



Shop Local
for the Holidays



Why Shopping Local Matters

There are lots of good reasons to shop local this holiday season.

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The most compelling, perhaps, is to put your money where your home is. Help grow your community by shopping local and give the hard-working small business owners in your town the opportunity to flourish after the pandemic.

YOUR MONEY STAYS LOCAL

Shopping local is another way to love your neighbor this holiday season. The American Independent Business Alliance says that each dollar you spend locally triples in value to the local economy. Locally owned businesses generally buy supplies from

other locally owned businesses. Their staffs eat out in the community and usually live where they work, pumping more money into the local economy.

Local business also invests in the community and, most importantly, nonprofit organizations. The National Technical Reports Library has produced data that shows local nonprofits receive 350% more money from its local small business neighbors than from out-of-town and larger corporate retailers. Among those nonprofits are community shelters, fundraisers and other community partners.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

When you shop locally made goods in local shops, you are shrinking your carbon footprint because your purchase doesn't have to be transported very far for sale. Locally owned businesses may also be expending fewer resources than their larger, national or multinational competitors.

BUSINESS BUILT ON SERVICE

Because local businesses are staffed by your friends and neighbors, it's likely that they may offer better customer service than larger counterparts. Also, small businesses

generally have to work harder to get you in the door and benefit more from you referring others, meaning it pays for them to treat their customers right.

Small businesses offer goods and services tailored to their communities, rather than trying to shoehorn one area into a larger, national plan. This means the products they offer are more likely to work for you and your family. If you do have an issue with your purchase, local businesses may be more likely to make it right for you than national competitors, who have to rely on broad policies to fit a range of scenarios.

Support Local Arts Community

Holiday shoppers can give the local arts community a shot in the arm by browsing their wares this holiday season.

Keep an eye out for local arts and crafts shows, or, if you're part of an organization that can, consider hosting one yourself for the holidays.

EXPOSURE

Many talented artists that are just getting started creating can't afford their own storefronts. They may partner with local businesses to showcase their art or they may join craft fairs around the region. Shop local and give these artists the exposure and funding they need to grow their businesses. Make sure to share posts of your gift (after you give it, of course) on social media to give them an additional boost.

GET LOCALLY FESTIVE

Add some local flair to your holiday decor by shopping local artisans' holiday collections. You can often find ornaments that are great ways to commemorate a special time or place. Think decorated sea shells from a beach town or ornaments with other local references. These make great gifts, too, even if the recipient doesn't live in your town. It's a great way to personalize a gift and make sure family and friends think of you when they're



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decorating their own tree.

SHOPPING LOCAL OUTSIDE YOUR TOWN

Chances are, a short day trip away is another adorable town

full of quirky gifts that will fit anyone on your list. Hop in the car and make a day of shopping, with stops at the local coffee shops and eateries for refreshment. You just might

discover your new favorite store, right in your own backyard.

Another way to shop local is to browse online stores like Etsy and filter the results by

geographic location. That way, you can find artisans in your town that may not go to craft fairs or have enough money for their own storefront yet. It may save you on shipping, too.

Eat (and Drink) Local

When you're planning your holiday shindigs, make sure you turn to local restaurants, food trucks and cafes for your catering needs.

If you're not planning a big soiree, make sure you factor them in to your holiday shopping plans by stopping in for a bite while you're out filling up the sleigh or even gifting gift cards from your favorite local spots.

Here are some hints for eating locally that you may not have thought of from USA Today.

BAKE WITH LOCAL GRAINS

Holiday baking is a family favorite. This year, look for locally grown grains and flavors to add to your rotation of recipes. Visiting a farmers market is a great way to learn what's grown nearby, from grits to locally processed flours.

VISIT THE LOCAL BUTCHER OR FISHMONGER

Big holiday meals call for quality proteins. Locally based ranchers and fisherfolk offer fresh, often organic, meats and seafoods that are well worth every penny. The experts at the butcher's and fish shops can even tell you how to stretch



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your dollar by suggesting lower-priced cuts and fish that taste the same (or even better) than their expensive cousins. While you're there, ask for any specials they may have and suggestions for recipes. You will probably learn a thing or two and come out with a new favorite holiday dish.

GO TO THE BAKER

While you're at the farmers market or out visiting the butcher, check out deals at local bakeries, too. Pick up some breads to go on your holiday table, or look for showstopping confections with a local flavor that can't be beat. These make great host or

hostess gifts, too, and are always welcome at the office party.

STOCK THE BAR WITH LOCAL BEER AND LIQUOR

Craft brewing is experiencing a surge in popularity, as is small-batch liquor. Most every

town or city nowadays can boast of at least one local brewery, and these are great places to find holiday gifts and libations. Look for small batch or special releases you can only get by dropping by. While you're there, ask the staff for their favorite cocktail recipe using their wares.

Small Business Saturday

Right between Black Friday and Cyber Monday — two of the largest shopping days of the year — is Small Business Saturday.

It was first celebrated in 2010 to call attention to small businesses and draw crowds to shop unique products and services.

American Express, part of a partnership that established Small Business Saturday, says that in 2020, Americans spent at estimated \$19.8 billion at independent retailers and restaurants. And that was during a pandemic.

SHOPPING TIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

Look for special deals, both online and in store. A popular trend among small business owners is to offer steep discounts on gift cards or certificates, which are just the right size for those people that you never know what to get. Also look for small businesses that are teaming up with nearby eateries or cafes. For instance, one may offer a deal if you present a receipt from the other.

