

# BLACK CONSUMERS AND SHOPPING AT MASS MERCHANDISERS – US – 2024

Mass merchandisers are essential to Black consumers. Their needs align with the general population, but retailers have an opportunity to engage them based on niche interests.



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# Black Consumers And Shopping At Mass Merchandisers - US - 2024

## This report looks at the following areas:

- Black consumers' online and in-store shopping habits at top mass merchandisers and warehouse stores
- Items purchased at mass merchandisers and Black consumers' relationship with private label brands
- Reasons why Black consumers shop at mass merchandisers and shopping occasions
- Black consumers' perceptions of top mass merchandisers
- Desired improvements for mass merchandisers
- Innovative marketing strategies and partnership opportunities to target Black consumers



Mass merchandisers are essential to Black consumers. Their needs align with the general population, but retailers have an opportunity to engage them based on niche interests.

## Overview

Black consumers have diverse shopping habits, including mass merchandisers, both online and in-store. They gravitate towards these retailers for essentials and often shop for private label brands, appreciating the balance of quality and affordability. Convenience, value and variety are key factors driving their patronage, with shopping occasions primarily focusing on routine purchases with some special occasion shopping supplementing routines.

Overall, Black consumers perceive top mass merchandisers positively, yet also desire improvements such as enhanced diversity in product offerings and improved in-store

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experiences. Black consumers want marketing and product assortments that reflect their preferences and cultural nuances, presenting partnership opportunities for brands aiming to target this demographic.

Understanding Black consumers' shopping behaviors and preferences is crucial for mass merchandisers seeking to capture this market segment. By addressing their specific needs, offering a diverse range of products and implementing inclusive brand collaborations and marketing strategies, retailers can promote stronger connections and loyalty among Black consumers.

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## Report Content



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- What you need to know
- Consumer trends: key takeaways
- Market predictions
- Opportunities

### MARKET DYNAMICS

#### Target audience overview

- Black consumers account for about 14% of the population and shop at mass merchandisers at nearly the same rate as all consumers
  - Graph 1: share of population, by race and Hispanic origin, 2023
- Black households are more prevalent in the South and overindex for urban areas
  - Graph 2: households, by region and race/Hispanic origin, 2021
- Convenience, value drives Black shoppers to mass retailers
  - Graph 3: retailers shopped by Black consumers – any shopping (net), 2023
- Unemployment continues to sit near historic lows; gap narrows between US total and Black unemployment rate
  - Graph 4: unemployment rate, by Black and by total, 2019-24
- Black adults' median household income has been steadily increasing
  - Graph 5: median household income % annual change, by Black and by total, 2012-22

#### Market context & drivers

- Market context
- Consumer price increases holding relatively steady in the 3.1-3.7% range for the past six months
  - Graph 6: Consumer Price Index % change from year ago, 2019-24
- Warehouse clubs and supercenters offer Black consumers the greatest deals
  - Graph 7: Total US retail sales and forecast of mass merchandisers (\$ bn), by segment, at current prices, 2018-28

### CONSUMER INSIGHTS

#### Consumer fast facts

#### Retailers shopped

- Walmart and Target are top contenders for Black consumers
  - Graph 8: retailers shopped at in-store in the past 12 months, 2024
- Black consumers show a preference for in-store shopping; as with consumers, overall, Walmart leads

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- Graph 9: retailers shopped at online in the past 12 months, Black consumers vs all, 2024
- Graph 10: retailers shopped at in-store in the past 12 months, Black consumers vs all, 2024
- Wholesale retailers are attractive to suburban Black consumers
  - Graph 11: warehouse/club store retailers shopped at in-store in the past 12 months, by area, 2024
- Warehouse/club store's regional presence may have an impact on shopper frequency
  - Graph 12: warehouse/club store retailers shopped at in-store in the past 12 months, by region, 2024
- Amazon has captured older audiences for online shopping
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- Walmart online is a hit for Gen Z shoppers
  - Graph 14: retailers shopped at online in the past 12 months, by generation, 2024
- Walmart Discovered encourages the creative culture of Gen Z
- Walmart honors Black business owners with their Black and Unlimited Clock

