

Tuesday December 2, 2025

Early Christmas shoppers lift retailers' hopes for a solid finish to 2025

Australians are getting a head start on Christmas shopping this year, with nearly one-in-three shoppers (29%) saying they are buying gifts earlier than in 2024, while only 8% are leaving it later, according to new research from the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) and Roy Morgan.

The Christmas Gift Buying survey shows 68% of Australian adults – around 15.9 million people – plan to buy gifts this year, down 9% from 2024 as cost-of-living pressures persist. However, total gift spending is forecast to rise slightly to \$12 billion, up \$200 million (1.7%), with shoppers spending an average of \$757 each, a 7.1% increase on last year.

Younger Australians aged 18 to 34 are set to spend \$3.5 billion on gifts, matched by those aged 35 to 49, who are the biggest individual spenders, averaging \$853 each.

Overall pre-Christmas retail spending for the six weeks from November 13 to Christmas Eve is forecast to reach \$72.4 billion* — a 4% increase on 2024. This increase is in line with forecasts for the Black Friday-Cyber Monday spending, which are also predicted to rise 4% year-on-year.

ARA Chief Executive Chris Rodwell said the data points to cautious but resilient consumer behaviour across the peak trading period:

"Retailers are seeing encouraging signs that Australians are planning ahead and spreading out their Christmas budgets," he said. "After a challenging year, early shopping activity is helping to build momentum for the most important season for the sector, where many discretionary retailers make up to two-thirds of their annual profits."

"Only 22% of Australians say they're making more purchases online than a year ago – less than half the level seen in 2021 – with many returning to in-store experiences in search of value and connection."

Catherine Jolley, Head of Retail & Consumer Products at Roy Morgan believes AI is beginning to shape a unique trend:

"Retailers face a market where prices keep falling, delivery keeps speeding up, and AI is reshaping what people trust and distrust. In this environment, trust is your most important asset, distrust your largest risk."

Mr Rodwell is encouraging Australians to shop with trusted Australian brands.

"Christmas is when retail truly comes alive — it's a vital season for businesses of all sizes. We're encouraging Australians to back the retailers who are part of their everyday lives, whether that's a favourite local store, a national chain or a trusted online platform," he said.

"Every purchase supports jobs, investment and community connection — the things that make Australian retail such an important part of the national story."

**This includes gifts, food, grocery, Liquor, and other specialised food retailing; Household goods: Furniture, houseware, textile goods, Electrical and electronic goods and hardware; Clothing: Clothing, footwear, personal accessory; Department stores; Other: Newspaper, book, recreational goods, pharmaceutical, cosmetic, toiletry, stationery, flower, etc.; Hospitality: Cafes, restaurants and takeaway."*

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About the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) & National Retail Association (NRA)

About us: The ARA and NRA, which propose to amalgamate into the Australian Retail Council (ARC), represent a \$430 billion sector that employs 1.4 million Australians across metropolitan, regional, and remote communities – making retail the largest private sector employer in the country and a significant contributor to the Australian economy. Our membership spans the full spectrum of Australian retail, from family-owned small and independent retailers that make up 95% of our membership, through to our largest national and international retailers that employ thousands of Australians and support both metropolitan and regional communities every day.

About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is Australia's largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state, as well as in the U.S. and U.K. A full-service research organisation, Roy Morgan has over 80 years' experience collecting objective, independent information on consumers. To learn more visit www.roymorgan.com.