

# CLOTHING RETAILING – UK – 2023

The clothing market has benefitted from its potential to lift the mood as consumers buy outfits for socialising and holidays, but savvier shoppers dents sales.



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# Clothing Retailing - UK - 2023

## This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of the cost of living crisis on clothes buying behaviour
- Analysis of the size of the clothing market and forecast for the next five years
- Market share of major players, competitive strategies and advertising initiatives
- The most important factors consumers prioritise when buying clothes
- Retailer improvements desired when shopping in-store and online



The clothing market has benefitted from its potential to lift the mood as consumers buy outfits for socialising and holidays, but savvier shopping dents sales.

## Overview

The clothing market has benefitted from its potential to 'lift the mood' amid the uncertainty of the cost-of-living crisis, with consumers treating themselves to new outfits for socialising and holidays. While inflation has driven value-led purchasing, consumers have adopted savvier shopping behaviours denting volume sales.

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# Report Content

## Key issues covered in this Report

- Overview

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Opportunities for the clothing retail market

- Three major opportunities for the market

### Market dynamics and outlook

- The five year outlook for clothing
- Consumer spending on clothing and accessories grow 4% in 2023 to £63.5 billion
- Specialist clothing retailers benefit from ongoing demand for fashion
- Inflation is still the key factor affecting consumers' finances

### What consumers want and why

- Less linear shopping journey as people combine in-store and online
  - Graph 1: how consumers have bought clothes for themselves in the last 12 months, 2021-23
- M&S is the most popular fashion retailer overall
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- Young want to be able to check stock availability in stores
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## MARKET DYNAMICS

### Market size

- Consumer spending on clothing and accessories grows 4% in 2023 to £63.5 billion
  - Graph 8: consumer spending on clothing and accessories, 2018-23

## Market forecast

- Consumer spending on clothing to rise 19% by 2028
- Consumer spending will normalise
- Value retailers main beneficiaries of the last income squeeze
  - Graph 9: consumer spending on clothing and accessories, 2009-14

## Sector size and forecast

- Specialist clothing retailers benefit from ongoing demand for fashion
- Store-based specialists drive sales
- While specialist sales remain volatile, they are set to grow 14% over the next five years
- Clothing sales through specialists
  - Graph 10: estimated sales of clothing and accessories through specialists, 2018-23

## Online

- Online sales grow 5.4% in 2023
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  - Graph 12: online as a % of spending on all clothing and accessories, 2018-23

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- The UK has avoided recession, but economic output has stagnated since the cost of living crisis began
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- Inflation is still the key factor affecting consumers' finances
  - Graph 14: Overall CPIH and garment inflation rate, 2022-23
- Interest rates will rise in importance over the remainder of 2023 and into 2024
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  - Graph 15: "Have you been affected by any of these issues over the last two months? Please select all that apply.", 2023
- Consumers have prioritised buying new clothes
  - Graph 16: recent and planned spending activity, 2023
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  - Graph 18: "How do you think the following will change over the next year?", 2023
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  - Graph 19: "If your financial situation significantly improved, which of the following would you prioritise spending on?", 2023
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## WHAT CONSUMERS WANT AND WHY

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  - Graph 21: Mintel Fashion Tracker, personal fashion purchases in the past three months, 2022-23
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  - Graph 22: Mintel Fashion Tracker, personal fashion purchases in the past three months, 2022-23

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- Women overall drive clothes purchasing...
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- Primark stands out as the favourite in-store retailer
  - Graph 31: where consumers have bought clothes in-store for themselves in the last 12 months, 2023
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  - Graph 32: where consumers have bought clothes online for themselves in the last 12 months, 2023
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  - Graph 33: where consumers have bought clothes in-store/online for themselves in the last 12 months, 2022 and 2023
- M&S succeeds in growing young and older female customers

- Primark appeals to consumers in a tight financial situation
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- Primark adds click-and-collect for womenswear amid fall in female Millennial customers
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- Supermarkets grow focus on fashion
- Sainsbury's, Asda and Tesco up their fashion offering
- Impressive rise of Shein
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  - Graph 35: where women aged 16-24 have bought clothes online in the last 12 months, 2023

