

READING AND USE OF ENGLISH

You are going to read an article about the psychology of shopping. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences A-G the one which fits each gap (1-6). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Who's playing mind games with you?

Designing a shop is a science, as we found out when we did some research

A bit of retail therapy is supposed to be good for you. You stroll round the shops at leisure, try on items which catch your eye, make those purchases you've been meaning to get for ages. But who's really making the choices? You're certainly picking up the bill, but the shops could be having a bigger say than you think.

We all know how supermarkets use the smell of baking around the store to draw shoppers in and how soothing music can make you stay longer while faster tunes are designed to keep you on the move. 1 _____ Tim Denison, who is a retail psychologist, confirmed this increase and he let me in on some of the secrets of the retail sector.

The shops are clearly far more sophisticated than you might think.

2 _____ In fact this can start before you even get that far, with warm air over the doorway to encourage you in. Of course, that wouldn't work in hot countries. They have their own version with air conditioning at the entrance.

Smells are still a favourite - travel agents sometimes release a coconut odour to get you in the holiday mood. Items placed at eye level are supposed to sell better, and the end-of-aisle displays are best for persuading people to buy food they hadn't intended to.

3 _____ You're then more likely to stop and buy something. Colours are also used successfully.

But where the art is really catching on is in the way it differentiates between women and men. A woman entering a shop might well find party clothes, with lots of frills and special materials, at the front. 'The key to effective retailing for women,' explains Tim, 'is to make the buying of clothes an engaging experience.' 4 _____ They will be grouped not by what they are but their style - classic or casual, for instance.

When men go shopping it's a different ball game. They want to buy a pair of jeans because their old ones have worn out. In fact, they probably want to get exactly the same jeans. 5 _____ So menswear shops are laid out with everything in its place and men can buy what they want and go. 'We all know that men hate shopping,' says Tim, 'so what we have to do is make it as simple and spartan as we can.'

But just as the shops are becoming more sophisticated, so are the shoppers. If you're looking for a flat to buy or rent and you notice the smell of freshly brewed coffee, you're likely to get suspicious because this is an old trick to convince people it's a nice place to live. So while the mind games are targeting our subconscious, they tend to work well. 6 _____ We don't mind spending our hard-earned cash, but we want to feel we're making the choices, not them.

- A Such items are placed near each other so they can be visualised together, as an outfit.
- B These kinds of techniques have been around for a while, but there's evidence that their use is growing.
- C When those decisions are made for us, it can stop us from buying anything at all.
- D You spend longer turning corners with awkward trolleys, so they catch your eye.
- E These shoppers don't want to be faced with ideas and suggestions.
- F But if they become too obvious, we're likely to resist, and things can backfire for shop-owners.
- G The minute you walk through their front doors, most of your senses are attacked.