

# MILLENNIAL SHOPPING HABITS: TREND REPORT 2022

Since late 2019, millennials — those born between 1982 and 1996 — have been the most populous generation in the United States, with **73.2 million** people in 2022.

Having long been a dominant cultural force, millennials also have a considerable annual spending power of **\$2.5 trillion**. How do millennials (sometimes referred to as Gen Y) spend their money? What influences their purchasing decisions? What trends shape their shopping, spending, and saving habits?

In this report, we examine the trends of millennial shopping habits in the U.S., explore how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted these habits, and how millennials, as America's largest generation, continue to shape retail and e-commerce.

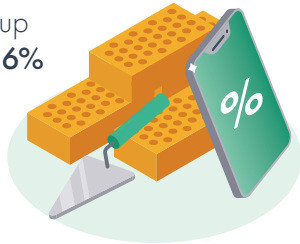


# KEY FINDINGS

1

## MOBILE IS THE NEW BRICK-AND-MORTAR

Four in five (80%) of millennials now do most of their shopping online, up from 60% in 2019, with 56% shopping mostly on their mobile devices, up from 36% over the same period.



2

## COVID PANDEMIC ACCELERATES SHIFT TO ONLINE SHOPPING

As many as 73% of millennials changed how they shop due to the pandemic. More than half (56%) shifted their shopping online away from physical stores, especially among older members of millennials.



3

## AS SHOPPING BECOMES MOBILE, TECH MATTERS MORE

Saving money and finding deals is still the most important factor in millennial online shopping (63%), but a smooth checkout process (42%) and product recommendations (22%) are significantly more important in 2022 than they were three years ago.



4

## WHEN IT COMES TO SHOPPING, FACEBOOK IS STILL #1 ON SOCIAL

As 78% of millennials now follow brands on social media (up from 57% in 2017), more than half (54%) admit their shopping habits are most influenced by Facebook (28%) and Instagram (27%).



5

## TIKTOK IS THE THIRD MOST INFLUENTIAL SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM FOR SHOPPING

Despite only launching in America in 2017, TikTok is already the main social media platform shaping the shopping habits of 12% of millennials.

For younger millennials aged 25-29, that share is 16%.



6

## MILLENNIALS GET CLEARER ON CRYPTO; SOME ARE STARTING TO SPEND IT

As the awareness of cryptocurrency grows (96% aware, up from 90% in 2019), so is the inclination to spend it when shopping online. One in three (30%) of millennials made at least one purchase using cryptocurrency in the past year (+8% since 2019).



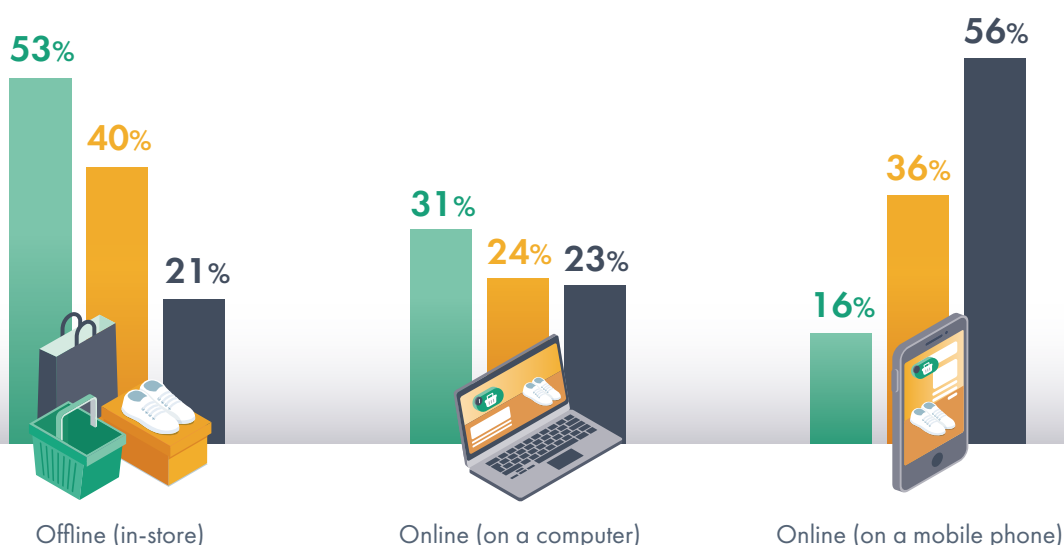
# MILLENNIAL SHOPPING HABITS IN 2022

## MORE ONLINE, EVEN MORE MOBILE: HOW MILLENNIAL SHOPPING HABITS SHIFTED SINCE 2019

The share of millennials choosing to shop primarily online compared to in-store has grown by 19% since 2019, and all that growth is due to mobile shopping. The share of millennials doing most of their shopping on a desktop or laptop computer is roughly the same (23%, down from 24%) in the same period.

Where Do Millennials Shop: 2017 to 2022

■ 2017 ■ 2019 ■ 2022



Almost **80%** of millennials now do most of their shopping online, but most interestingly, **56%** of them primarily shop from their mobile device.