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- 30% sell unwanted clothes
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- Using resale to draw Millennials to stores
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  - Graph 37: shopping behaviours in the last 12 months, by gender, 2023
- Fostering loyalty through free returns
- Retailers add quicker in-store returns
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- Young Millennials use AI for search
  - Graph 38: shopping behaviours in the last 12 months, by generation, 2023
- Young see benefits of AI for clothes shopping
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- While opting for more sustainable retailers is not a priority yet, it is climbing up the ladder of importance
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- Inditex looks to lead with environmental strategy

### Most important factors when buying clothes

- Fit is the most important factor when buying clothes
  - Graph 40: when buying clothes for myself, it is most important to me that..., 2023
- Appealing to women with affordable clothes that fit well
- Appealing to women with affordable clothes that fit well
  - Graph 41: when buying clothes for myself, it is most important to me that..., 2023
- Me+Em opens new store offering personal styling and focusing on pieces that fit and flatter
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  - Graph 42: when buying clothes for myself, it is most important to me that..., 2023
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- Graph 43: agreement with "they are long-lasting" is the most important factor when buying clothes for myself, 2023
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- How to appeal to value focused shoppers
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- Digital avatars wanted to help with fit
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- Zalando uses 3D avatars to improve fit
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- Older Millennials want more information on environmental impact
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### Retailer improvements desired in-store

- Young want to be able to check stock availability in stores
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- Gen Zs and Millennials want phygital clothing stores
  - Graph 49: retailer improvements desired in-store, by generation, 2023
- Redesigning stores for the future
- Upselling to young men through in-store digital recommendations
  - Graph 50: retailer improvements desired in-store, by gender and age, 2023
- Hugo Boss adds new technology to draw men

## RETAILER ACTIVITY

### Leading specialists

- Specialist revenues track upwards as demand for fashion continues
- Robust spending despite the cost of living crisis has helped retailers
- Specialists adding to their brand offering

- Compound annual growth rates
  - Graph 51: leading specialist retailers' compound annual growth in revenues, 2018–22
- Outlet numbers for 2022
- Digitally-focused stores providing ease for shoppers
- Some are streamlining the store offering...
- ...while others continue to expand
- Sales per outlet

### Channels of distribution

- Online share remains stagnant, while specialists regain ground
  - Graph 52: estimated distribution of consumer spending on clothing, by retailer type, 2022
- Multichannel retailers keep hold of their share

### Leading non-specialists

- Non-specialists revenue
- Pureplays continue to struggle as competition increases
- Supermarkets expanding fashion ranges

### Market shares

- Next remains the market leader

### Launch activity and innovation

- Barbiecore turns fashion pink
- Women's football takes over
- Fashion focused supermarket ranges
- Retailers promote more sustainable shopping
- Retailers add more premium options

### Advertising and marketing activity

- Ad spend on clothing grows in 2022
  - Graph 53: total above-the-line, online display and direct mail advertising on clothing and accessories, 2019–23
- M&S dominates ad spend due to Sienna campaign
- Sienna Miller becomes face of M&S
- H&M Moves new campaign
- Tesco makes a fashion statement with F&F TV campaign
- Nike collaboration promotes versatile clothing for all the family
- Digital dominates spend, while TV declines

## BRAND RESEARCH

- M&S is the most trusted, but Seasalt is the most differentiated



- Me+Em is most recommended brand
- TK Maxx seen as offering good value
- Me+Em & Nobody's Child viewed as fun
- Urban Outfitters & Pull & Bear seen as cutting edge

## APPENDIX

### Market forecast data and methodology

- Market size: consumer spending on clothing and accessories
- Market forecast: consumer spending on clothing and accessories
- Market size: clothing retail sales
- Market forecast: clothing retail sales
- Market forecast and prediction intervals (consumer spending)
- Market forecast and prediction intervals (clothing retail sales)
- Forecast methodology

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- Abbreviations and terms

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- Nielsen Ad Intel coverage

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