We asked 2,400 people about their upcoming Back-to-School shopping plans.

Numerator's 2022 Back-to-School Survey was fielded between Monday 6/27 and Thursday 6/30 to 2,396 individuals. The report showcases overall consumer plans as well as comparison to their back-to-school purchases last year.
Back-to-School will continue to evolve from prior years...

Parents and guardians are prepping to send their children back to in-person schooling.

Many parents prefer in-person education and most children will return to exclusively in-person classes this year—curbing popular purchases from past years of online / hybrid school.

84% prefer their children’s schooling to be in-person

78% of children will attend school exclusively in-person this year

89% expect inflation impact on their Back-to-School shopping

28% Expect the inflation impact to be significant

Inflation continues to be a cloud hanging over a myriad of categories and shopping events.

As parents and guardians prep for their Back-to-School shopping, almost all are expecting rising prices to impact their purchases, cost-saving measures, and spend levels.
Shoppers will cut back on hygiene products amidst shifting COVID concerns.

Staple categories such as clothes, shoes, and pens will be shopped by most. With the worst of the pandemic seemingly behind them, parents aren’t expecting to shop face masks, hand sanitizer, or disinfectants as heavily this year.

**BACK-TO-SCHOOL PLANNED PURCHASES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>% Point Change vs. Prior Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shoes or clothes</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pens and pencils</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper/Notebooks</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crayons, markers, or colored pencils</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backpack or lunchbox/bag</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand sanitizer</td>
<td>-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disinfecting wipes or sprays</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face masks or coverings</td>
<td>-42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 27% of the US is concerned with COVID-19 as of June 2022\(^1\) vs. Jan 2022 at 50%.
Consumers will be open to cutting their spend across some top products.

Although still being purchased, categories with usual lift such as clothes, backpacks, and crayons / markers could see pullback due to inflation effects.

Electronics were purchased by over a third of parents / guardians last year (35%). As online schooling takes a back seat, it’s no surprise tech is a popular category to cut from.

Planed spending cutbacks due to inflation:

- Shoes or clothes: 35%
- Backpack or lunchbox/bag: 26%
- Electronics: 24%
- Craft supplies: 21%
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils: 18%
- Unsure: 21%

Numerator 2022 Back-to-School Survey (n= 2,396) 06/27/2022 – 06/30/2022
On which back-to-school items, if any, will you cut back on purchases due to inflation?
Expect children to be a decision maker during back-to-school shopping.

Over 1 in 3 shoppers will have their children tag along as they stock up their respective closets and backpacks. 2 in 5 will be waiting for a list to be sent out by the school to help guide their purchases.

An additional 2 in 5 will not only bring their children along but will also allow them to pick out some of their own items.

Which of the following describe how your household will shop for back-to-school this year?

- My child’s school will send a list of items to purchase: 44%
- I’ll let my child pick some of their own back-to-school items: 42%
- My child will come with me to shop for back-to-school items: 38%
- I will try to get all back-to-school shopping done in one day/trip: 31%

Numerator 2022 Back-to-School Survey (n=2,396) 06/27/2022 – 06/30/2022

Which of the following describe how your household will shop for back-to-school this year?
Back-to-School shopping will skew heavily to in-store, mass retailers.

Over 7 in 10 plan to shop in-store compared to the 1 in 5 that plan to shop online. With the popularity of in-store, mass retailers and those bringing kids on the in-store trip, brands need to appeal to both the parent and the child when in the aisle.

**TOP IN-STORE RETAILERS**
Among those who plan to shop in-store
1. Walmart – 83%
2. Target – 64%
3. Dollar General – 23%
4. Sam’s Club – 16%
5. Costco – 14%

**PLANNED BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING LOCATIONS**

- Mass retailers: 89%
- Online-only retailers: 36%
- Club/Wholesale retailers: 22%
- Drug stores: 12%
- Specialty retailers: 8%
Shopping for Back-to-School is starting earlier than last year.

Almost 2 in 3 will have their back-to-school shopping done before August. Parents and guardians also have a high amount of certainty around their timing– only 3% aren’t sure when they’ll get their shopping done.

**PLANNED BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING TIMING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
<th>Change vs. 2021 Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Already started</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early July (July 1 - July 15)</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late July (July 16 - July 31)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early August (Aug 1 - Aug 15)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late August (Aug 16 - Aug 31)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September or later</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure/Don’t know</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spending levels will change for most, with many expecting to spend over $100.

Roughly 2 in 5 plan to keep their back-to-school spending the same as last year. The remaining shoppers are split almost evenly between spending more or less. Regardless, almost half plan to spend north of $100 on their products.
Almost all parents will look to save where they can.

Almost 3 in 4 will buy sale items for their children. Many will leverage online deals or look to re-use old school supplies to extend the value of the products they buy. Only 2% don’t plan to take advantage of any cost-saving measure.

**PLANNED SHOPPING CHANGES**
Due to inflation

- **Buy items on sale**: 74%
- **Look for online deals**: 52%
- **Re-use old supplies**: 50%
- **Use more coupons**: 41%
- **Switch to cheaper brands**: 36%
- **Shop at more dollar stores or discount stores**: 28%
- **Buy fewer items**: 26%

**HOLIDAY SPOTLIGHT**
More are taking advantage of cost-saving strategies vs. Independence Day shopping where only 62% wanted sale items and 31% looked for online deals.¹

Track purchasing behaviors of your category during the peak shopping periods using Numerator Insights.

Field an instant survey to gather purchasing intent specific to your category regarding inflation.

Track key category promotions during the Back-to-School season using Numerator Promo Intel.

Where Numerator can help next...
Study up on more consumer insights.

Reach out to us at hello@numerator.com or visit numerator.com for the latest research.

Learn more about prior Back-to-School reports from our blog and webinar.