## Items purchased

- Mass merchandisers are essential for everyday necessities
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- Similar trends for Black consumers and general population, with food and personal care leading top purchased items at mass merchandisers
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- Popularity of private label products for Black consumers demonstrate quality and value
  - Graph 17: private label items purchased from a mass merchandiser in the past 12 months, 2024
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  - Graph 18: private label items purchased from a mass merchandiser in the past 12 months – footwear, by gender, 2024
- Analyst POV: leveraging hip hop culture to improve the stock of private label footwear
- Shoes are an integral part of the wardrobe for multicultural consumers
  - Graph 19: attitudes toward shopping for footwear (agree) – influence on outfit, by race/ethnicity; gender and race/ethnicity, 2023
- Older generations more likely to lean into mass merchandisers for food purchases
- Parents rely on mass merchandisers for clothing and accessories
  - Graph 20: items purchased from mass merchandisers in the past 12 months – clothing and accessories, by parental status, 2024

## Reasons for shopping mass merchandisers

- Black consumers' reasons for shopping at mass merchandisers mirror the general population, but with less emphasis on affordability and variety
  - Graph 21: reasons for shopping at mass merchandisers, by Black consumers vs all, 2024
- Affordability is key for Black consumers aged 55+
  - Graph 22: reasons for shopping at mass merchandisers – prices are affordable, by age, 2024

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- Non-parents favor variety, parents prioritize quality and family shopping
  - Graph 23: reasons for shopping at mass merchandisers, by parental status and gender, 2024
- Consumer preferences define value
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  - Graph 24: reasons for shopping at mass merchandisers – prices and selection, by items purchased, 2024
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## Occasions for shopping at mass merchandisers

- Everyday essentials are primary occasions, winter seasonal products follow
  - Graph 25: occasions for shopping at mass merchandisers, by Black consumers vs all, 2024
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  - Graph 26: occasions for shopping at mass merchandisers – gifts and hosted events, by those who purchased furniture/home decor, 2024
- Leverage Pinterest for gift shoppers through inspiration and deals
  - Graph 27: occasions for shopping at mass merchandisers – gift shopping, by daily Pinterest users, 2024
- Pinterest's audience skews heavily towards Millennial women looking for information on projects, ideas and products
- Leisurely shopping ads may appeal to more Black male shoppers
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- Black men are engaged with digital ads
- Mass merchandisers provide significant value to high-income Black consumers who show a slightly higher tendency to shop for all occasions
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- Black consumers believe mass merchandisers offer good value and overall convenience
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- Consumers look for efficiency and value from mass merchandisers
  - Graph 35: desired improvements to mass merchandisers, by Black consumers vs all, 2024
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- Graph 36: desired improvement – free shipping/delivery, by generation, 2024
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- Different desires show the need for emphasis on brand integrity

## Attitudes toward mass merchandisers

- Fair treatment and community involvement from mass merchandisers is attractive to Black consumers
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- Consumers are dollar conscious and looking for saving, better communication of rewards programs and memberships can help
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- Preference for shopping in-store means there will be a need for in-store staff
  - Graph 41: attitudes toward mass merchandisers – in-store interests, 2024

## COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES

### Competitive strategies and market opportunities

- Walmart's commitment to social justice and affordability makes it a top retailer among Black consumers
- Major retailers make bold commitments to Black-owned businesses
- Walmart+ InHome expands its delivery service to more markets
- Target reaches parents with their viral year long return policy
- Costco taps into relatability to Black men with social media ads
- Target is vocal about their contribution to change by highlighting the diverse owners of the brands they sell
- Walmart celebrates 50 years of Hip-Hop through partnership with People of Crypto Lab
- Sam's Club and Costco can unlock market potential by partnering with Black mom influencers to reach large families
- Join forces with Black mom YouTubers who are already advertising for warehouse clubs

### Opportunities

## APPENDIX

- Consumer research methodology
- Generations
- Abbreviations and terms

### Market segmentation

- US retail sales of mass merchandisers, by segment
- Supercenters and warehouse clubs make up the majority of market share for mass merchandisers

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