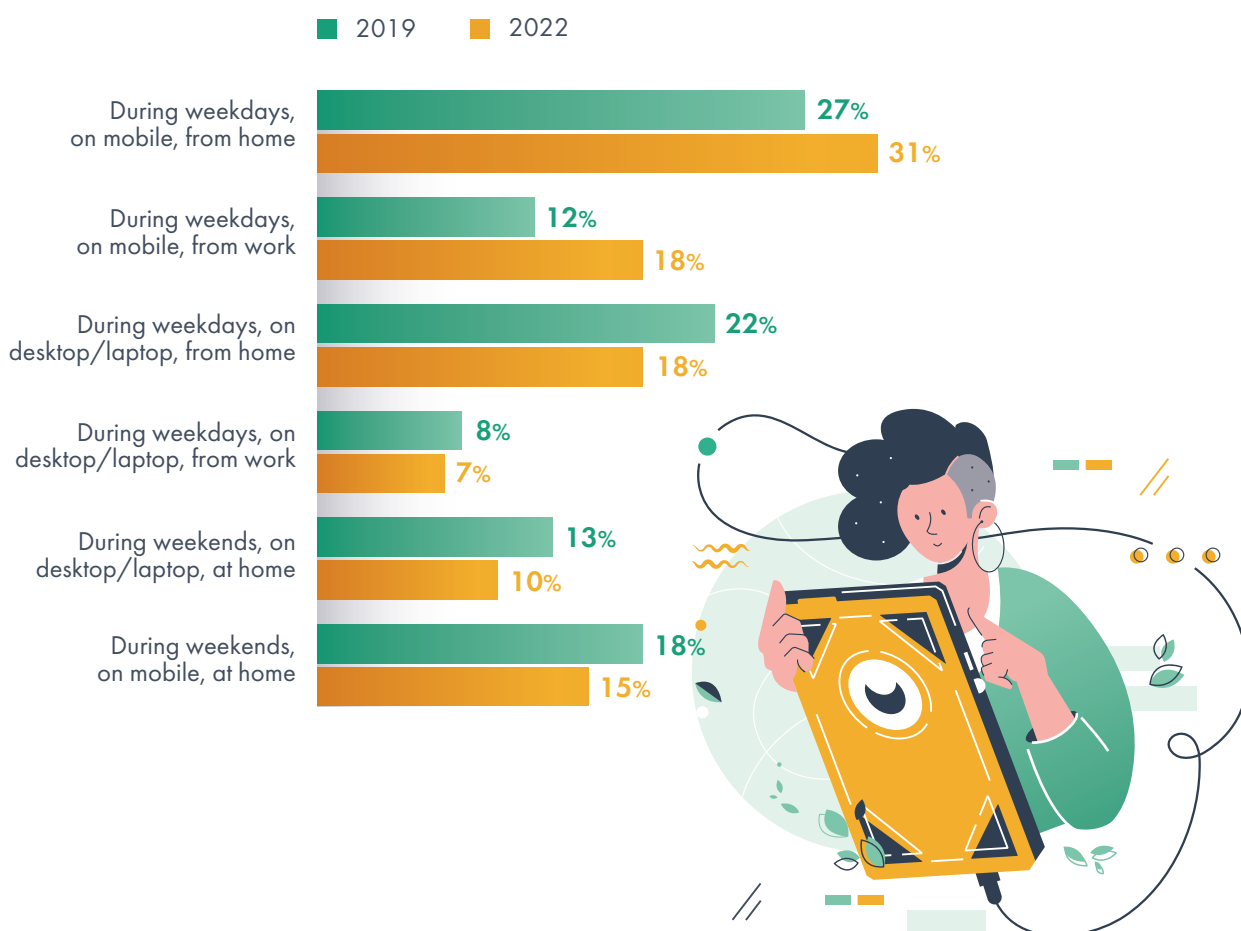
It is women who are more likely to shop on their phones than men (**61% vs. 51%**). Age-wise, **59%** of older millennials (**35-40**) mostly shop on mobile, compared to **52%** of those aged **25-29**.

See also: [CouponFollow's Online Shopping vs. In-Store Shopping Statistics](#)

## Almost Half Shop On the Phone, During the Week

In **2019** only about one in three (**38%**) millennials reported making purchases on their mobile device on a weekday, but in **2022**, about half (**49%**) now make purchases this way regularly. Perhaps this is due to the increase in mobile shopping, but several other factors could have contributed to this trend, such as the transition to working from home.

