



# The scores on the stores

We reveal the top shops and high-street flops as rated by you in our biggest-ever retailer survey

**G**ood customer service is the way to consumers' hearts, according to this year's Which? retailers' survey. And our research shows that you are willing to pay extra for quality service and an enjoyable shopping experience.

Waitrose, the best-performing retailer in our survey, scored an impressive 75 per cent for customer service. In comparison, JD Sports, at the bottom of our satisfaction table, scored an abysmal 6 per cent. Local independent stores do exceptionally well in this year's survey, all scoring highly for customer care, too. However, the presence of four discount stores in our top 20 shows that low prices mean you can be tempted to make sacrifices in other areas.

This year, our retail satisfaction survey is bigger and better than ever before. We've included more retailers, 77 in total, and divided them into eight shopping categories so that you can see, at a glance, which stores are the best and worst performing for certain purchases.



## Still the best

One respondent describes our winner as 'simply streets ahead of its competitors', and she's right. This year, Waitrose is the clear winner of our satisfaction survey, knocking sister company John Lewis off the number-one spot. Waitrose gains top marks for

customer care, shopping experience and the range and quality of its products. One shopper summed up the views of many by saying: 'First rate; outstanding quality at a price, but it's worth it.'

Despite dropping into second place in our overall table, John Lewis is the best-performing retailer in every category it appears in – electrical, clothing, toiletries, sports and home and garden. However, it loses marks this year for the quality, range and availability of its products, with a significant decrease in the number of members rating them as good or excellent.

## Local heroes

This year, local independent stores prove that they are fighting back against the big chains. Independents score highly in categories for entertainment (books, CDs and DVDs), electricals, sports, mobile phones and toiletries and cosmetics – frequently beating well-known chains.

Not surprisingly, local retailers score well for convenience. But they get your vote for other reasons, too. One respondent told us: 'It's good not having to drive there – much more environmentally friendly.' Another said: 'It's great to shop locally and support our local community.' But your favourite aspect is the friendly, knowledgeable staff. One independent sports store customer summed it up by saying: 'It's good to be served by real people who have a real interest in their business and who want to help you.'

## The thrills of no-frills

For the second year in a row, discount supermarkets Lidl (6) and Aldi (9) do well in our survey, despite low scores for service and shopping experience. You see them as convenient, with reasonable products that are excellent value. Their success proves that, if the price is right and the products acceptable, you don't mind sacrificing service. Discount housewares store Wilkinson (12)



## Local stores are fighting back against the big chains

and supermarket Iceland (16) also do well – for similar reasons. For more on discount supermarkets, see 'Groceries', p36.

## Down in the basement

This year, JD Sports, which is new to our survey, has the dubious honour of being named your least favourite retailer. It achieved an overall customer satisfaction score of only 33 per cent and truly awful scores for customer service and shopping experience. One respondent said of JD Sports: 'The shops are a jumbled-up mess with indifferent staff.' Another told us: 'It's a relief to get out of the shop.'

Big names such as JJB Sports, Woolworths and Somerfield have barely moved since last year and still occupy the bottom part of our table. The same is true of the shops in the DSG International group – Currys.digital, Currys and PC World. Despite promises to improve last year, respondents felt the electronics giants were poor for both customer service and pricing.

For DSG's and JD Sports' responses to their disappointing results, see 'Electricals', p36 and 'Sports shops', p38.



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### USING THE TABLES

In all tables throughout this report, the overall satisfaction scores are a combination of members' satisfaction scores and the likelihood of them recommending the store to a friend. To give us a better idea of the reasons behind their satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, we asked respondents to rate retailers on five separate aspects.

**Convenience** Includes both opening times and location.

**Customer service** Includes knowledge, availability and helpfulness of staff and after-sales service.

**Shopping experience** Includes ease of finding products, tidiness, environment, child-friendliness and queuing time.

**Pricing** Includes regular price, sales and special offers.

**Product** Includes quality, range, stock and (for electrical goods only) durability.

These figures represent the percentage of customers rating stores as excellent or very good. If a retailer is active in more than one sector we rate them separately in each relevant category. Sample sizes and ratings in individual categories may differ from the overall survey.

