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Money Talks Series: Shopping Savvy (Teen Guide)

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Money TALKS

Should I Be Listening?

Learn shopping secrets that go easy on your pocketbook

Shopping Savvy

In today's world of buying and selling, you as the consumer, have many choices. With so many choices...how can you be sure you're getting the most for your money? To get the best deal, you need to learn Shopping Savvy.

Shopping Savvy is getting what you need at the best price. In order to obtain Shopping Savvy you need to first recognize your personal shopping style. Take the *My Shopping Habits Quiz* to find out about your own shopping habits.

MY SHOPPING HABITS QUIZ

SHOP SAVVY AND SAVE

Becoming Shopping Savvy

My Shopping Savvy
Techniques

Are You a
Savvy Shopper?



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My Shopping Habits Quiz

- 1. You decide to buy a new pair of shoes. Upon reaching the shoe store you find a pair of shoes you like, but they are a little expensive. You:**
 - A) Buy the shoes, even though they cost a little more than you want to pay. They look great!!!
 - b) Choose a pair of shoes that are the price you want to pay, even though they are not what you want.
 - c) Search other shoe stores, looking for a better price and maybe even a better pair of shoes.
- 2. Today, you got your first paycheck!!! What do you do with it?**
 - A) You wanted to make money to buy things—that's why you got the job—so you spend it all right away.
 - b) Even though there are many things you want, you put the money under your mattress so you will not spend it.
 - c) There are so many things you want—clothing, shoes, going out with friends, college, a car—so you put half the money in the bank for long-term savings and spend the other half on things you want right now.
- 3. You just saw an ad for a new computer—the one you have been saving for—and the price is great. When you get to the store you find out that the price didn't include a printer, which costs another \$250.00. You decide:**
 - A) To pay the extra money; you have it and you really want to buy the computer.
 - B) Continue to save your money and look for better deals, going home without the computer.
 - C) Take the ad to other stores and see if they will match the computer price and if they sell printers for less.
- 4. Last week you bought a new backpack. It is really comfortable, but today you realize that one of the zippers is not working. You:**
 - A) Complain to your friends but don't do anything else. You'd be way too embarrassed to go back to the store and talk to someone.
 - B) Go to the store, ask for your money back, buy a cheaper backpack, and realize when you get home that it just isn't as nice as the other one.
 - C) Go to the store and find out if there is a repair policy and, if not, you exchange it for another one.

See answers on page 5.

Becoming Shopping SAVVY

Now that you know a little about your own shopping habits, read on for some tips to help you get the most for your money. While all of these shopping techniques will save you money, you will find some are easier for you to accomplish than others. You will be most successful in getting more for your money if you practice shopping techniques that are easy for you to do. Turn the page to see how.





Shop Savvy & Save

1. Find out about your favorite stores' sales.

Most stores have a pattern to their sales. These patterns decide not only what will go on sale, but when. Ask and you might get clued in to when the best deals are available. If you like a particular store, get on friendly terms with the sales staff...some places have pre-sale sales for good customers.

2. Read the fine print.

In looking through ads, be mindful of the small print and read it. Here you can learn about sales dates, extra costs, and what is or is not included in the sale. Take time to understand the ads before you go shopping so you can get the best deal.

3. Think, think, think.

Impulse shopping is a worldwide spending habit. Almost everyone has bought something on the spur of the moment and later wished they hadn't. Prevent buyer's remorse—don't buy unplanned purchases on the spot. Go home and think about the purchase overnight. To help you decide if you should buy the item, ask yourself these questions...and answer honestly. Why do I want it? Do I need it? Do I already have one? How long did it take me to earn the money I will spend on it?

4. Wait.

Sure, you want it right now, but in just a few weeks or months you may get it much cheaper. Hot items such as movies, CDs, and electronic products will catch your eye immediately and you know you will want them. But so will millions of other people, and in just a short time when millions are being produced prices will drop. If you can't handle the wait, borrow a friend's— you might even find out that you really don't like it.

5. Be prepared.

When you go into a store to buy electronics, cars, furniture, and such, remember that some stores are willing to match or beat

prices from other stores. Call different stores to compare prices, models, and return policies. Before you head out, prepare yourself with ads and a cool attitude, one that doesn't reveal how much you want the item.

6. Follow up on prices.

Some stores have a policy that if they have a sale on an item that you recently bought, they will refund the difference between what you paid and the sale price. It's your money, so don't be afraid to ask for a refund.