### When Millennials Shop: 2022 vs. 2019

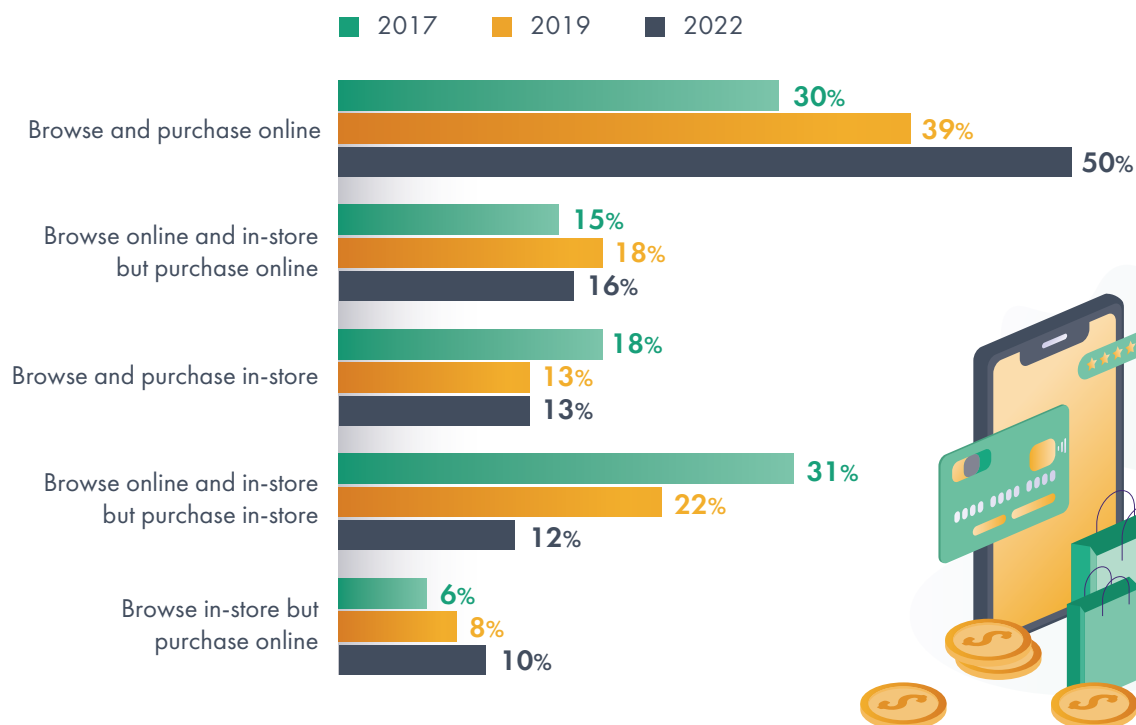


Curiously enough, almost one-in-five (**18%**) of millennials primarily shop on their mobile while at work - a category that has seen the biggest surge in popularity (**+6%**) since our **2019** study. Most of this growth comes from younger millennials, whose share of shoppers making purchases on their phones while at work doubled since **2019**, from **9%** to **19%**.

## One in Two Purchasing Journeys Now Fully Online

In **2017**, more millennials browsed online and in-store, and purchased in-store (**31%**) than accomplished the whole of their shopping on the internet. Today, browsing and buying online has become the most predominant mode to shop, with **50%** of millennials following this trajectory.

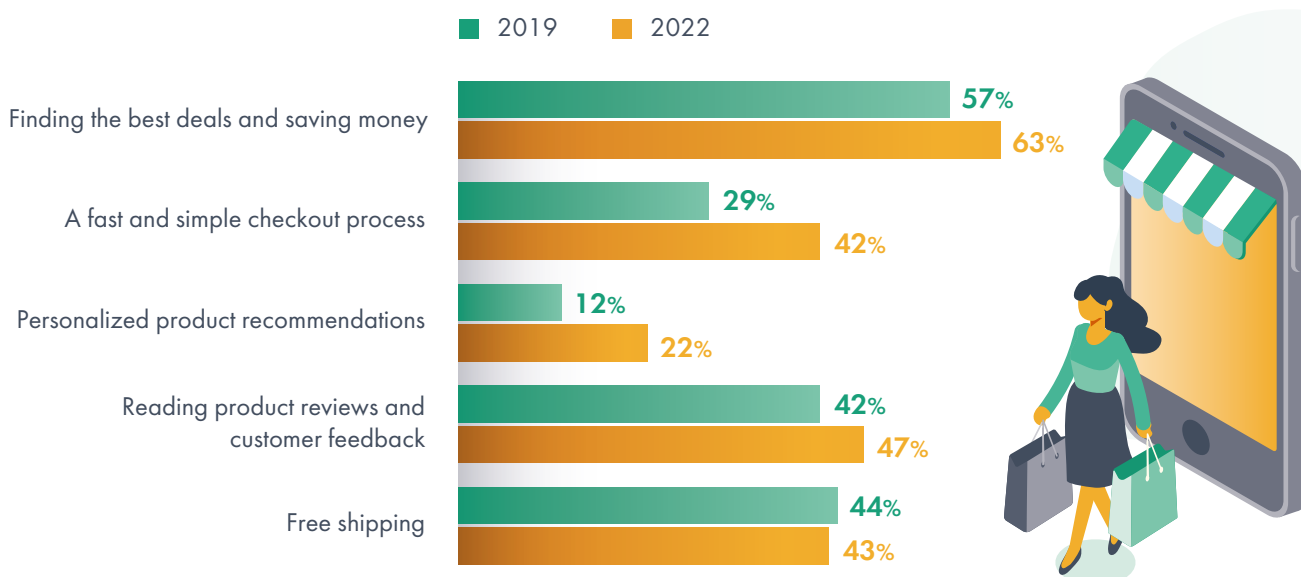
## How Millennials Do a Majority of Their Browsing and Purchasing



## Deals and Reviews Still Key, but Customer UX Grows in Importance

Finding the best deals and saving the most money remains the most important driver of shopping decisions among millennials (**63%, up from 57% in 2019**), followed by customer reviews (**47%, up from 42%**) and free shipping (**43%, slightly down from 44%**).

### Deals & Reviews Key to Purchasing Decisions



Interestingly, however, tech-related factors like a smooth online checkout process (**42%**) and personalized product recommendations, i.e., AI (**22%**), have grown significantly since 2019.

Across the board, it seems millennial consumers are expecting more out of their online shopping experiences.

Having noted the significant shifts in millennials' shopping habits over the past few years, let us now turn to key trends that have been shaping and continue to influence how millennials are going about their shopping in 2022.



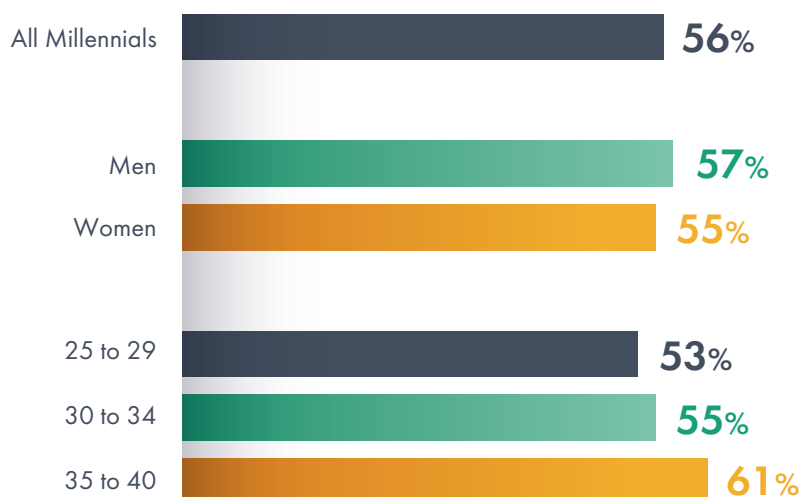
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It's hard to overstate the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on everyone, millennials included, which in turn had an effect on how they go about their shopping.