UK RETAILERS		CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
		CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
1	WAITROSE (301)	68	75	65	26	78	87
2	JOHN LEWIS (1,258)	55	68	63	42	66	78
3	IND <sup>a</sup> BOOK/CD/DVD (290)	53	73	51	26	47	77
4	IND <sup>a</sup> ELECTRICALS (279)	44	71	39	27	44	71
5	WATERSTONES (174)	41	58	49	29	63	70
6	MARKS & SPENCER (943)	54	48	44	27	55	69
=	LIDL (305)	43	16	18	79	29	69
=	IND <sup>a</sup> SPORTS (286)	35	62	37	21	45	69
9	ALDI (301)	42	23	21	73	30	68
=	BORDERS (298)	51	49	40	27	69	68
11	THE BODY SHOP (297)	38	53	40	20	53	67
12	WILKINSON (299)	35	20	13	60	37	62
=	IND <sup>a</sup> TOILETRIES (291)	45	52	34	24	38	62
=	IND <sup>a</sup> PHONE (266)	48	60	41	33	39	62
=	THE PERFUME SHOP (209)	43	41	33	43	55	62
16	ICELAND (302)	44	22	27	61	39	61
17	LAURA ASHLEY (265)	34	41	42	22	46	60
18	WICKES (302)	47	25	18	34	29	59
=	CLARKS SHOES (263)	30	29	30	21	44	59
=	DFS (139)	51	44	53	41	37	59
21	HABITAT (297)	27	26	34	14	37	58
=	BLACKS (296)	27	45	32	14	45	58
23	WALLIS (306)	35	28	28	21	30	57
=	MONSOON (298)	36	30	23	22	34	57
=	IKEA (208)	36	19	17	49	38	57
=	MOTHERCARE (118)	47	37	37	25	45	57
27	TK MAXX (600)	35	10	6	62	26	56
=	CO-OP (441)	52	28	26	32	31	56
=	GAP (297)	36	35	31	27	27	56
30	NEXT (556)	39	23	26	25	31	55
=	GAME (300)	36	47	27	18	45	55
32	HOUSE OF FRASER (784)	40	34	34	20	48	54
=	ARGOS (412)	39	14	20	35	46	54
=	PRIMARK (297)	26	11	8	67	21	54
=	MILLETS (295)	30	34	22	27	29	54
=	BOOTS (156)	36	34	21	32	50	54
37	TESCO (1,667)	73	21	28	46	28	53
=	ASDA (1,571)	67	22	25	53	24	53
=	CARPHONE <sup>b</sup> (292)	38	40	28	27	44	53

UK RETAILERS		CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
		CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
=	JESSOPS (217)	31	49	27	28	41	53
=	NETTO (169)	38	10	8	70	16	53
42	DEBENHAMS (835)	44	26	26	27	43	52
=	BHS (577)	31	18	23	32	23	52
=	H&M (306)	33	13	11	47	25	52
=	BOOKS ETC (277)	35	30	27	21	44	52
46	MATALAN (555)	34	11	13	52	18	51
=	MORRISONS (298)	55	24	27	42	33	51
=	B&Q (160)	47	25	15	23	32	51
49	HMV (297)	32	31	18	20	49	50
=	SAINSBURY'S (1,322)	62	22	26	29	26	50
51	VIRGIN MEGASTORE <sup>c</sup> (523)	36	34	22	21	47	49
=	SUPERDRUG (300)	33	10	16	37	31	49
=	T-MOBILE (293)	33	35	32	26	38	49
=	DOROTHY PERKINS (291)	30	21	15	26	17	49
55	O2 (282)	32	34	32	20	36	48
56	ORANGE (289)	29	30	30	15	32	47
=	VODAFONE (288)	31	34	26	17	42	47
=	HOMEBASE (174)	47	20	16	18	25	47
=	HALFORDS (112)	41	19	24	15	31	47
60	NEW LOOK (304)	27	8	9	38	16	46
=	RIVER ISLAND (284)	30	14	21	13	23	46
62	EVANS (309)	29	32	22	20	20	45
=	MFI (246)	37	19	30	31	21	45
=	BARRATTS SHOES (193)	26	16	21	20	15	45
=	WH SMITH (179)	31	15	14	14	26	45
=	COMET (155)	39	18	25	24	32	45
67	SPORTSWORLD (292)	25	7	4	53	22	44
=	TOPSHOP/TOPMAN (288)	27	13	12	17	19	44
69	FOCUS (294)	43	14	14	18	19	43
=	CURRYS (252)	43	15	21	18	25	43
=	PHONES 4U (222)	33	30	26	24	35	43
72	PC WORLD (591)	40	14	23	16	29	41
=	SOMERFIELD (298)	51	13	14	24	13	41
74	CURRYS.DIGITAL (290)	34	17	19	17	24	40
75	WOOLWORTHS (449)	32	10	10	27	16	39
=	JJB SPORTS (295)	30	14	13	21	23	39
77	JD SPORTS (292)	19	6	7	15	14	33

Sample size in brackets <sup>a</sup> Ind=Independent or local <sup>b</sup> Carphone Warehouse <sup>c</sup> Now Zavvi



'I use Somerfield because it is two minutes from my home. But the store is congested, staff are often in short supply and prices are not very competitive.'

