

THE KING OF THE SHOPPING MALL



It was on 22 March 1954 that the world's first shopping mall, Northland, opened. Built in a suburb of Chicago, USA, the designer of Northland, Victor Gruen, told the press that it was the 'shopping centre of the future'. Gruen was half-right, because although Northland was the world's first purpose-built shopping centre, it was his next design, Southdale in Minnesota, that became the model that architects all over the world would copy. Opened two years after Northland, Southdale was the first shopping centre where the shops were enclosed in one enormous building, and shopping mall architects have followed Gruen's model ever since. 1.....

However, if Victor Gruen invented the mall, businessman Alfred Taubman perfected it. Taubman took Gruen's design and added a few rules to encourage consumers to spend as much money as possible. Taubman decided that shops should only occupy two floors. Furthermore, the escalators to move shoppers between the floors should always be at the two ends of the mall, forcing people to walk past all the shops on a floor. He also insisted on glass safety barriers on the first floor, allowing consumers to easily see the shops above and below them, and on opening up the front of shops completely by removing their big glass windows. 2..... Taubman also wanted shoppers to spend as much time as possible in the malls so they would spend more money. He suggested letting plenty of natural light into them by constructing huge glass ceilings. Taubman also installed artificial lights next to the glass ceilings, so that as daylight faded, the artificial light increased and shoppers were unaware of the passing of time. Holding different events every week and local festivals in the space inside the mall would bring in even more people. 3.....

Today, shopping malls have grown to the size of small towns and contain a lot of leisure facilities such as theme parks, artificial lakes and even ski slopes to

attract customers. 4..... However, although shopping malls are carefully designed to make consumers part with as much of their money as possible, it is unlikely that they will notice. Many people see a visit to a shopping mall as a leisure activity and that is perhaps Taubman's biggest legacy.



Match sentences A-F with gaps 1-4 in the text. There are two extra sentences.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

- A** This took away a major obstacle between shoppers and the brands on sale inside.
- B** Despite that, if you spend a little time looking around the next mall you visit, you'll see that Taubman's ideas are still being put into practice.
- C** However, seldom do shoppers notice that the day seems to last longer in a shopping mall.
- D** The layout of a modern shopping mall is very similar to the layout of those first malls from nearly seventy years ago.
- E** Restaurants and cafés were placed at the end of the malls because they were only used at certain times of the day.
- F** The idea was to create a space that people would feel like spending a whole day in.