Nearly three-quarters of millennials (**73%**) changed how they shop during the pandemic, with more than half (**56%**) opting for online shopping in favor of shopping in-store. This was particularly true of older millennials (**61%**) compared to their younger counterparts (**53%**).

## COVID Impact

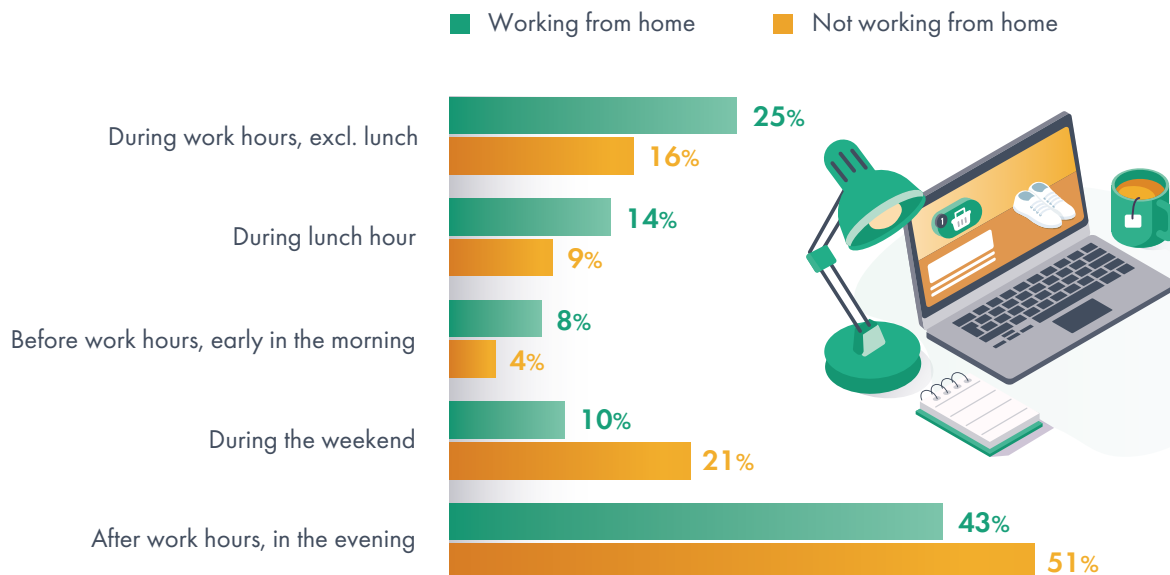
% started shopping online more due to the pandemic



Almost two-thirds (**64%**) of employed millennials continue to work at home at least some of the time, with **26%** fully remote and a further **27%** splitting their time between home and office.

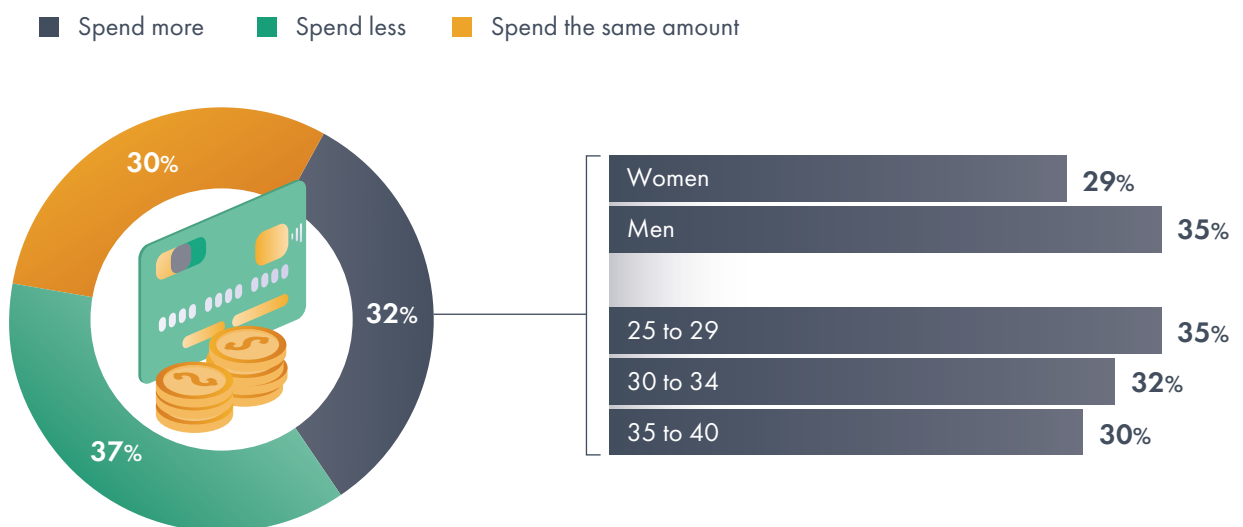
Millennials working from home were much more likely to shop during work hours than those working from the office (**25% vs. 16%**). Conversely, they were almost half as likely to leave their shopping for the weekend (**10% vs. 21%**) than office workers.

### Work From Home Impact on When Millennials Shop



Remote workers may be shopping more often, but it doesn't mean they spend more money. In fact, a total of **67%** said they either spend the same amount when working from home (**37%**) or less (**30%**). Roughly a third (**32%**) did acknowledge overspending when working remotely.