**Richard Alexander,**  
Devon

## Groceries

Waitrose is a winner with food shoppers, but the big four barely get a look-in

Waitrose tops our table in everything except price.

Marks & Spencer (M&S) achieves second place. It scores highly for products and customer service but again is let down by price. One M&S customer told us: 'Everyday items are pricey compared with other stores.'

### Tempted by price

Just like last year, discount stores do well, with Lidl, Aldi and Iceland in our top five.

Iceland sees a significant rise in all aspects except customer service. Lidl and Aldi are also seen as great value. One member said: 'They seem to cut the cost of products by economising on staff. But their prices are worth the wait at checkouts.'

Several of you point out that these stores don't stock

all of the brands that you're used to. But as one Lidl customer told us: 'If you are willing to experiment, the pricing is excellent.'

### The big four

None of the big four – Asda, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco – makes it into our top five. Morrisons tops the group, winning points for good value. Sainsbury's and Tesco are used most often for your main shop.

### Only for convenience

Somerfield comes last in the groceries sector. It scores badly for everything except convenience. You use it more for top-up shops than main shops. One customer joked that the store offers 'food shopping for people who don't like food'.

STORES	CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
	CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	SHOPPING EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
1 WAITROSE (301)	68	75	65	26	78	87
2 MARKS & SPENCER (207)	55	51	44	23	65	77
3 LIDL (305)	43	16	18	79	29	69
4 ALDI (301)	42	23	21	73	30	68
5 ICELAND (302)	44	22	27	61	39	61
6 MORRISONS (298)	54	27	28	42	41	57
7 SAINSBURY'S (164)	63	31	30	23	43	56
8 TESCO (173)	68	29	26	35	40	53
= NETTO (169)	38	10	8	70	16	53
10 CO-OP (219)	59	19	19	21	20	51
11 ASDA (228)	59	24	18	39	32	48
12 SOMERFIELD (298)	51	13	14	24	13	41
SECTOR AVERAGE (2,965)	53	29	27	45	38	61

Sample size in brackets



'Staff in Currys.digital are unlikely to know anything about products – if asked a question, they just read the box, which I can do myself.'

**Lynet Smith,**  
Cambridge

## Electricals

Locals and John Lewis beat the big boys, and Co-op is on the rise

The message is loud and clear. If you're buying electricals, stick to John Lewis and local shops.

John Lewis is seen as having good after-sales care. One customer told us: 'I know if I have a problem it will be dealt with promptly and satisfactorily.'

Local electricals come second, with many of you impressed by their 'excellent knowledge of products and good customer service'.

### Cheap but limited

Many supermarkets now stock electrical goods. Tesco and Asda win points for convenience and price, but you think that their product range is limited. Co-op is seen as the best of the supermarkets for electrical

goods, with improvements in all areas since last year.

### Last resort

Currys.digital, PC World and Currys bring up the rear. A visitor to Currys said: 'Dismal place, long waits and ignorant staff.'

Mark Webb from DSG International, which owns Currys, Currys.digital and PC World, told us: 'Given our increased focus on customer service, the Which? rankings are bitterly disappointing. We'll examine the results to see what we can take forward and will continue to work to improve the experience for our customers. We hope that results in future will reflect the real progress we are making.'

STORES	CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
	CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	SHOPPING EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
1 JOHN LEWIS (232)	52	71	68	53	72	86
2 INDEPENDENTS (279)	44	71	39	27	44	71
3 CO-OP (222)	44	36	34	43	42	62
4 TESCO (298)	75	21	34	54	26	55
= ASDA (298)	73	22	27	58	19	55
6 JESSOPS (217)	31	49	27	28	41	53
7 ARGOS (161)	41	15	20	29	46	52
8 COMET (155)	39	18	25	24	32	45
9 CURRYS (252)	43	15	21	18	25	43
10 PC WORLD (591)	40	14	23	16	29	41
11 CURRYS.DIGITAL (290)	34	17	19	17	24	40
SECTOR AVERAGE (3,002)	47	31	30	32	35	53

Sample size in brackets

## Clothes, shoes and accessories Topshop/Topman aren't tops for you



'John Lewis has very helpful staff and quality products.'  
**Alan Russell,**  
**Berkshire**

John Lewis knocks spots off other retailers in this sector. It offers 'good designs and quality', one member told us.

