these days so only the big stores can keep going. Every town and city in Britain is a carbon copy of the others. I prefer to buy things I need over the internet. It’s easier and it means I don’t have to go to the town centre.

Oscar - I quite like shopping and most Saturdays or Sundays I go shopping with my girlfriend. There’s a new shopping centre near where I live, and you can get everything there. It’s great in the winter ‘cause you don’t even realise it’s cold and wet outside. What’s the point of working all week if you can’t go out and spend your money at the weekend?

Paula – I live in a small town and it has really changed in the last few years. Big supermarkets have opened up outside the town and lots of the small shops have had to close. Now everyone goes to the big supermarkets and the town is really quiet. It’s difficult to park in the town centre but I think it’s a shame that the town is dying. It used to be really busy.

Josh – I’m not a shopaholic but I think there are lots about. I work in a sports’ shop in the town centre and people just go crazy buying so much stuff. Now I have to work on Saturdays and Sundays and they let me have a day off in the week. It’s not the same though ‘cause all my mates go out on Saturday nights and I always have to go home early as it’s really hard to get up on a Sunday morning.

Patrick – I think shopping is so much easier on the internet. I do nearly all my shopping on-line. I order food from the supermarket and they deliver it the next day to my front door. It saves me a lot of time. This year I'm going to do all my Christmas shopping on-line. I hate the crowds and the queues of town centres and I don't like the artificial atmosphere of shopping centres so for me the internet is a great way to shop.

- Do you think it's a good idea for shops to open on seven days a week? If you worked in a shop, would you like to work on the day when most people are off work?
- Look at what Paula says about out of town supermarkets. Has this happened to any towns where you live?
- Look at what Anita says about the 24 hours supermarket. Do you think it's necessary for people to work all night in supermarkets?
- What advantages does Oscar mention about shopping centres? Can you think of any more advantages and disadvantages of shopping centres?
- Do you think town centres in your country are becoming more and more similar?
- Why does Patrick like internet shopping?
- Have you ever used the internet to buy anything?

Task 4 – Buy Nothing Day

Buy Nothing Day is celebrated every November in the UK and around the world. Before you read the article, use your imagination to guess what Buy Nothing Day is about.

When you have read the article, answer these questions:

- How long has Buy Nothing Day existed?
- What is the idea of Buy Nothing Day?
- Does your country celebrate Buy Nothing Day? If so, what happens? If not, do you think it would be successful in your country?
- Do you think you could buy nothing at all for 24 hours?
- Do you ever ask yourself any of the questions before you buy something new?

Buy Nothing Day

Buy Nothing Day started in 1993 and is now an international event that takes place in more than 55 countries. It is a simple idea to challenge consumer culture and ask people to stop shopping for 24 hours.

Buy Nothing Day encourages people to think about what they buy and the possible effects the product may have on the environment and developing countries. For example, if you buy a new pair of

trainers, do you know where they were made and if the people who made them are treated well by the company?

According to the organisers of Buy Nothing Day, shopping itself isn't harmful but what we buy can be. They claim that in the rich western countries 20% of the world population consume 80% of the earth's natural resources. They want consumers to think more about what they buy and to ask themselves some questions before buying anything new. Here are some of the questions to put on your check list:

- Do I need it?
- How many do I already have?
- Will I use it a lot?
- Will it last a long time?
- Could I borrow it from a friend instead?
- Is it recyclable?

Each year Buy Nothing Day is at the end of November. There are some events in town centres to celebrate the event and to encourage shoppers to have a day off and buy absolutely nothing!

Task 5 – My ideal shop

Imagine the shop of your dreams!

- What would it sell?
- Where would it be?
- Would it have any special features? (internet, games room, star guest appearances....)
- How much would things cost?