



UK Retail Trend Report 2021

Explore Black Friday insights and hot categories, and
learn who's leading the conversation in electricals,
baby products, DIY, and sporting goods

| What's hot in UK retail trends 2021?

The way we shop has changed forever due to the -19 pandemic, and the impacts of this dramatic shift in consumer will shape the Christmas holidays. A look at UK retail trends in 2021 based on a [survey of 1,500 UK and US consumers](#) reveals that:

- **85.9% plan to continue shopping in 2021 as they had in 2020** even though more brick-and-mortar stores are open.
- **28% expect to shop even more online** during the festive season.

And a majority of online shopping will occur in the palm of consumers' hands. More than half of respondents to a PwC Global Consumer Insights Pulse Survey in June 2021 said they had used digital devices more frequently than six months earlier. In all, the use of smartphones for shopping has doubled since 2018.

As ecommerce soars, the look and feel of Black Friday and Cyber Monday will be quite different this year. In addition, consumers will seek out unique products during the Christmas holidays. Three already hot items:

Intro into retail trends and COVID -19 Impact

Searches for **electric scooters** have increased on average by **125%** since March 2020.

TOP SEARCHES INCLUDE

"electric scooters for adults"
"razor electric scooter"
"best electric scooters for commuting"
"electric scooter with seat"

Searches for **tennis racket** have increased on average by **124%** since March 2020.

TOP SEARCHES INCLUDE

"tennis racket wilson"
"tennis racket for kids"
"tennis racket size"
"beginner tennis racket"

Searches for **Etsy** have increased on average by **174%** since March 2020.

TOP SEARCHES INCLUDE

"etsy shop"
"sell on etsy"
"etsy shop jewelry"
"etsy commercial"

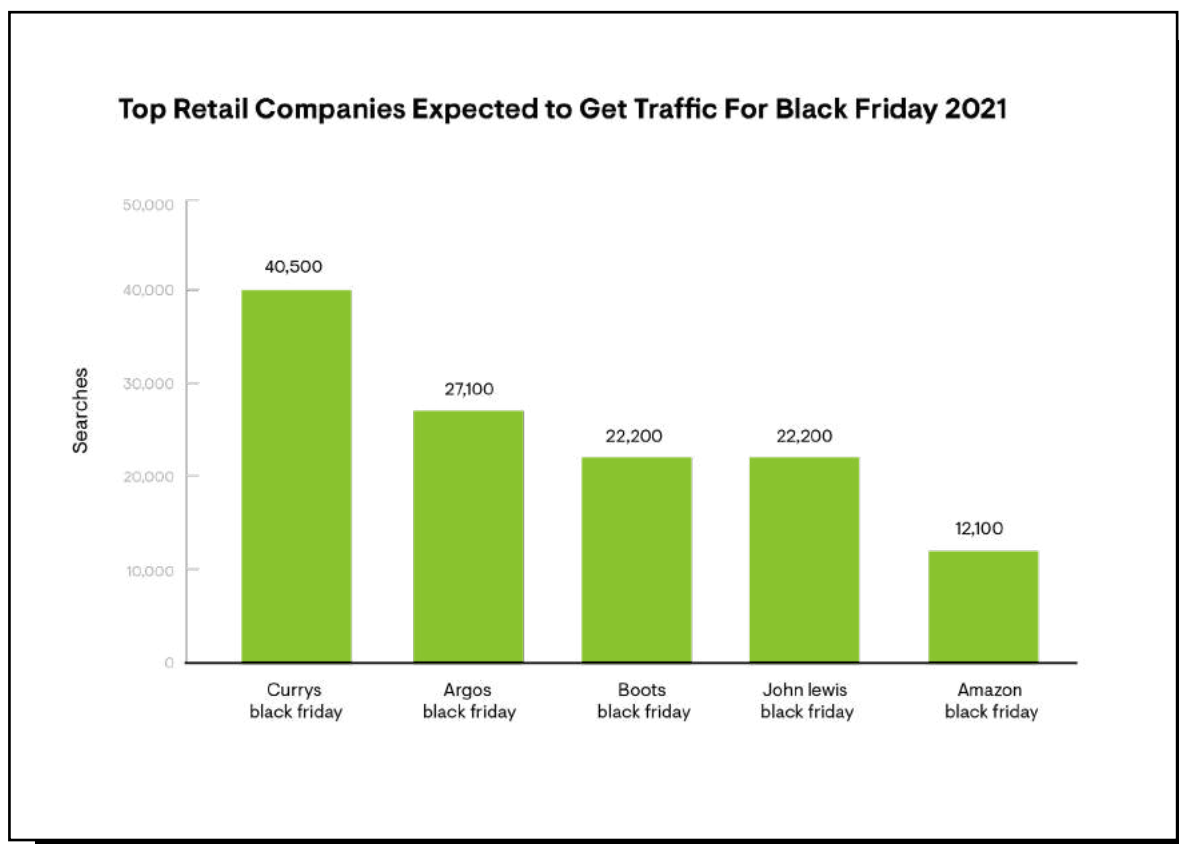
To learn more about UK retail trends in 2021, we took a deep dive into Conductor search data. We identified Christmas holiday shopping traffic expectations, leading categories by search volume, and who's owning the market for popular items like electricals, baby products,

