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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## Take Away English 随身英语



### Serial returners

### 快购时代的“连环退货买家”

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Vocabulary: shopping 词汇: 购物

We've all done it. We buy something we think we like and then change our minds about it. Whether **panic buying**, an **impulse purchase** or **shopper's remorse**, we're fortunate many companies allow us to easily **exchange** or **refund** items. In fact it's so easy these days that **retailers** are seeing an increase in a new type of shopper: the **serial returner**.

A serial returner is someone who buys items, often **in bulk**, only to return most of them. 41-year-old Hester Grainger, founder of Mumala Club, estimates spending £300 to £400 each month on clothes, but returning "around 80%", she told the BBC. This isn't unique. Barclaycard, which processes nearly half of the UK's credit and debit card **transactions**, says that in the last two years 26% of retailers have seen an increase in in-store and online returns – with the number of items being sent back up by 22%.

It's a problem for companies. Handling these returns eats into profits. Free delivery for the customer means the company **foots the bill**. Items may need to be **repackaged**. They are damaged - making them unfit for resale. Tony Mannix, CEO of Clipper, a **logistics firm** that handles returned goods for major retailers, said about 5% of them end up "being binned." Sometimes the **fast fashion** cycle has moved on. By the time the item comes back, it becomes a **cut-price** item on a **reduced-to-clear rail** - at further loss to the company.

Some companies are taking action to deter this behaviour. According to a BBC article, four in ten retailers now say they **charge** for **returns** to discourage the sending of non-faulty items. Online retail giant Amazon was reported to have started barring customers with too many returned items. This is something a study by retail management system Brightpearl found over half of UK fashion retailers would consider. And Barclaycard says a third of retailers have **hiked** their prices to cover these returns.

But Vicky Brock, director of data innovation at ReBound Returns, a returns management software system, believes this isn't the best strategy. Speaking in a BBC article, she says discouraging returns shows a lack of understanding by the retailer. Using data, companies can reduce returns by helping customers choose better. Some companies such as Uniqlo and Asos already provide a **suggested size** based on the customer's previous purchases and information on height and weight. Ultimately, she says, returns are now as much a part of the shopping experience as buying things, and shops need to take this into consideration.

## 词汇表

<b>panic buying</b>	(因害怕商品短缺的) 恐慌性购物
<b>impulse purchase</b>	冲动消费
<b>shopper's remorse</b>	买了后悔的心态
<b>exchange</b>	换(货)
<b>refund</b>	退款
<b>retailer</b>	零售商
<b>serial returner</b>	连环退货的消费者
<b>in bulk</b>	大量、成批
<b>transaction</b>	交易
<b>foot the bill</b>	掏腰包
<b>repackage</b>	重新包装
<b>logistics firm</b>	物流公司
<b>fast fashion</b>	(紧跟流行趋势、价格低廉的) 快速时尚
<b>cut-price</b>	降价出售的
<b>reduced-to-clear</b>	清仓减价
<b>rail</b>	挂衣杆、架
<b>charge</b>	收费
<b>returns</b>	退货
<b>hike</b>	(价格) 大幅增加
<b>suggested size</b>	推荐尺寸

## 测验与练习

### 1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. True or false? *Serial returners are on the rise.*
2. Approximately what proportion of her clothes purchases does Hester Grainger return?
3. What actions are companies taking to stop serial returning?
4. What does discouraging returns reveal about a retailer, according to Vicky Brock?
5. Which word used in the article means 'thrown away'?

### 2. 请在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. I don't know why I bought this chocolate. I'm not even hungry! It was an \_\_\_\_\_.

panic buy	impulse purchase	refund	fast fashion
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2. They were so cheap! I bought them in a \_\_\_\_\_ section of last season's clothes.

shopper's remorse	suggested size	exchange	reduced-to-clear
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3. With the hurricane approaching, people have started \_\_\_\_\_ water and food.

panic buying	impulse purchasing	serial returning	in bulking
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4. It was a bad date. She left without me early and I had to \_\_\_\_\_ for the meal!

feet the bill	foot the bill	eye the bill	leg the bill
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5. A bad potato harvest has led to retailers \_\_\_\_\_ the price of crisps as supplies grow scarce.

panic buying	impulse purchasing	hiking	cutting the price
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## 答案

### 1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. True or false? *Serial returners are on the rise.*

**True. In the last two years 26% of retailers have seen an increase in in-store and online returns – with the number of items being sent back up by 22%.**

2. Approximately what proportion of her clothes purchases does Hester Grainger return?  
**Hester returns around 80% of her clothes purchases.**

3. What actions are companies taking to stop serial returning?  
**Some retailers charge for returns, some bar customers with too many returns and some retailers have hiked their prices.**

4. What does discouraging returns reveal about a retailer, according to Vicky Brock?  
**She says discouraging returns shows a lack of understanding by the retailer.**

5. Which word used in the article means 'thrown away'?  
**Binned. "Tony Mannix, CEO of Clipper, a logistics firm that handles returned goods for major retailers, said about 5% of them end up "being binned."**

### 2. 请在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. I don't know why I bought this chocolate. I'm not even hungry! It was an **impulse purchase**.

2. They were so cheap! I bought them in a **reduced-to-clear** section of last season's clothes.

3. With the hurricane approaching, people have started **panic buying** water and food.

4. It was a bad date. She left without me early and I had to **foot the bill** for the meal!

5. A bad potato harvest has led to retailers **hiking** the price of crisps as supplies grow scarce.