



Keith **Speaking** Academy

Live Lesson Notes

Shopping and Consumerism

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Some Useful Links

My **online course** for IELTS Speaking

<https://courses.keithspeakingacademy.com/p/ielts-speaking-get-band-7-gold>

Learn more about **Pop-up shops**

<https://www.thestorefront.com/mag/what-exactly-is-a-pop-up-shop/>

The **pros and cons of consumerism**

<https://vittana.org/15-consumerism-pros-and-cons>

Get my **free materials** here

<https://keithspeakingacademy.com/ielts-speaking-free-live-lessons/>

Download my e-book: **10 Most Common Mistakes** in IELTS Speaking

<https://keithspeakingacademy.com/sign-up-download-10-mistakes/>

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IELTS Speaking Vocabulary: Shopping

Warm up!

Fill in the gap with one word

1. I like to go shopping _____ clothes in the sales
2. I don't have any money, I am just _____ shopping
3. I haven't made many _____ this week. Tom, the Sales manager is not going to be happy!

Answers at bottom of PDF

Nouns

A shop (n.) = A store (n.) (US)

- A department store
- A shopping mall (US)
- A shopping centre (UK)

A **pop-up shop** = A space leased (rented) for days or weeks to sale products

Read more about pop-up shops here:

<https://www.thestorefront.com/mag/what-exactly-is-a-pop-up-shop/>

A **one-stop** shop = A shop providing different products or services in one place

A high-end shop = selling expensive stuff

An up-market shop = selling expensive stuff

A retail shop = a shop selling to individual customers (B to C)

A wholesale shop = a shop selling to businesses (B to B)

A sale (n)

1) Give something in exchange for money

How many sales have you made today?

2) Goods are sold at a lower price

*The store is having a **mid-season sale***

*There is a **sale on** this week in this shop*

*Nike are having a **sale** this week*

- A clearance sale = a sale to clear stocks (*everything must go!*)
- Everything is reduced to clear
- A liquidation sale
- A winter sale
- An end-of-season sale

A sale is an event

A discount is an amount of money

Items are **on sale** (= available **or** at a lower price)

Shirts are not on sale in this shop (not available), we only sell trousers.

These shirts are on sale this week only (lower price)

Verbs

To shop (v.)

To shop **for** clothes / food

To go **shopping for** clothes / food

To shop **around** = to look for the best price

To **do the shopping** = to buy food

To **do the weekly shop** = to buy food for the whole week

To **window shop** = to look but without buying anything

To buy (v.)

To purchase (*formal*)

To procure (*formal - mainly used when companies buy things*)

To pick up (*informal*)

To snap up (buy something quickly and cheap)

To get hold of...

A **bargain** (n.) = something at a good price
(**good value for money**)

To **bargain** (v.) = to negotiate (the price)

The Pros and Cons of Consumerism

What is consumerism?

1. The protection of consumer rights.
2. The preoccupation with buying more and more.

In this section, we are just focusing on the second definition where people are obsessed with buying new things.

The Advantages

Access

- We can **follow the latest fashions and fads**.
- We can buy **items** from all over the world.
- We have a **wider choice** of products to buy.
- We are often **spoilt for choice**.
- Technology has made consumerism so easy, we can buy stuff **at the click of a button**.

Therapy

Buying something new is a kind of therapy (**make us happy**), it can **cheer us up** (make happy) **no end** (a lot)

Growth

More consumption can lead to **economic growth**

The Disadvantages

Values

- A **consumer society** can lead to a **distortion of values**, where people value material things rather than relationships.
- Obsession with **materialism**
- Mental health problems

Addiction

We can become **addicted to shopping** and only find happiness in the next 'hit' or purchase

Debt (/det/)

To be **in debt** = to owe money

With the influence of marketing, people end of **living beyond their means** as they try **to keep up with the Joneses**

- **To live beyond your means** = spend more than you earn
- **To keep up with the Joneses** = to try to have a lifestyle as good as your neighbours

Environment

Excessive production has a **negative impact** on the environment, mainly because industries like the clothes industry use **non-renewable resources**

- We will have **resource depletion**
- A wasteful lifestyle
- Too much waste
- The '**throw away culture**'

There is a big pushback now against consumerism and towards **minimalism**, especially amongst younger people.