garden/DIY, and sporting goods. Read on to gain insight that can help your brand develop a content strategy that will win the 2021 festive season.

Store websites will drive Black Friday traffic in the UK

A few years ago, [Amazon](#) topped UK search volume in the days and weeks leading up to Black Friday. But today, retailers are seeing lower Black Friday-specific search demand, and online shoppers are more likely to search for their favourite stores by names. This

explains why electronics retailer [Currys PC World](#), health and beauty/pharmacy leader [Boots](#) and department store brands like [Argos](#) and [John Lewis](#) all topped Amazon in Black Friday search volume this past summer.



In 2020, overall UK Black Friday sales volume fell, but online sales surged. We expect online traffic to be heavy again on Black Friday 2021 as consumers still prefer contactless shopping over visiting brick-and-mortar stores.

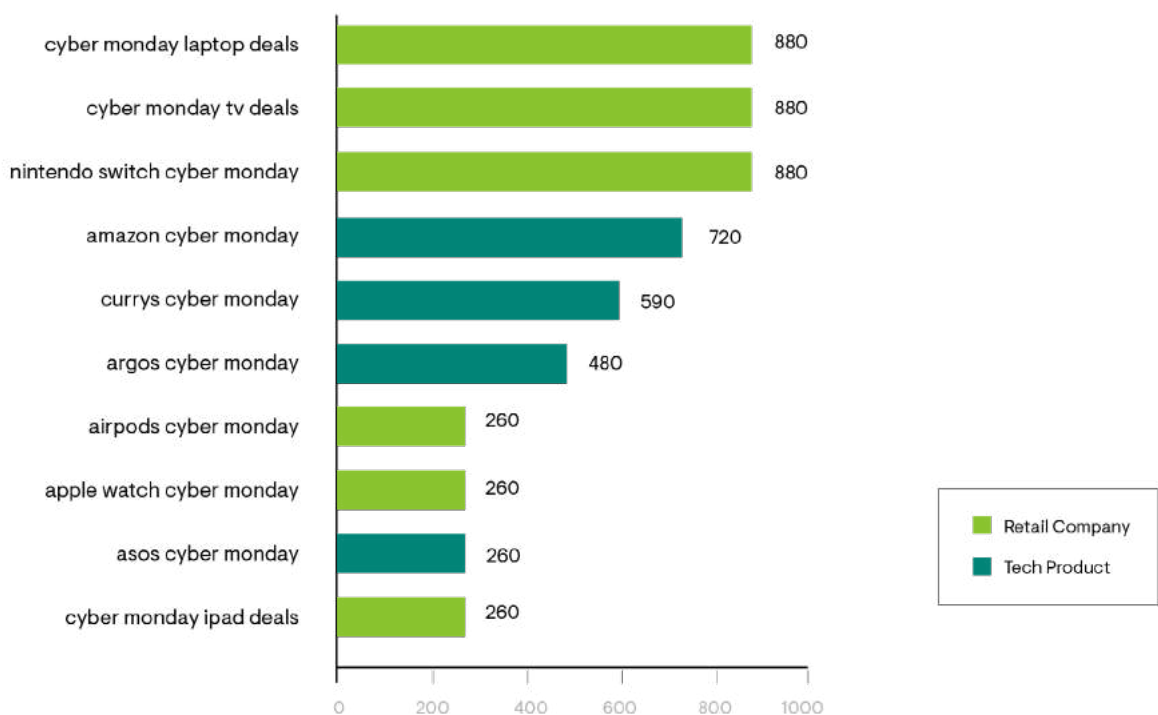
John Lewis reported a [35% increase in online sales](#) on Black Friday 2020.

