

Brits Spend Over Â£3 billion on Impulse Buys Every Month

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We surveyed 1,106 members of the British public, asking if they made impulse purchases, how often, when, where and what they bought. Of the 91% of respondents who said they do so every month, the supermarket was many people's weak spot as 59% admitted to adding extras to their basket. However, food and drink were only the second most popular impulse buy for 49% of respondents compared to 56% who said clothes.

It's late at night, you've recently been paid and are surfing the internet when you stumble across something magical; a pink and blue unicorn t-shirt for a bargain price. Sure, you may only wear it once, but at that moment you really want it. What do you do?

 Brits spend Â£3.14 billion on impulse purchases every month.png

 The average Brit spends Â£47.84 on spontaneous purchases every month.png

If you're like the majority of Brits then you'll make the purchase, as our research has found that 91% of Brits admit to making impulse buys every month. It probably isn't always a unicorn t-shirt, but across all impulse purchases in total we are spending £3.14 billion each month. That works out at £47.84 per person and there are plenty of other interesting findings our survey threw up.

Top Impulse Purchases

We surveyed 1,106 members of the British public, asking if they made impulse purchases, how often, when, where and what they bought. Of the 91% of respondents who said they do so every month, the supermarket was many people's weak spot as 59% admitted to adding extras to their basket. However, food and drink were only the second most popular impulse buy for 49% of respondents compared to 56% who said clothes. The top five items Brits impulse buy each month are:

 Top impulse buys each month.png

(24%).

Those in Bristol are most tempted by special offers, with a massive 71% blaming this for them buying things on a whim. While having a drink led to 34% of people in Edinburgh and 32% of those in Southampton making an impulse buy.

Comparing Impulse Buying Habits

Our research found some interesting differences between consumers too. Younger generations are more drawn in by technology, with 55% of under 24s blaming late night browsing for their instant buys and one in three admitting to ordering rushed items on their phone while at work or commuting. Compared to over 65s, this was just 22% and 7% respectively.

 91% of Brits make impulse purchases every month.png

At the other end of the scale, only 4% of people said they have bought travel or holidays on an impulse, showing we think more about such purchases before going through with them. This is also reflected in the finding that just 1% will spend more than £500 on these types of purchases every month too.

When and Why Are We Spending So Much?

The main benefactor of increasing impulse buys is undoubtedly the British economy which is getting an impulse £3 billion pumped into it each month. Why is this happening though? One reason could be the modern world of 'now' that we live in, where pretty much anything you could desire is available to order online with the click of a button.

After supermarkets, it was online retailers and ecommerce sites such as Amazon and eBay where most impulse purchases take place for 54% of respondents, which backs this up. Our research found the most popular reasons given for making impulse buys were that there was a good deal on (46%), they were up late at night, tired and browsing online (39%) and that they'd had a drink

Men are less likely to buy on impulse too, with 12% saying they never do it, while only 7% of women claim to never do so. However, men actually spend 11% more on average on impulse buys than women (£50.67 compared to £45.71) and are slightly more impatient, being happy to wait 89 hours for delivery compared to 91 hours for women.

The place with the highest average spent each month on impulse buys was Liverpool at £71.63, closely followed by Manchester with £71.52. That's more than double what it is in Sheffield (£34.06) and Dublin (£35.22).

Down south, 16% of Londoners said they make purchases through social media, leading the tech savvy brigade of impulse buyers. They also make the most impulse buys on jewellery, with 35% of Londoners admitting to splashing out on the finer things, well above the national average of 22%.

Impatient Impulse Buying

When making an impulse buy, speed of delivery is important as a third of people claimed that two to three days is the longest they're willing to wait, which is where [Whistl](#) delivery services can help. Under 24s were most impatient, with only 16% saying they were happy to wait a week, compared to 38% of over 65s. In Birmingham they are the most impatient too, with the lowest average expected delivery of 3.3 days, compared to being most relaxed in Nottingham, where they are willing to wait an average of 4.7 days for a delivery.

 A third of Brits are only willing to wait 2 to 3 days for online purchases.png

Finally, some of the interesting admissions people made of what they'd bought on impulse included spending £120 on cheese, investing £500 in a company on CrowdCube, bulk buying toilet rolls, a castle for a cat and an actual furry rabbit.

Source: [Whistl](#)