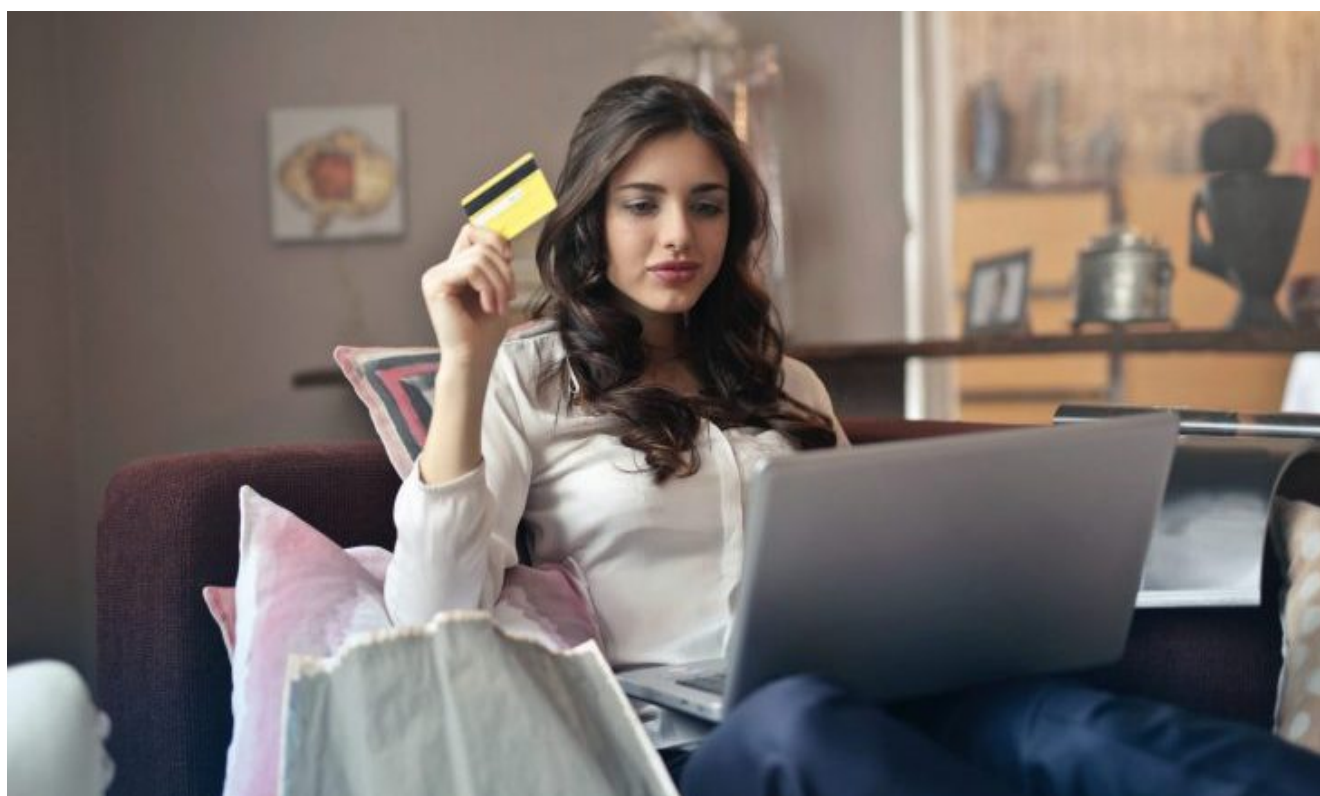


Fashion Advice: 5 Shopping Mistakes to Avoid on Cyber Monday



Enjoying a Thanksgiving that comes with all the trimmings can be a challenge for your budget, especially when you're quick to exchange your drumstick for a credit card. Traditionally, Black Friday kicks off the unofficial start to the holiday season, where the deal-hungry masses pack shopping malls across the country. But in a time when personal space is treasured, you may not be comfortable joining the melee as usual. Walmart, a bastion of Black Friday madness, is closing its doors for Thanksgiving, with more retailers sure to follow suit. That puts all the focus on Cyber Monday. Can your finances handle the pressure?

If you need some fashion advice on scouring the web for the best Cyber Monday deals, make sure you don't make these mistakes.

1. Shopping without Checking Your Budget: A budget gives your Cyber Monday shopping structure. It helps you determine a reasonable spending limit that won't eat into the money you need for important bills. If you're unhappy with the limit you have, take a closer look at how you use your cash in a month. Eliminate expenses you can control, like getting takeout when your fridge is full, another streaming service, and a gym membership you don't use. Unlike rent or utilities, you can live without these splurges.

2. Boosting Your Budget with a Loan:

When your budget falls short of what you want, it may be tempting to contact direct payday loan lenders to get a quick cash injection, but it's not a good idea. That's according to the loan specialists at [MoneyKey](#), who warn against using direct lender payday loans unless it's an unexpected emergency. These financial products have a short turnover and high rates, which make them inappropriate for shopping. The same goes for direct lender installment loans. While they may have a longer term, they're better suited for unexpected emergency expenses, like a trip to the ER or repairing your car.

3. Using Your Debit Card to Shop: Keep your debit card safely tucked away in your wallet when you hit the web. Using this card at the online checkout means you're sharing your bank account's information when you finalize the purchase. If hackers manage to get their hands on this data, they'll also nab any other account linked to your bank. Compare this to your credit card, which is an isolated account. Even if the

website still gets hacked, the breach will only affect that one card, making it easier to isolate, prevent, and dispute potential fraud.

4. Shopping without a List: A list is a valuable accessory that gives focus to your online shopping trip. Having your list of must-haves written down helps hammer home the fact that you're only looking for those items on the list. Anything that doesn't have a spot on that list shouldn't find its way into your cart.

5. Shopping on Your Own: Don't head online alone when there are so many money-saving apps that can tag along to your shopping trip. From the browser extension, Honey, that finds and applies the best coupons to your shopping cart, to the cash-back app, Rakuten, that pays you to shop at participating stores, these apps can help maximize your Cyber Monday haul.

Shopping at home where you can avoid other people is easy, but don't let that lull you into a false sense of security. You need to be on your toes to make sure you nab the best deals without hurting your finances. Remember these shopping tricks to help you save and prepare for the upcoming holidays.

How can you have a successful Cyber Monday without emptying your wallet? Start a conversation in the comments down below!