



For some people, it's shopping heaven. For others, it's shopping hell. Black Friday, which is the day after Thanksgiving Day, is the busiest – and craziest – shopping day of the year in the US. This year it is on November 27th.

PHILADELPHIA STORY

The name Black Friday originated in Philadelphia in the 1950s. It referred to the state's busy streets, and not **its busy shops**. Many people travel on the day after Thanksgiving Day, resulting in traffic congestion. Later, other states adopted the name but changed its meaning. "In the red" is a term for "operating at a loss" and "in the black" is a term for "operating at a profit." The idea was that shops traditionally operated at a loss between January and November, but they started to make a profit on Black Friday, which is the start of the Christmas shopping season.

INTERNATIONAL

Black Friday is not an official holiday, but many people don't work on that day – so they can go shopping instead! Last year, about 133 million people spent more than \$50 billion on Black Friday weekend, from Thursday to Sunday. When Black Friday first became popular, people from Canada travelled to the US to go shopping. However, in the late 2000s, Canada started its own Black Friday. Now many other countries, including the UK and Australia, have their own Black Friday, too.

SLEEPING OUT

In the US, most shops open very early on Black Friday, or even late on Thanksgiving Day. Most of them have major sales, and some of them also offer special prices for a limited time, or a limited quantity of free things. For this reason, millions of Americans sleep outside shops on Thanksgiving night – so they can be the first people into the shops when they open, and buy the best and cheapest things.

CHAOS

Every year, there are reports of violence between shoppers on Black Friday. When the shops open, people often trample each other while rushing inside, and then fight over things that they want to buy. Many people think that Black Friday is dangerous and stupid. Others think it's unfair because the shops' employees have to work long hours. And some accuse the shops of selling only low-quality products.

The good news is that you can avoid the chaos of Black Friday but still benefit from the great sales – by shopping online on the Monday after Black Friday, which is called "Cyber Monday."

Happy (and safe) shopping!