

Parents Will Lean on Digital for Back-to-School Shopping, but Many Still Plan to Shop In-Store

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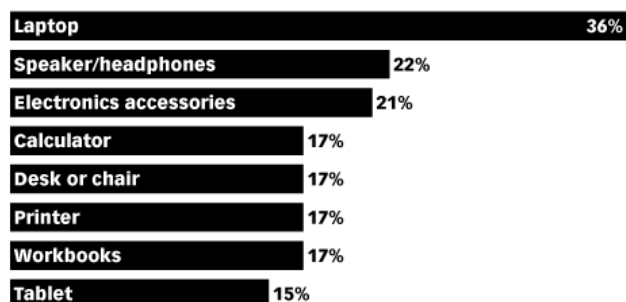
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Back-to-school shopping in the US may look a little different this year due to the pandemic—but only slightly.

Distance learning will likely play a substantial role in the back-to-school season. And many consumers are already eyeing certain products as a result. According to a July 2020 survey from the National Retail Federation (NRF), more than a third of US internet users said they plan to buy a laptop for elearning. Respondents also cited furniture, such as desks and chairs (17%) and printers (17%), as planned purchases.

Top Items US Internet Users Plan to Buy due to Elearning, July 2020

% of respondents



Source: National Retail Federation (NRF), "2020 Back-to-School/College Spending Survey" conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics as cited in press release, July 15, 2020

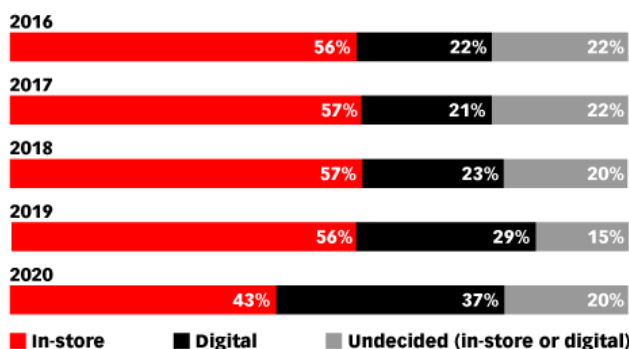
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Additionally, more parents will rely on digital for their back-to-school shopping needs. According to Deloitte data published in July, US parent internet users planned to conduct 37% of their back-to-school shopping online this year, up 8 percentage points from 2019.

Share of Back-to-School Shopping US Parent Internet Users Plan to Conduct Digitally vs. In-Store, 2016-2020

% of total



Note: n=1,200

Source: Deloitte, "2020 Back-to-School Shopping: Learning to Grow Amidst Uncertainty," July 8, 2020

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Despite stay-at-home orders and social distancing measures, many parents still plan to shop in physical stores for the back-to-school season. Respondents to the Deloitte survey said that 43% of their back-to-school shopping will happen in-store. While that share decreased from 2019, it's still a substantial figure.

May 2020 research from shopkick also found that two-thirds of US shoppers planned to shop in-store for school supplies.

Types of Retailers Where US In-Store Shoppers Plan to Go Back-to-School Shopping, May 2020

% of respondents



Source: Shopkick as cited in company blog, June 5, 2020

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And the majority of this shopping will likely take place at big-box stores. The largest share (95%) of respondents said they would shop at retailers like Target and Walmart; 37% planned to go to office supply stores and 24% planned to shop at drug stores.