Cyber Monday 2021: UK shoppers seek tech products, apparel

Cyber Monday began as the online-only version of Black Friday. But with Black Friday shopping moving online and many UK retailers offering similar sales on both days, monthly search volume (MSV) for Cyber Monday has decreased.

To see how UK shoppers will approach Cyber Monday 2021, we looked at top products and retailers. Not surprisingly, electricals will be hot. Search volume trends indicate that laptops, TVs, Nintendo, and Apple products will win the day, with many UK retailers already developing promotions around the release of [Apple's new iPhone 13 Pro](#). Apparel will also be a hot category, as indicated by MSV for apparel retailers like [Asos](#).

Top Retail Companies & Items Expected to Get Traffic for Cyber Monday in 2021



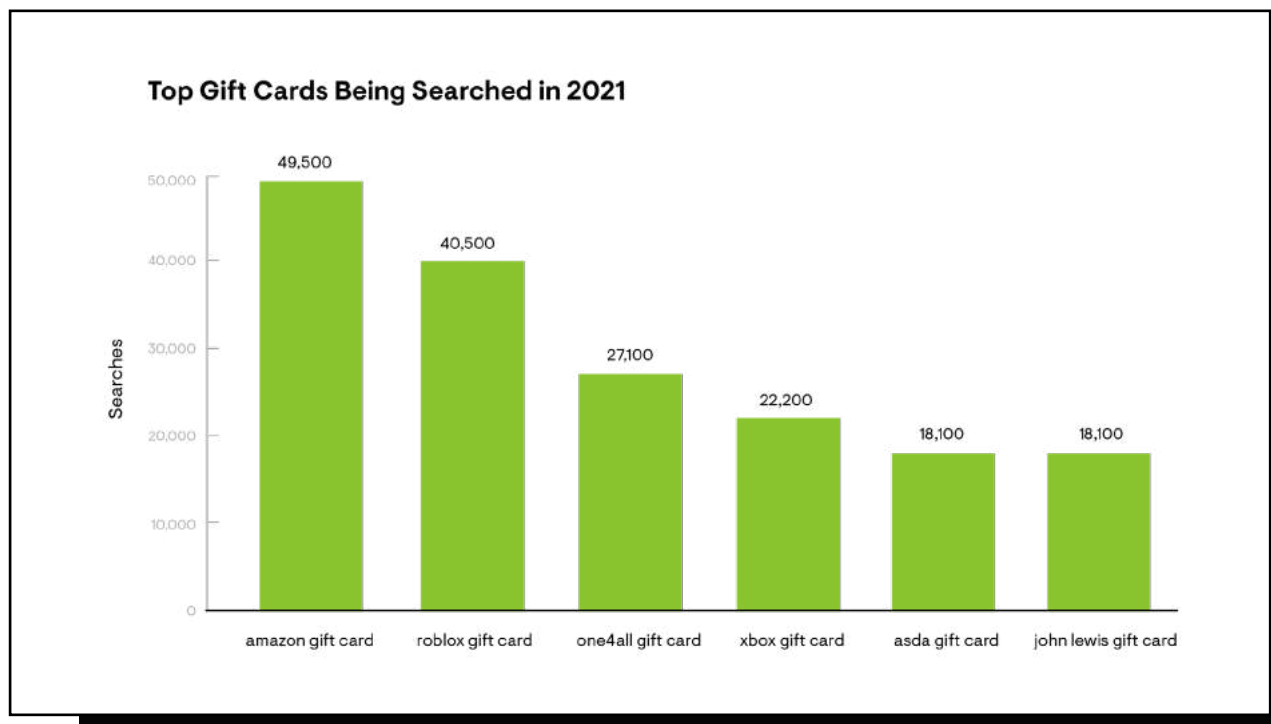
Top predicted electronic items based on UK search volume include some traditional products—cellphones, gaming, computers, electronics for kids. They also include smart speakers, security, pet cameras, smart home systems, smart lighting and smart vacuums.

Demand for electricals in the UK grew 91% in 2020 and 78% in Q1 2021.