Read more about the **pros and cons of consumerism** here:
<https://vittana.org/15-consumerism-pros-and-cons>

IELTS Topic: Consumerism

Listen to the passage below and answer this question.

1. How many advantages and how many disadvantages are mentioned?
2. Note any useful collocations or phrases



PROS AND CONS OF CONSUMERISM

Answers at bottom of PDF

Idioms about SHOPPING

To **cost an arm and a leg** = to be expensive

My new bike cost (me) an arm and a leg

To be **dead expensive** = to be very expensive

The new MacBook is dead expensive

To be a **rip-off** = to be too expensive and not worth it

100 dollars for a T-shirt is a complete rip-off!

To **pay (way) over the odds** = To pay too much

200 dollars! You paid way over the odds for those trousers!

To **pay through the nose** = To pay too much

She paid through the nose for her wedding dress.

3 idioms meaning to be **very cheap**

- To be **going for a song**
- To be **dirt cheap**
- To be **cheap as chips**

I'm going to buy these shoes whilst they are on sale, they are going for a song

To **talk shop** = to talk about your work

He is so boring, he is always talking shop at parties.

To **splash out on** (something) = to spend a lot of money on (something)

I like to splash out on new clothes in the Spring sales

Warm up: ANSWERS

Warm up!

Fill in the gap with one word

1. I like to go shopping for clothes in the sales
2. I don't have any money, I am just window shopping
3. I haven't made many sales this week. Tom, the Sales manager is not going to be happy!

IELTS Topic: Consumerism ANSWERS

3 Advantages and 5 Disadvantages

Consumerism.

Well, yes, that's a tricky topic these days, especially with **this ever growing divide** between **the haves and the have-nots**.

I think, generally speaking, consumerism, yes, it can be good.

It can lead to a wider, an **access to a wider variety** of goods and products. [Adv. 1]

We can buy things from all around the world nowadays and **technology facilitates that**, buying stuff **at the click of a button**.

I think also, you know, consumerism, it's a kind of therapy. I think what people call **retail therapy**. [Adv. 2]

So if you are **feeling** a bit **down in the dumps** (=sad), you can go out and buy stuff and it can **cheer you up no end**.

So that's a positive side. Also, many people argue that as we supply more, we demand more, and this is a **growing cycle**, which leads to **economic growth** and prosperity for many, many people. [Adv. 3]

Of course, there are the downsides. As I mentioned before, people who benefit from consumerism are often those who already have money they can spend.

So there can be a **growing divide** between the rich and the poor, which can be negative. [Disadvantage.1]

I think also nowadays with more and more consumerism, people's **values are changing**. People start to value material objects rather than relationships and people, and obviously this is **not a good way morally for us to go** in the future. [Disadvantage.2]

As people buy more, they almost become **addicted to shopping**, right, and to **getting the next hit** or purchase.

Obviously, that's not a good thing. [Disadvantage.3]

Another downside, I think, is a lot of people, **with all the marketing that goes on**, people are encouraged to buy more, to spend more, and so a lot of people **live beyond their means**. [Disadvantage.4]

They're spending money they haven't got, so they **take out credit**, they **get into debt**, and of course this leads to more stress and huge health problems for many, many people.

Finally, I would also mention **the issue of the environment** with consumerism, in particular some **key industries**.

I'm thinking in particular of the fashion, clothes industry and maybe the food industry.

You know, they're **renowned for** using **non-renewable resources** and so the more they produce, the more **negative impact** they're having on

the environment and so that's a **key issue** nowadays as well.
[Disadvantage.5]

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