7. Take it back.

Just because it broke doesn't mean that you lost money. In most cases, stores will take back defective items and refund your money if you saved your receipts. When it has been too long to return the purchase for a cash refund, some stores will take back the merchandise for store credit or allow you to exchange the item for another. Don't be embarrassed; most stores want their customers to be satisfied. Also, be honest...don't take back items just because you're tired of them. Stores need to make money to stay in business; if customers abuse the return policies, stores will have to raise prices to make ends meet.

8. Save at the bank.

Why not make money while you save? Investments and saving are important for those with Shopping Savvy because they realize that in order to make a big purchase, money must be set aside. Why not make money while you save? Talk to bank representatives, parents, and friends to find out which banks offer the best interest. Some banks require teenagers to open an account with their parents; others allow students to open accounts. Select a bank that pays good interest, doesn't charge fees, and is convenient for you to use.

Remember shopping habits take time to change. Keep the money you will be saving in mind, and you will do great!

My Shopping Savvy Techniques

While you have all of these saving tips fresh in mind, take time to fill out the following chart. By listing your saving tips now, you will have made your first step towards improving your Shopping Savvy.

I plan to get the best buy by using the following Shop Savvy and Save tips:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Each time you use one of the Shop Savvy and Save tips that you chose, track your success on the following chart.

DATE	ITEM PURCHASED	TIP USED	MONEY SAVED
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Remember—fill out your chart to personalize your own habits, goals, and successes.

As you track your savings, take a look at your chart to see how much money you saved—inspire yourself to do it again. This motivation will make it clear which tips work for you and how much money you can save. Be proud of your successes...every time you save money you are improving your *Shopping Savvy*.



Check your answers! Shopping Habits Quiz

If you answered mostly:

- A: You spend money, even though you may not get the best buy. But, there's good news for you—there are many ways that you can save money and still enjoy shopping. Read the section “Becoming Shopping Savvy” to see how you can save money and improve your shopping habits.
- B: You want to save money and get a good deal, but you tend to compromise for less than what you want. There are ways to save and get exactly what you want. Read the section “Becoming Shopping Savvy” to see how you can save money and get what you want.
- C: Wow! You know a lot about getting what you want at a good price! Read the section “Becoming Shopping Savvy” to see if there are any new shopping tips you can pick up.

Are You a Savvy Shopper?

Add to your understanding of Shopping Savvy. Complete the following quiz by marking the best answer for each statement.

- | | FACT | FICTION | NOT SURE |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. All advertisements are true; no one would purposely try to trick me out of my money. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Obtaining Shopping Savvy takes practice, but if I try and understand that I might fail once in a while, I can do it. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. If I buy something then decide that I don't really want it, the store must exchange it if I bring it back the next day. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Since one store is selling a CD for \$18.99, then all other stores are selling it for the same price. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. If it is pictured on the packaging, then it is in the box. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Compare your answers

- Fiction.** Although advertisements are not supposed to purposely deceive the consumer, many companies will use fine print, pictures, and wording in attempts to trick the consumer into believing that the product is different than what it really is. Can you find the deception in the following ad?
- Fact.** With practice and determination, you can obtain Shopping Savvy.
- Fiction.** Stores have the right to refuse returns, refunds, or exchanges. In these cases, the store must post a sign or inform the customer via the receipt. Most stores do have a refund policy, so don't be afraid to ask.
- Fiction.** Prices vary from store to store, so check around before you buy to obtain the best price.
- Fiction.** A picture can make an item seem larger than it really is or look like it includes different features than it really has. Always ask to see what is in the box and how it works before you buy it.

Did you get most of these correct? If so, the *Shopping Savvy* in you is emerging. If you missed some, then you have learned some new information. Use it to improve your Shopping Savvy.

Remember that you have power over what you buy and how much money you spend. Don't be fooled by ads or sales clerks who try to make decisions for you. You have the power to walk out of one store and into another to get the better deal. So do it!

FREE BOAT!



Buoyant Factory Outlet

555 Mississippi Place
(800) 555-3434

Offer Expires 9/9/2009

*Requires the purchase of 2 paddles for \$399

Money Talks... Should I Be Listening? Is a series of five teen guides designed for teenagers. The topics and subject matter content are based on the results of a survey completed by teens. The goals of these teen guides are to assist teens in 1) identifying their money spending and saving habits; 2) understanding the importance of long-term savings, and 3) developing savings plans that meet their lifestyles. Comments regarding these newsletters can be addressed to: Consumer Economics Department, University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), 135 Building C, Highlander Hall, Riverside, CA 92521. Author: Katherine Wassenberg, freelance writer. Development Team: Shirley Peterson, Margaret Johns, Charles Go, Susan Cortz and the UCCE Money Talks Workgroup; Graphic Designer: Kerry Decker, UC Riverside. 2007



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