Gift card interest remains strong for Christmas holidays 2021

While Amazon leads the pack in gift card search volume, a variety of providers and retailers are close behind. Gaming cards from [Roblox](#) and [Xbox](#) take two of the top four spots. [One4All](#) in third

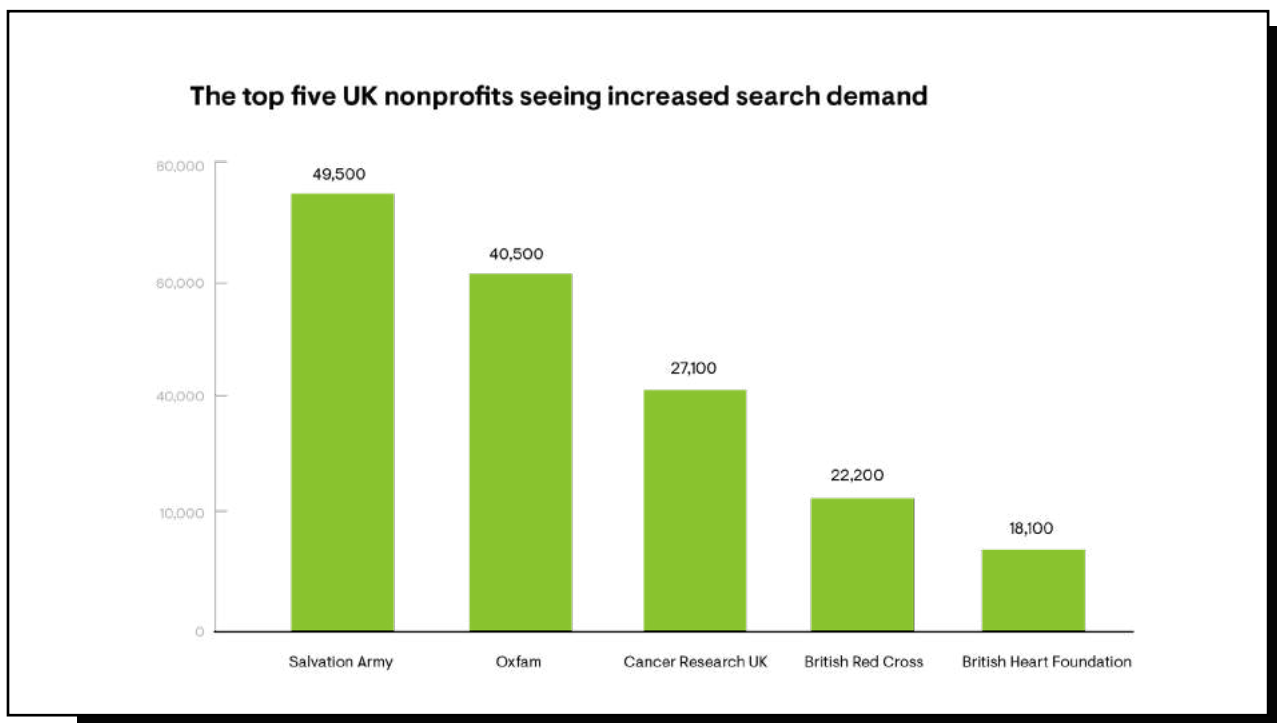
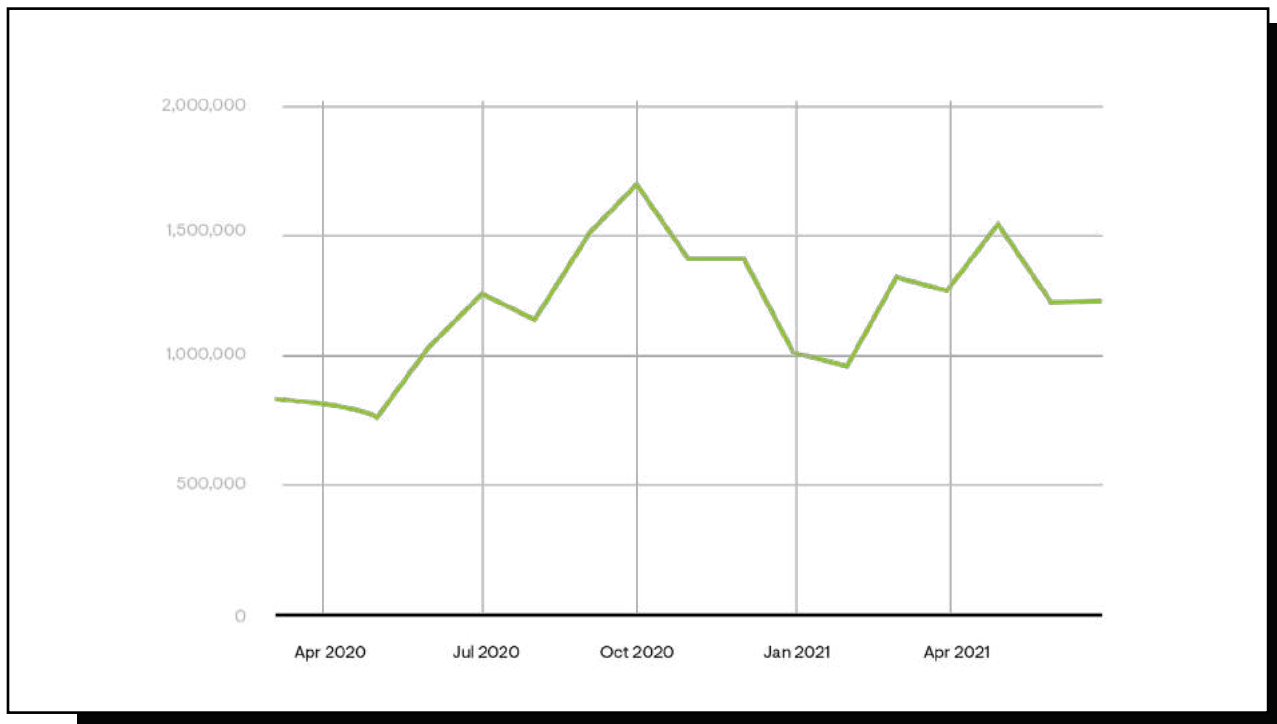
place shows high demand for multi-store cards. And surging search volume for gift cards from [Asda](#) and John Lewis show the popularity of both grocery and apparel heading into the festive season.