### Work From Home Influence on Shopping Spend



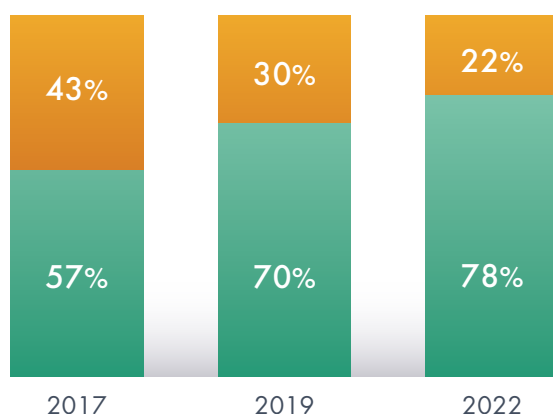
Younger millennials were marginally more likely to spend more when working from home than their older counterparts (**35% vs. 30%**), as were men compared to women (**35% to 29%**).

# SOCIAL MEDIA: INSTAGRAM & FACEBOOK HOLD SWAY, TIKTOK GAINS MOMENTUM

Compared to five years ago, following brands on social media has become even more prolific as 78% of millennials now follow brands on their social feeds, up from 57% we recorded in our 2017 study.

## Following Brands on Social Media

■ Follow brands on social media ■ Do not follow brands on social media



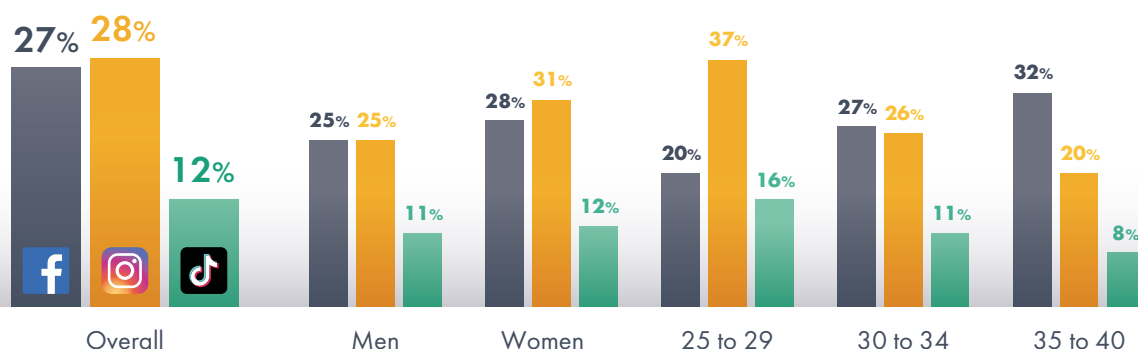
This increase is largely due to millennial men tuning into brand feeds, as **12%** more of them started following brands on social media in the last three years.

As we reported in our **2020 study** into shopping and social media, increased social media usage also leads to increased shopping activity. Nearly half (**48%**) of social media users made at least one purchase through social media.

Among social media platforms, Meta (the company formerly known as Facebook) still holds the greatest sway when it comes to sharing millennial shopping habits. Its properties, Instagram and Facebook, are the primary social media platforms influencing **56%** of millennials.

## Influential Social Media Platform for Shopping Habits

■ Facebook ■ Instagram ■ TikTok



Predictably, younger millennials are more influenced by Instagram than Facebook (**37% vs. 20%**), while the older members of Generation Y are more partial to Facebook (**32% vs. 20%**).

No report into the social media habits of Americans would be complete without a mention of TikTok. Launched in the U.S. in **2017** and mostly associated with viral videos, this platform is already the third most influential when it comes to shopping, as **12%** of millennials cite it as the media shaping their shopping habits. Much like with Instagram, TikTok is more popular with the younger crowd, as millennials aged **25-29** are twice as likely to look to TikTok for shopping advice than those aged **35-40 (16% to 8%)**.

See also: [CouponFollow's Shopping Through Social Report](#)

## CRYPTOCURRENCIES: USAGE LAGS BEHIND GROWING AWARENESS

Awareness of cryptocurrencies is near-ubiquitous as only **4%** of millennials concede they don't know what they are in 2022, down from **9%** in our 2019 study. The biggest awareness gain has been made by women, with the share of those unaware of cryptocurrencies shrinking from **14%** to **5%** in three years.

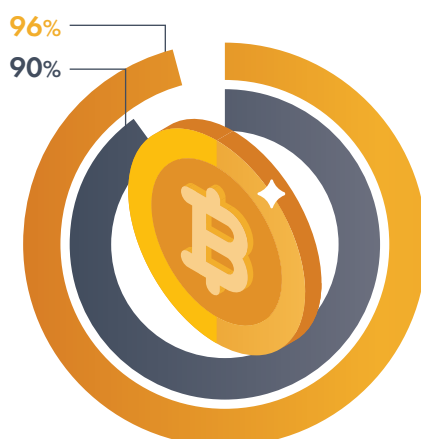
That's a significant shift. Vast strands of the wider American public, [according to our study into cashless payment methods last year](#), were rather clueless about the cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin or Ethereum.

Moreover, **50%** of millennials in the study claim to own some cryptocurrency, with men (**59% vs. women's 41%**) and younger millennials (**53% vs. older millennials' 43%**) leading the charge.

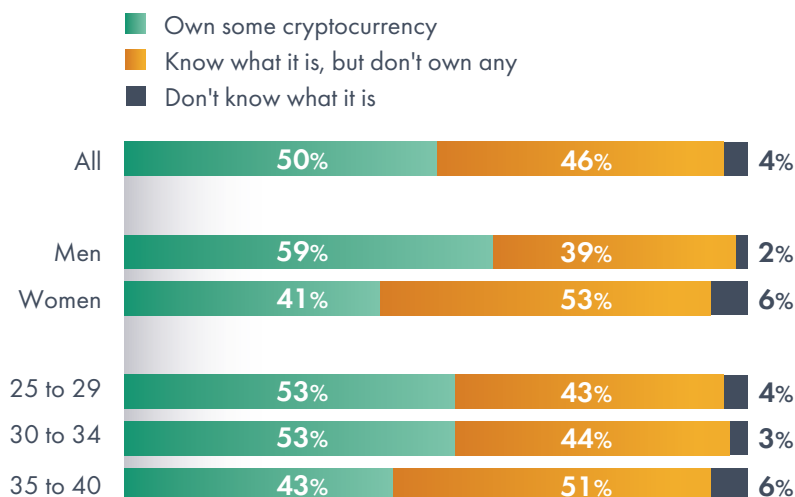
### Cryptocurrency Awareness

Know what cryptocurrency is:

■ 2019 ■ 2022



## Cryptocurrency: Awareness & Ownership by Demographic



Cryptocurrency use is not as widespread as awareness. However, it's worth noting that **30%** of millennials report making at least one purchase with crypto last year, an **8%** increase compared to our study from **2019**.

