

Seasonal Shopping (Autumn/Winter) - UK - April 2021

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This report looks at the following areas:

- Impact of COVID-19 on spending levels for seasonal events.
- Impact of COVID-19 on gift and product buying for seasonal events.
- Seasonal events activities for Halloween, Bonfire Night and Valentine's Day.
- Behaviours related to seasonal events.

Consumer spending on seasonal events during the winter/autumn months totalled £3 billion in 2020/21. Back-to-School saw a 9% decline in spending, albeit much lower compared to other seasonal events as it was the only seasonal event to occur outside lockdown. Bonfire Night and Halloween held up well despite COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings and household mixing. Spending for these events reached an estimated £464 million and £556 million in 2020 as households took the opportunity to spend time with friends and family.

The impact of COVID-19 and related lockdowns has had a clear impact on all seasonal events leading to a significant drop in spending levels for most events. Historically all these events have been store-oriented and lockdowns have forced shoppers to move shopping habits online. Despite this, it is encouraging to see that purchasing levels have remained resilient for most events – giving retailers plenty of scope to capture spend from consumers who want a reason to celebrate and treat family and friends.



“The pandemic did not deter celebrations for the autumn/winter seasonal events with spending resilient across all events – albeit significantly down on the year before. Uncertainty ahead of a new term eclipsed Back-to-School spending with some parents focusing on supporting remote learning.”

– Emily Viberg, Retail Analyst

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