Searches for [gift cards online](#) grew globally by **100% from 2019-20**.

UK consumers want to continue high levels of charitable giving

Festive season is a time of giving. We analysed about 1,000 searches related to charity giving, donations, nonprofits, and volunteering, and found a **47% increase in interest** since the beginning of lockdowns in 2020.



Top categories UK retailers should prioritise for Christmas holiday 2021

Based on Conductor data and Google research, we predict UK retailers would be wise to prioritise these three categories to catch the latest UK retail trends in the 2021 fall and winter seasons.

01. Baby and toddler outerwear

While the predicted COVID-19 baby boom didn't happen during lockdown, more recent data from the [Office of National Statistics](#) shows that couples "got busy" once lockdowns ended. No matter the number of babies born over the fall and winter months, Google and Conductor data show that search demand for products like pramsuits, puddle suits, and baby sleeping bags peaks consistently each year from September to January. We expect to see the same demand spike during the 2021 festive season.

Monthly Search Interest 74k

Avg Monthly Search Volume in the Last 12 Months



02. Coats and jackets

The Christmas holidays mean the UK's coldest months of January and February are right around the corner. That's why coats and jackets are always a seasonal favorite, with search demand typically rising in August, peaking in November, and then dropping once the warmer weather returns in April.

What's trending in coats and jackets: the wool-bodied, leather-sleeved [varsity jacket](#). It's experienced a remarkable **817% increase** in MSV since 2017. Other types of jackets experiencing MSV increases YoY include "north face puffer jacket", "carhartt jacket", "windbreaker", and "waterproof jacket"

