

ENGLISH CLUB

ITT Buonarroti

B1 weekly topic for 10/03/2021:

BLACK FRIDAY

What is it? Is it a good idea or does it make people spend too much money? Do you really save money if you buy something that you don't really need? What are your ideas?

What is Black Friday?

Black Friday is the day after the American holiday of Thanksgiving, which is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. Because it is a holiday in the United States, it has long been a popular day for consumers to start shopping for Christmas. Over the last 20 years big retailers have started to offer discounts and bargains on this day, and it has become more and more popular. Last year, people in the USA spent an estimated \$54.7 billion between Black Friday and Cyber Monday (the Monday after Thanksgiving, when people often buy more online). The idea of Black Friday has also spread around the world. For example, in 2017, people in the UK spent the equivalent of \$10.3 billion, in Germany \$7.6 billion and in France \$6.2 billion.

Is Black Friday out of control?

Many of us love to get a bargain, but some feel that events like Black Friday encourage people to buy things that they don't really need and can't afford. Many people seem to completely lose control of both their spending and their tempers. It is easy to find video online of customers physically fighting each other over bargains. It is also argued that Black Friday is bad for small shopkeepers, who cannot afford to offer the kinds of price cuts that the big companies can.

What's the alternative to Black Friday?

Instead of taking the opportunity to buy as much as possible on Black Friday, you could do the opposite and buy absolutely nothing. Since 1997, Buy Nothing Day has been held on the same day as Black Friday. The rules are simple. Just don't buy anything at all for 24 hours. Many people are surprised how difficult this actually is. The aim is to make people think more about their spending and to make better decisions about what they buy and where they buy it from.

Ethical spending

As well as spending less and not buying unnecessary items, Buy Nothing Day aims to raise awareness of how to be a more ethical consumer. For example, you can avoid buying 'fast fashion', that is, very cheap clothes that are worn a few times before being thrown away. Or you could decide not to automatically upgrade your mobile at the end of a contract. These kinds of decisions can help to protect the environment as well as saving you money.

What else can you do on Buy Nothing Day?

Some people carry out protests at shopping centres. Others avoid the shops completely and go for a walk in nature instead. Another alternative, the Buy Nothing Coat Exchange, is an idea which is spreading. People donate winter coats throughout November and anyone who needs one can come and take one on Buy Nothing Day.

(source: British Council B1)