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Export date: Fri Oct 30 12:08:22 2026 / +0000 GMT

Braving the Boxing Day sales

Although sales usually start earlier and earlier Boxing Day is still the main event for those willing to brave the crowds to find the best deals in town.

Here are some tips if you are planning to head out on December 26th:

Carpool. Emotions can flare before you have reached your destination and competing for a parking spots can be a recipe for road rage. Carpool with family and friends, or take a cab to your destination.

Start early. If you are serious about shopping on Boxing Day get there early. Mid-afternoon is the worst time to go, that is when the largest number of shoppers can be found in the stores. Plan on going early to get in and get out to avoid three-hour line ups.

Not looking for anything specific? Bring cash to avoid over spending. Make a budget before you go and allow yourself to spend only the cash you bring. Its too easy to whip out that credit card and overspend.

Dress in Layers. Retail stores are full of bright, hot lights which can get uncomfortable not to mention all those people and standing in line can be exasperating. Dress for comfort and if you are inclined to buy without trying things on, double check the return policy as sale items are often non-refundable.

Stick to the plan. If you know exactly what you want to purchase, plan the route and the time necessary for shopping and stick to it. It's easy to be drawn in with big posters 50 to 60 per cent off and end up in stores you weren't even thinking of going into.

Ask about price adjustments and sales. If you plan on shopping before December 26th, it doesn't hurt to ask retailers if they offer a price adjustment if the item is further reduced on Boxing Day. If it's something you really want, chances are you're better off buying now rather then risking it being sold out on Boxing Day.

Be choosy about buying ?holiday? wear. No doubt all those sparkly dresses and sequinned Ts will be going on sale this week, but is there any point in buying them after all the Christmas parties? Stay away from buying large statement pieces unless it's something you really love. Smaller pieces, however, have more longevity. My rule is if you're going to buy expensive products make sure its something your going to wear three times a week the whole winter. Never splurge on something you will only wear four times. I have learned this because I have a closet full of insane shoes with sparkles or fur and never wear them.

Go online for electronics. Electronics are always popular on Boxing Day and if you're a keen shopper willing to line up early for door crashers there are some really good deals to be had. But do your homework by looking online first. You may find what you're looking for without even having to leave home.

Is that ?doorbuster? up to snuff? These deals are made to draw shoppers in with their low prices, but they are not necessarily the best products for your needs. Some doorbuster TVs for example can be derivative models created specifically for the event, which usually has lower specs and can lack features found on the manufacture's standard lines.

Happy Shopping!

By Michelle Janzen