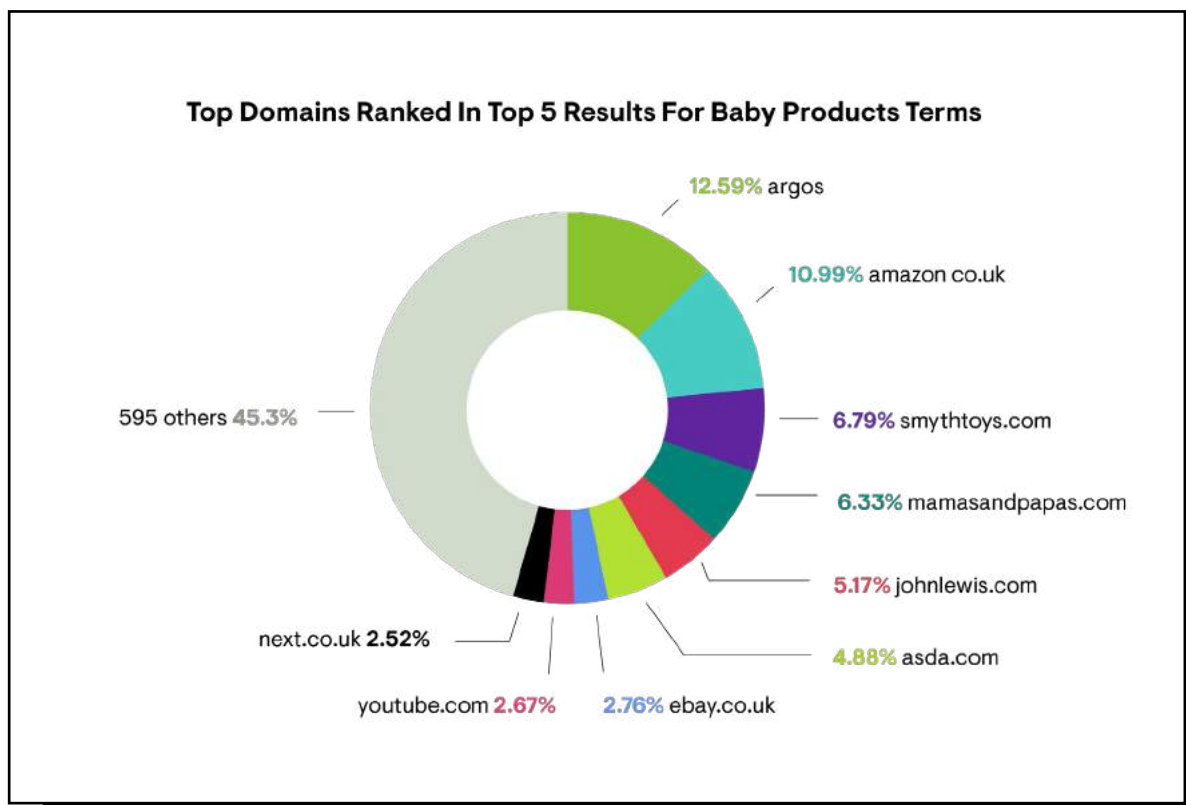
03. Luggage and duffel bags

With more and more countries getting added to the [UK's green-light travel list](#), consumers are anticipating a return to travelling. Interest is surging for both recreational and business travel, with a Deloitte survey expecting corporate travel to reach **25% to 35%**

[of pre-pandemic levels by the end of Q4 2021](#). That's why we're seeing increased search volume for luggage and duffel bags, and we expect that trend to continue as travel begins to normalise heading into 2022.

Top UK domains for baby products and related categories in 2021

Argos and Amazon, both of which sell toys and a whole lot more, take the top two spots in searches for terms related to baby products. Specialty retailer [Smyths Toys Superstore](#) ranks third.



A deeper dive into baby product-specific and subcategory search data reveals potential reasons why certain domains regularly make the top five on Google. Superstore Asda and specialty nursery products retailer [Mamas & Papas](#) both rank well for baby sleeping bags, one of the top terms in the baby products category (MSV 74,000).

Baby walkers are one of the most competitive baby products subcategories. Here, Argos, Amazon, Smyths Toys Superstore, Asda, and Ebay rank in the top-five spots. Of all those leading contenders, [Argos and their “Sleep Time”](#) section stands out for the way they create content specifically for new parents, answering common questions such as “how long should baby sleep” and “how to put baby to sleep.” They then embed their best-selling prams and pushchairs into that content to create a seamless shopping experience.

Baby Products Subcategories July 2021 market share



When it comes to searches related to “baby and preschool,” content providers such as [YouTube](#) and [The Guardian](#) stand out above individual retailers. Meanwhile, search trends for “baby feeding and accessories” show how brands that carry baby food, such as Asda and Boots, dominate the online conversation.

Some of the top baby products showing increase in search demand since last summer include unbranded searches for boys’ and girls’ christening gifts and parasols for prams, along with branded searches for the [Medela](#) Swing breast pump and the [VTech](#) Crawl and Learn ball.