At the same time, the signs that crypto is largely seen as an investment vehicle are there, with **48%** of millennials who own cryptocurrency having no intention to use it for shopping.

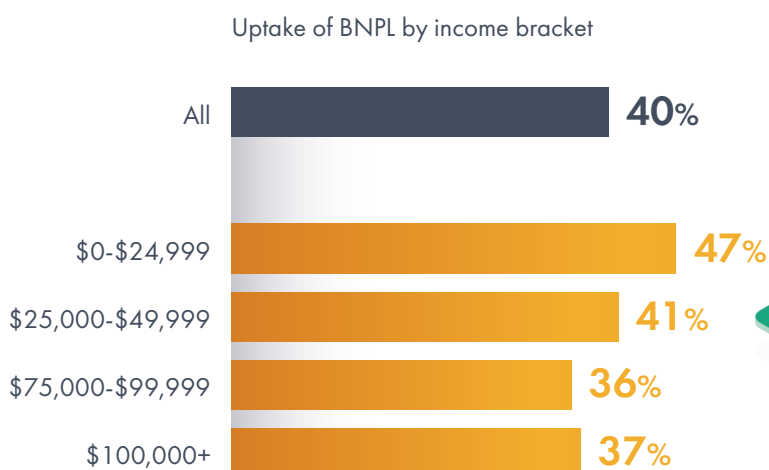
See also: [CouponFollow's The State of Cashless Spending & Payments in 2021 Report](#)

## ONE TO WATCH: 40% OF MILLENNIALS USE BUY NOW, PAY LATER OPTION

Despite first becoming widespread a few years ago, Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) purchasing options in online stores have only gained traction recently.

Around **40%** of millennials used this option when making purchases in the last year. Unsurprisingly, it was more common among the lower-income millennials, of whom nearly half (**47%**) exercised this option at checkout.

### Buy Now, Pay Later Usage



BNPL options aren't new ways to pay per se, as installment plans have long been available to shoppers online and in-store. Contemporary solutions such as Klarna and Affirm make it rather easy to sign up for a repayment plan, but as Consumer Reports warns, for financially sensitive consumers, opting for BNPL can result in missed payments and rise of personal debt.

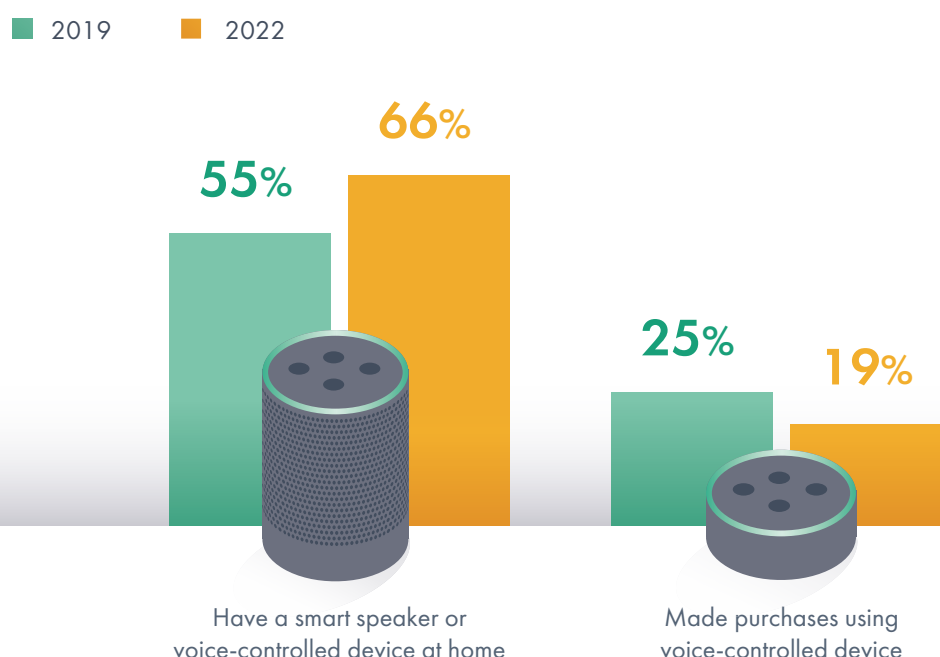
See also: [CouponFollow's Buy Now, Pay Later Report](#)

## VOICE ASSISTANTS: GREAT FOR HOME, NOT THAT USEFUL FOR SHOPPING?

Voice-controlled smart home devices were at one point tipped to redefine many spheres of our daily lives, including shopping, but their impact seems to be fizzling out.

Sure enough, two-thirds of millennials (66%) now have one of these devices at home (up from 55% in 2019). That said, and this is consistent with our previous research on this topic, only a minority (19%) of device owners used it to purchase something in the last year.

### Voice-Controlled Device Ownership & Purchase Habits



When it comes to brand landscape, voice-controlled smart home devices are still a three-horse race with **Google's Assistant (36%)**, **Amazon's Alexa (31%)**, and **Apple's Siri (28%)** controlling the market with their shares not significantly changed since our 2019 report.

