EPISODE 101

Supermarket English

Full transcript · mini-story · vocabulary review

Are you a spender? Today I'm going to talk about the tricks that supermarkets use to make you buy more than necessary.

You'll also improve your speaking with a funny mini-story.

Ok! Let's start!

When you leave the **supermarket**, have you ever wondered why you spent more money than you originally planned?

I do :) If it happens to you, you may think that you don't know how to manage money, that you are a **spender** or simply that you don't have enough discipline, but don't worry, because supermarkets follow a series of powerful marketing strategies that encourage shoppers to buy, so don't feel too guilty :)

By the way, a spender is someone who spends money unnecessarily. And another interesting expression: "**overspending**," which means spending more than planned or necessary.

These **supermarket** strategies can simply be called tricks. The truth is that supermarkets have more tricks than a magician.

Let's take a look at a few of them, and learn some vocabulary on the subject.

The size of the cart matters.

The **shopping cart** is the element we push to add the products we want to buy. These trolleys, with time, have been increasing in size.

The logic is simple. Psychologically we feel more satisfied if we can fill the cart and, therefore, with a slightly larger cart, we tend to put more products inside.

The products they want to sell the most, are placed right at **eye level**.

We are lazy by nature, and therefore, all products that are visually easier to see, but overall easier to access, are also easier to sell.

Prices with decimals.

This is another classic seller's trick. For some reason, $9.99 seems much cheaper than 10 dollars. We save 1 cent! Wow! If we do this 100 million times, we'll save a million dollars :)

The products we need the most, are always located at the back of the store.

It's a very logical trick, and even those who don't think about it too much will find it obvious. The supermarkets place the most necessary products at the back so that you can see as many products as possible while you walk through the **supermarket**.

Change of location of products.

From time to time, supermarkets move certain products around. I hate when they do that. The reason is the same as the previous point. They want to prevent you from knowing too well where everything is. So, once again, you have to walk more and therefore the temptation to buy an extra item is greater.

Once you have filled the **shopping** cart, you have to wait in the **queue** of the **cash register**.

When you wait, right next to you, you have several products that are cheap, and that you may need. For example, chewing gum or batteries. The temptation to add one more product to the cart is big.

Many times supermarkets only have a few open cash registers for two reasons. The first one is to save money on personnel. This was very obvious. But the second reason is to make customers wait a little longer to buy the products displayed next to the cash desk. This trick is dangerous, because if the customer has to wait too long, he may not return to the supermarket. Therefore, the aim is to make you wait only for a short time.

Music also influences.

There are a variety of strategies here. Some supermarkets use fast-paced music to stimulate a more impulsive purchase and encourage faster **shopping**.

On the other hand, other supermarkets use a more relaxed, quieter music that makes the customer stay longer, and therefore is more likely to buy something.

As you can see, supermarkets implement many tricks, but we can also have ours. For example:

Have a list prepared of what you really need.

Go to the supermarket after lunch. If you're hungry, you'll probably buy more than necessary.

Pay with cash. This way, you'll have more control over your expenses. Consider buying on the internet. This way we will buy more wisely.

Mini-Story

Speaking Practice

Answer the questions aloud with short and quick responses. Repeat the Mini-Story several times to improve your speaking and listening.

Tom went to the supermarket to buy a bottle of water because he was thirsty.

Did Georgiana go to the supermarket?
No. Georgiana didn't go to the supermarket. It was Tom who went.

Who went to the supermarket to buy a bottle of water?
Tom. Tom went to the supermarket to buy a bottle of water.

Did Tom go to the supermarket because he was hungry?
No. He didn't go there because he was hungry but thirsty.

Was Tom thirsty?
Yes, he was thirsty. He was thirsty.

What did Tom buy?
A bottle of water. He bought a bottle of water at the supermarket.

Tom went through the supermarket to the right, and then back to the left.

Did Tom go through the supermarket on the right first?
Yes, Tom went through the supermarket first on the right.

Did he go through it first on the left?
No. Not on the left. First, he went through it on the right and back on the left.

While he was there, he took the opportunity to buy things he needed.

Who took the opportunity to buy things he needed?
Tom. Tom took the opportunity to buy things he needed.

What did Tom take advantage of?
He took advantage of it to buy things he needed.

Did he take advantage of buying unnecessary things?
No. Only the necessary things.

Tom ended up filling the entire shopping cart with irresistible offers.

Did Tom end up filling the shopping cart?
Yes, Tom ended up filling the shopping cart.

What did Tom fill the shopping cart with?

With irresistible offers or normal prices?
With irresistible offers. He ended up filling it with irresistible offers.

Could Tom resist?
No, he couldn't resist, because the offers were irresistible.

In the queue, Tom filled another cart with more products at a very reasonable price.

Did Tom fill the second cart?
Yes, Tom filled another cart. A second cart.

What did Tom fill?
Another cart. He filled another cart with more reasonably priced products.

Were the prices good or bad?
Good. The prices of the products were good.

How many carts did Tom end up filling?

One, two or three?
Two: Tom ended up filling two carts with groceries.

Tom spent a month's salary on all that shopping.

Did Tom spend a year's salary?
No. Not a year's salary. Tom spent a month's salary.

What was Tom's salary spent on?
On all those purchases. On all the grocery shopping.

When he got home, Tom saw that he had bought everything but water.

Had Tom bought everything?
Yes, everything. He had bought everything...except water.

Had Tom bought chocolate?
Yes, he had bought chocolate.

And meat?
Also. Also meat.

Did Tom notice that he had bought water too?
No. Tom didn't notice that. He noticed that he hadn't bought any water.

Thanks for listening, and I'll see you in the next episode.

Review

Vocabulary from This Episode

Review the most useful words and expressions before listening again.

01 Spender
A person who spends money, especially more than necessary.

02 Overspending
Spending more money than planned or needed.

03 Shopping cart
The wheeled cart used to carry products around a supermarket.

04 Eye level
The height at which something is directly in front of your eyes.

05 Cash register
The place where customers pay for their purchases.

06 Queue
A line of people waiting for something.

07 Fast-paced
Moving or happening quickly.

08 Impulse purchase
Something bought suddenly without planning it in advance.

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