Searches for baby products that had a great % increase in demand compared to last summer

| New Search in 2021 | % increase (July 2020 vs July 2021) |
|-----------------------------|--|
| christening gifts for boys | 1019% ▲ |
| christening gifts for girls | 817% ▲ |
| parasol for pram | 241% ▲ |
| medela swing breast pump | 238% ▲ |
| vtech crawl and learn ball | 238% ▲ |
| babies swim nappies | 238% ▲ |
| baby swimsuit | 175% ▲ |
| baby chair seat | 164% ▲ |
| pram umbrella | 125% ▲ |
| stroller pushchair | 125% ▲ |

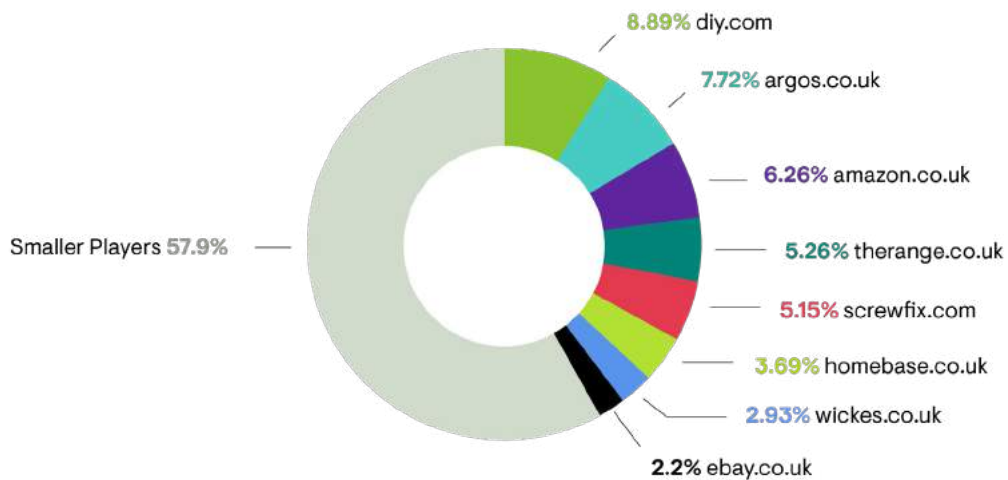
Top UK domains for garden and DIY products

Without a doubt, garden and DIY products became a global standout during the pandemic, and UK consumers joined in the frenzy. From March 9 - 15, 2020, online sales of gardening and home improvement products in the UK grew by 50% YoY. That included increases in sales for:

- Plants, seeds, and bulbs - **up 48.2%**
- Tools and equipment - **up 15.7%**
- Building materials - **up 31.4%**
- Paint - **up 41.7%**

As interest continues to surge in the garden and DIY products category, competition remains fierce. DIY.com ranks as the #1 domain, but in reality, the market is quite condensed. Market share is split rather evenly among many brands, from department stores and Amazon to home improvement, furniture, and hardware stores.

Top Domains Ranked In Top 5 Results For Garden and DIY Products Terms



Garden and DIY Products Subcategories July 2021



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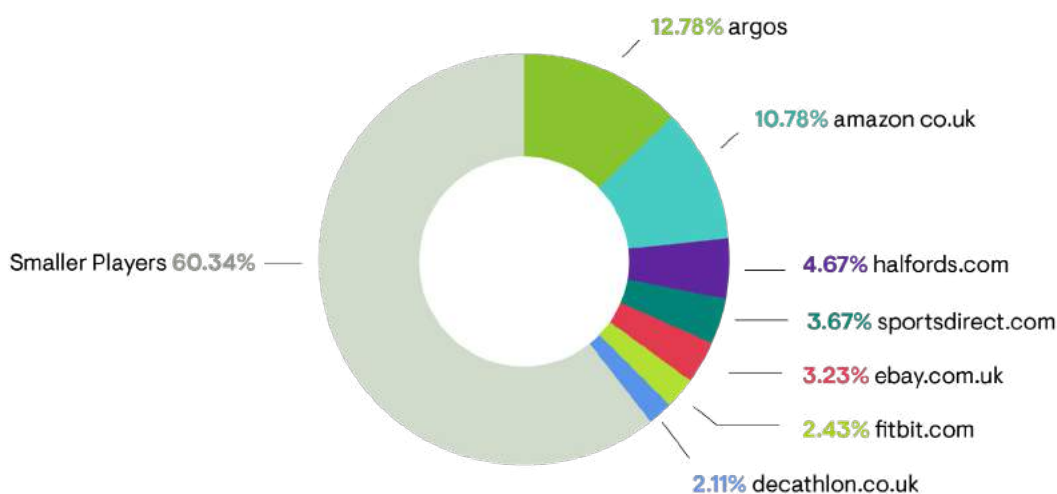
| New Search in 2021 | % increase (July 2020 vs July 2021) |
|------------------------------|--|
| outdoor heating accessories | 800% ▲ |
| garden parasol base | 402% ▲ |
| barbecue supplies | 267% ▲ |
| what size barbecue do i need | 267% ▲ |
| hozelock spray gun | 235% ▲ |
| parasol umbrellas | 235% ▲ |
| how to declutter your home | 222% ▲ |
| dremel tool | 175% ▲ |
| patio furniture sets | 175% ▲ |
| bosch rotak 34r | 125% ▲ |

