



How to be comfortable when holiday shopping

Shopping can be time-consuming come the holiday season. According to a *Consumer Reports* Holiday Shopping Poll, during the holiday season, the average American spends roughly 42 hours buying, wrapping and returning gifts.

Holiday shopping can be both physically and mentally tiring. But there's no reason why holiday shopping excursions cannot be comfortable.

- **Keep weather in mind.** The weather can affect where shoppers do their shopping. Select indoor malls or outlets and other retailers with overhead coverage to protect against the elements.

- **Choose easy-flow stores.** Stores that are easy to navigate and offer ample room for multiple people to shop simultaneously can feel more comfortable, even during the busy holiday season.

- **Wear comfortable clothing.** The rise in luxury loungewear means shoppers can be comfortable and look good at the same time. Choose footwear that will not rub and cause blisters while offering ample arch support to prevent tired feet.

- **Arrive well-fed.** It's difficult to make shopping decisions on an empty stomach. Heading to stores satiated can improve productivity and help avoid fatigue or impulse food stops.

- **Consider shopping small.** Many small business owners go out of their way to provide a comfortable shopping experience, establishing rapport and solving problems for customers.

- **Take breaks along the way.** Recharge by resting from the shopping experience. Take a break by sitting down or periodically engage in activities that do not involve shopping or thinking about the holidays.

- **Shop unencumbered.** Leave unnecessary items at home so as not to be burdened down by coats, bags and other accessories. Utilize lockers at malls or coat checks. Skip bulky purses in lieu of small, easily toted options.

With these shopping comfort strategies in mind, holiday excursions can be that much more enjoyable.

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