Remember that small businesses doesn't just mean gifts and crafts. Small businesses can mean your landscaper, house painter or other tradesperson, too. Also consider



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book shops, boutiques, service providers, gyms and more. Look into buying services in advance for friends and family members, such as yard services in the spring or ten yoga classes. Buying in advance makes a great gift

and really helps the small business owner, who gets to hold onto and use the cash well in advance of providing the services.

BRANCH OUT

Remember to shop in your

town, but don't be afraid to branch out a little and hit small businesses that are just a road trip away. Browse social media or the newspaper and find nearby businesses that you may not have even heard of previously. Look at

this Small Business Saturday as an opportunity to get out of the (big) box and try out some shops and services that are a little off the beaten path. If you're traveling to shop, remember to get gas out of town and grab a bite to eat.

Indie Bookstores

Margins are thin for independent bookstores in the best of years, but the pandemic didn't do them any favors.

The American Association of Publishing noted that bookstore sales dropped around 30% in August 2020, and that's with many local bookstores offering new services, such as to-your-doorstep delivery.

ORDER DIRECTLY

Some stores started to offer direct ordering and delivery during the pandemic, and those services are more than likely here to stay. Search for local booksellers in your neighborhood and use those instead of ordering from a multinational corporation. If you're not sure about the tastes of the readers in your life, grab a gift card and let them pick out whatever they want.

INDIEBOUND AND BOOKSHOP

IndieBound has a ZIP code search to let you find local booksellers with certain titles in stock. Bookshop allows you to select a local seller to take your order or buy the book and put your money into a pool distributed among member shops. Either way, your local booksellers benefit.

ATTEND AN EVENT

Many local bookshops host events like author signings (great, personalized holiday gift right there), restaurant partnerships and charity drives during the holiday season. Visit during one of those, have a great time, support a great cause and maybe pick up a few gifts as well.

LOCAL AUTHORS

Independent bookshops are more likely to showcase and carry books by local authors and on local subjects. So if you're looking for gifts for someone that loves their hometown, look no further than the hometown's local bookshop. If you're clueless, the shop's staff can usually give you some great recommendations.

MORE THAN BOOKS

Most bookshops — but especially indie bookshops — are more than just books. You can get games, puzzles, great local apparel, housewares, tote bags and more. Bookshops are also full of great stocking stuffers, such as pens, stationery sets, bookmarks and more. You can also find your holiday cards there, often with a great local bent that will make your holiday cards this year something special.



By The Numbers



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Small businesses offer service that is unparalleled by larger big box stores. There's also an economic benefit to shopping local, especially when you look at the big picture.

Here are some numbers about shopping local this year from Fundera.

Small businesses generate \$68 of local economic return for every \$100 spent. Meanwhile, spending the same \$100 at a national chain only nets \$43.

More than \$9.3 billion would be directly returned to the U.S. economy if every family spent \$10 a month at a local business.

Businesses with fewer than 500 employees account for 99.7% of all U.S. employers.

Small businesses donate 250% more than large businesses to community causes. More than half of polled small businesses plan on donating to charity. When you shop local, you're putting money back into your community through charitable causes, too.

Small businesses employ 58.9 million people.

Local business generates 70% more local economic activity per square foot than big-box retailers.

More than a quarter of small

business owners are immigrants.

Around half — 48% — of the overall growth of U.S. business ownership can be attributed to immigrant business owners.

About a quarter of local businesses close because of

low sales or limited cash flow.

The majority, around 65%, of Americans' shopping budgets are spent in store.

73% of searchers trust a local business more because of positive reviews.

65 million local businesses

have a Facebook page, but only 4 million are using Facebook advertising.

61% of shoppers say they shop locally because of a unique product selection.

56% of workers at locally owned businesses have high

commitment scores.

Minnesota is ranked the best large state for local businesses.

South Dakota is the best small state for local businesses.

Pittsburgh is the best metropolitan area for local businesses.

History of Small Business

Entrepreneurship and working hard is at the core of American identity, even from the earliest days of the nation.

Here's a history of American small business.

17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

This is the time of the pioneer who blazed trails and overcame hardships to carve a life out of the American wilderness. Most colonists in the New World were small farmers who scraped out a living and produced many of their own goods, including beer, clothing, soap, furniture and more. What they couldn't make, they traded for.

19TH CENTURY

As the American experiment pushed west, so did the farmers and ranchers and, eventually, the merchants and factories. Cities grew up and so did the professional classes. With the growth of industry came a wave of independent merchants, traders and, then, the bookkeepers, managers and white color workers. Specialized trades also flourished, and the Industrial Revolution brought a whole new class of them to American shores.

20TH CENTURY

American businesses continue to grow in both scale and complexity, and government intervention in the form of busting monopolies and then, during the Great Depression, relief and employment, increased. In the wake of World War II, the modern corporation gained great influence as consumers grew increasingly sophisticated and affluent. Smaller businesses often aimed to be larger ones, and mergers and buyouts grew more common.

21ST CENTURY

The modern American economy includes a wide array of businesses from the sole proprietorship to behemoth companies employing millions. Like the Industrial Revolution did in its day, today's technological revolution is changing the way Americans work. More people are working remotely and more are working as subcontractors for larger enterprises, changing the face of small business in America.