Top UK domains for sporting goods products

Tennis, anyone? Staying active at home topped many people's lists during the pandemic, leading to renewed interest in sporting goods products among UK consumers. While Argos and Amazon lead the top domains, UK companies like [Halfords](#)—a leader in bicycle

and automotive goods—and [Sports Direct](#) and [Decathlon](#)—two brands specialising in sports equipment and gear—regularly appear in the top five on Google as well.

Top Domains Ranked In Top 5 Results For Sport Products Terms



A look at sporting good products subcategories brings plenty of interesting trends to the fore. In sports nutrition, joining retailers like [Holland & Barrett](#) and [MYPROTEIN](#) is [Healthline](#). It's not a retailer, but a health-and-wellness content domain that answers questions people in the UK may have about diet and exercise.

In fitness tech and trackers, global brands [Fitbit](#) and [Garmin](#) flank UK brands Currys PC World and Argos as top domains.

A rising pandemic sporting goods star: the "mountain and nature sports" subcategory. [Google trend data](#) shows that searches for "caravan" and "camping" in July 2020 hit an all-time high—up 56% compared to the prior year—as people renewed their love of the outdoors. In this subcategory, [Blacks](#) and [Cotswold Outdoors](#) are among the top domains, with camping gear retailer [Go Outdoors](#) also standing out from the competition.

Sporting Goods Products/Retail Subcategories July 2021



Racket sports (tennis, squash and badminton) took three of the top five spots in sporting goods products with increasing UK search demand. Paddling pools and bouldering shoes also showed great gains. The top 10 searches in the chart below were all unbranded,

opening up some prime opportunity for brands to show their expertise in these subcategories through effective organic content marketing.

Searches for sporting goods products that had a great % increase in demand compared to last summer

| New Search in 2021 | % increase (July 2020 vs July 2021) |
|--------------------|--|
| tennis | 643% ▲ |
| paddling pool | 309% ▲ |
| squash rackets | 241% ▲ |
| bouldering shoes | 233% ▲ |
| badminton racket | 174% ▲ |
| hockey | 174% ▲ |
| paddle board | 124% ▲ |
| rash vest | 83% ▲ |
| boxing bots | 83% ▲ |
| climbing shoes | 83% ▲ |

New shopping behaviours spur growth for UK retailers

The pandemic didn't just change the products UK consumers want to buy. It also shifted their expectations of what the store experience should be like.

Options like click-and-collect, call-and-collect, and local delivery helped many retailers thrive during the pandemic. They also gave consumers added peace of mind and met their desire for safe shopping experiences during the COVID-19 era.

Just as important for retailers is offering contactless payment. According to [Shopify UK](#), 70% of UK consumers indicated the ability to make contactless payments and hands-free checkouts were important to them, and 67% said those contactless options were more important now than before the pandemic. In addition, more consumers today are paying with mobile wallets like Apple or

Google Pay and using tap options on their credit cards.

The go-forward plan for UK retailers is clear: The more convenient and contactless the shopping experience, the more consumers will gravitate toward your brand.

Retailers with creative pickup options—curbside, in-store, drive-through—[grew more than 60% higher than those that didn't](#) during the last five days before Christmas 2020.

Conclusion

Today's shoppers in the UK are smarter and more technologically savvy than ever before. And after a year of lockdown, they're ready to shop and spend. Retailers that embrace these UK retail trends in 2021 will be best positioned to optimise their online retail experience,

promote in-demand categories with innovative organic content strategies, and win their share of the Black Friday, Cyber Monday, and Christmas holidays.

CONDUCTOR CAN HELP

Methodology

We tracked over 30K retail related terms and categorized them into over 700 different categories and subcategories. This list of terms includes both branded and non-branded searches. Using the Conductor platform we were able to see what domains own the market share in 2021 by category and also search intent. Using a blend of Conductor and Google data we also were able to analyze historical search data to find what searches have been trending this year.