

A recent report on the differences between men and women's shopping habits found changes in the balance of buying activity between the sexes. The report, published last month by the market research company, Street Trends, focused on the areas of food and drink, toiletries and cosmetics, clothing and electrical goods.

Little change was found in food and drink shopping habits. Over 70% of supermarket shopping in the UK is done by the women of the household, and they generally control how much is spent on food. The report suggests that women show a greater ability to find special offers, and are more interested than men in getting good value when they shop. Similarly, in the area of clothing, women are still greater consumers than men. There has been a general increase in the purchase of clothes over the last few years, due to the introduction to the UK of cheap fashion from China and the rest of the Far East. Discount clothing has become more popular, as retailers have become skilled in reproducing fashion designs at lower costs. This is most noticeable in women's fashion, where purchases have increased significantly in the last year.

Interesting changes were seen, however, in the purchase of toiletries and electrical goods. Approximately 80% of British women do most of the shopping for cosmetics and toiletries, but the men's toiletry market is growing, as younger men are more interested in their physical appearance than they were five years ago. Well-known cosmetics companies are now targeting men with new skincare products. In the case of electrical goods, men have traditionally been regarded as the main buyers in the household. However, women are now taking a more active role in the purchase of these items.

Several major supermarkets are expanding into this area and targeting female customers, so further changes are expected in these areas in the future.

Choose the best ending to each of the statements.

The report says that:

- a. 70% of women in the UK shop in supermarkets
- b. women do most of the food shopping in the UK.

Cheap fashion imports from China and the rest of the Far East mean:

- a. women buy more clothes
- b. an increase in prices.

The report says that:

- a. more men are buying toiletries
- b. men are interested in their appearance.

Supermarkets now sell electrical goods to:

- a. get men to shop there
- b. get women to buy them.