See also: [CouponFollow's Virtual Assistants and Shopping Study](#)

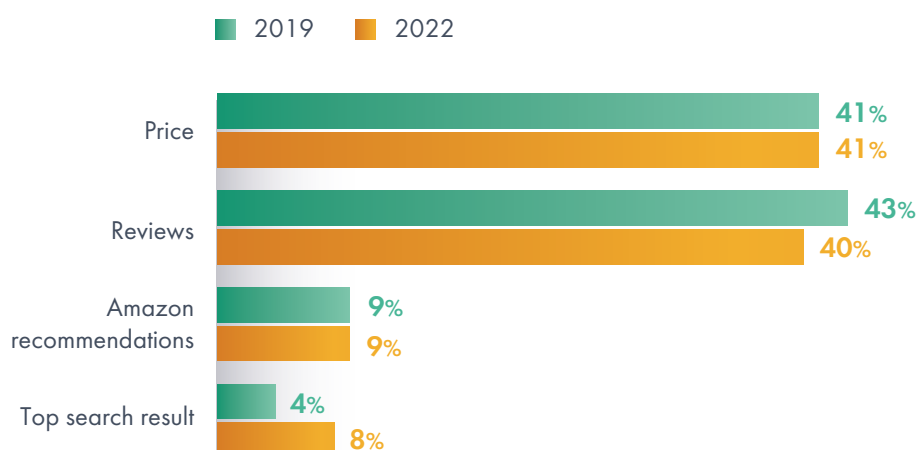
# HOLDING PRIME POSITION: AMAZON CONTINUES TO ASSERT ITS DOMINANCE

Despite or, perhaps, because of the pandemic, Amazon's grip on millennials as the prime destination for online shopping continues to dominate in 2022.

98% of our millennial consumers surveyed said they do at least some of their shopping on Amazon, as two-thirds (66%) report making at least half of their purchases on the biggest e-commerce site in the world.



## Top Amazon Purchase Factors



When it comes to factors influencing how millennials shop on Amazon, they are unchanged since our 2019 report. Product prices (41%) and reviews (40%) hold the most influence over their purchasing decisions.

One breakout factor is search, as twice as many (8%, up from 4% in 2019) millennials are now paying attention to products coming up first in their Amazon search results.

# DEALS AND COUPONS: HOW MILLENNIALS SAVE MONEY WHEN SHOPPING IN 2022

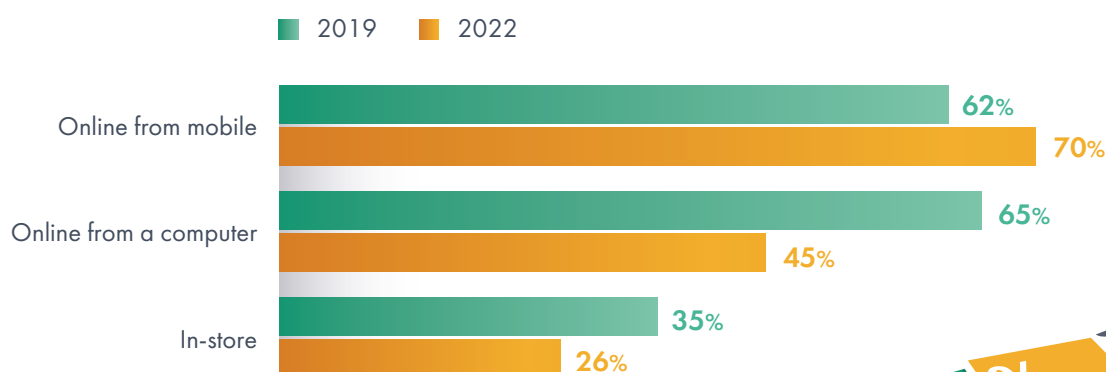
Mirroring the shift towards online shopping and e-commerce, online coupon clipping has become nearly universal. Nearly all millennials (96%) search for coupons and deals when shopping in 2022.



## SAVING FOLLOWS SHOPPING COUPON SEARCH IS NOW MOBILE, TOO

As millennials shift their online shopping to mobile, that's where they want to have opportunities to save as well. In **2022** around **70%** of millennials search for deals and discounts on their phone, rather than on a computer (**45%**), which used to be the predominant way to find coupons in **2019 (65%)**.

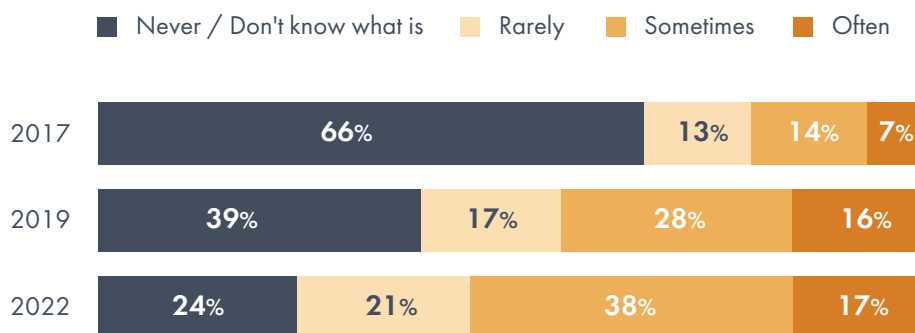
### Coupon Redemption Preference



## SAVE AS YOU BROWSE? MORE MILLENNIALS USE BROWSER EXTENSIONS TO SAVE MONEY

In our first survey of millennial shopping habits in **2017**, only a minority of study participants (**21%**) reported using browser extensions like Cently to save when shopping online at least some of the time.

### Coupon Browser Extension Usage



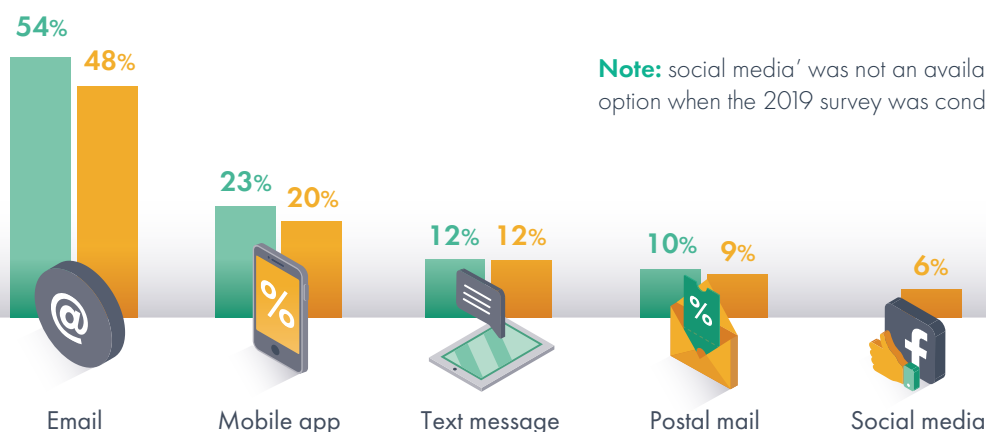
By **2022**, this percentage has more than doubled, with more than half of millennials (**55%**) using a money-saving browser extension when shopping online sometimes or often.

## CAN'T BEAT EMAIL: LITTLE CHANGE TO THE COUPON DELIVERY LANDSCAPE

Despite the increased rate at which millennials follow brands on social media, good old-fashioned email is still their most preferred way to receive deals and coupons. Almost half (**48%**) prefer to receive their discounts that way, followed by a mobile app (**20%**), text message (**12%**), and snail mail (**9%**).

### Coupon Delivery Preference

■ 2019   ■ 2022



Only **6%** indicated they'd like to get their coupons on social media. This finding can partially be explained by the fact that most millennials who follow brands on social media (**51%**) don't do it for discounts, but rather to learn about the latest trends and products (**44%**) and participate in their community (**9%**).

## DISCOUNTS OVER FREEBIES: MILLENNIALS' FAVORITE DEAL TYPES

Freebies are always welcome, but millennials prefer a percentage discount (**35%**) above any other deal type. Dollar discounts (**19%**) and free shipping (**18%**) are second and third favorites, with Buy One, Get One Free offers being top for **14%** of millennials.

### Discount Types Preference



Free trials (**7%**) and product bonuses, i.e., free gifts with purchase (**6%**), are of interest to only a small number of millennials.

So high is the appetite for discounts that **52%** of millennials would be prepared to abandon their favorite brand and try a competitor product if they can save up to **20%** on their purchase. For a **30%** discount, three-quarters of millennial shoppers are willing to switch away from their usual brand of choice.

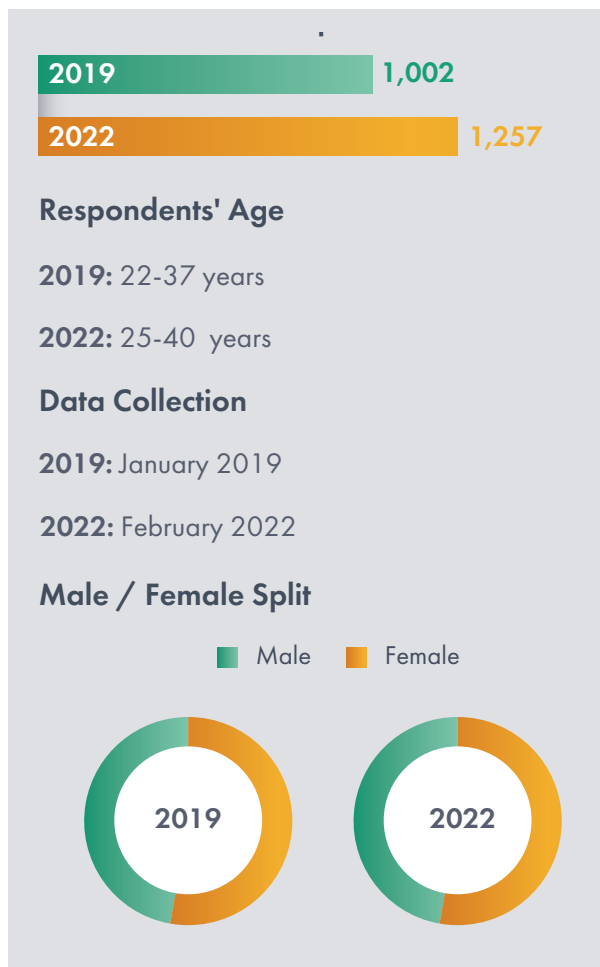
### Influence of Competitor Discounts

Stick with Brand Try Competitor Product



# Study Methodology and Limitations

This report was prepared based on surveys of U.S. millennials and their shopping habits, carried out in **2019**, and **2022**. Methodological information on these surveys are as follows:



In both surveys, respondents represented a broad economic scope, with an annual household income ranging from **0- \$200,000+**, participation was almost evenly split amongst millennials who identify as male or female.

Missing and not applicable responses were excluded from analyses. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Survey data have certain limitations related to self-reporting. These limitations include telescoping, exaggeration, and selective memory.

We didn't weigh our data or statistically test our hypotheses. This was a purely exploratory project examining online shopping patterns, perceptions, attitudes, and considerations regarding digital discounts and promotional codes.

As a final note, this report also features some comparisons to our initial millennial shopping research done in **2017**.

## FAIR USE STATEMENT

If you feel that our insights into online shopping patterns and digital discounts can be beneficial to someone, feel free to share this research, but be sure your purposes are noncommercial, and please do provide a citation link back to the research on this page so they have access to our complete findings and survey methods.

<https://couponfollow.com/research/millennial-shopping-report>