### Cheap and cheerful

Supermarkets do better than some established high-street retailers. The clothing range at Asda (8) is considered the best of the supermarket offerings, with Sainsbury's (10) close behind and Tesco (18) last. According to one shopper: 'Asda offers good quality clothing at good prices.' Unsurprisingly, the supermarkets do well for convenience and pricing.

But you might not go there specifically to buy clothes. One respondent told us: 'I tend to look at the Tesco clothing

on my way through to buy groceries.'

### Disposable fashion

Topshop and TopMan fail to live up to their names. These two, alongside New Look and River Island, are seen as 'for the moment', offering a limited range of 'disposable fashion' that's good for fashion-conscious teenagers or one-off events but 'not the place to go for high-quality stuff that will last'.

These stores were also rated poorly for customer service and shopping experience. The words 'untidy' and 'messy' cropped up frequently. You had similar views about Primark, but the store managed to come eighth in this category, boosted by its 'excellent value for money'.

STORES <sup>a</sup>	CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
	CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	SHOPPING EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
1 JOHN LEWIS (300)	54	66	58	36	66	76
2 MARKS & SPENCER (165)	38	47	40	24	50	68
3 CLARKS SHOES (263)	30	29	30	21	44	59
4 WALLIS (306)	35	28	28	21	30	57
= MONSOON (298)	36	30	23	22	34	57
= MOTHERCARE (118)	47	37	37	25	45	57
20 NEW LOOK (304)	27	8	9	38	16	46
= RIVER ISLAND (284)	30	14	21	13	23	46
22 EVANS (309)	29	32	22	20	20	45
= BARRATTS SHOES (193)	26	16	21	20	15	45
24 TOPSHOP/TOPMAN (288)	27	13	12	17	19	44
SECTOR AVERAGE (6,569)	37	23	22	34	28	53

Sample size in brackets

<sup>a</sup> There are 24 retailers. We have shown the top six and bottom five

'John Lewis is the place to shop. Please come to Celtic Cornwall. We desperately need a John Lewis and a Waitrose down here.'  
**Janet Croome,**  
**Cornwall**

## Toiletries and cosmetics

### John Lewis is top of the shops for toiletries

There's a big difference between where you'd prefer to shop and where you actually go. John Lewis, The Body Shop and M&S are your favourite stores in this category. But most of you buy toiletries and cosmetics at Boots, Superdrug, Sainsbury's and Tesco – all of which are near the bottom of the table.

### Basics only

It seems that many of you get the basics from supermarkets. You rate them highly for convenience – but overall they don't do that well. One respondent summed up the thoughts of many by saying: 'It is only convenience that

makes me buy toiletries in Tesco.'

### Gifts and treats

John Lewis is the place where you most like to shop. One John Lewis customer told us: 'It always has the best price, usually beating discount drugstores, and it's a nicer environment.'

The Body Shop comes second in this category. You like its products and many of you commented on liking its environmental policies. But several of you are worried about the shop's takeover by cosmetics giant L'Oréal.

One reader said: 'I am slightly apprehensive about the change of ownership and whether this affects its ethical approach.'

STORES	CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
	CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	SHOPPING EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
1 JOHN LEWIS (290)	62	69	66	41	70	77
2 THE BODY SHOP (297)	38	53	40	20	53	67
3 MARKS & SPENCER (293)	61	46	47	34	55	66
4 INDEPENDENTS (291)	45	52	34	24	38	62
= THE PERFUME SHOP (209)	43	41	33	43	55	62
6 HOUSE OF FRASER (288)	45	44	40	21	61	58
7 DEBENHAMS (301)	58	39	35	26	62	55
= ASDA (255)	70	26	31	51	38	55
9 BOOTS (156)	36	34	21	32	50	54
10 SUPERDRUG (300)	33	10	16	37	31	49
= SAINSBURY'S (292)	60	23	24	18	30	49
12 TESCO (162)	70	21	26	30	36	48
13 MORRISONS (249)	57	21	27	40	28	45
SECTOR AVERAGE (3,383)	52	39	34	32	47	58

Sample size in brackets



'If you have a query it is almost impossible to find a member of staff in Woolworths to help. Very much a do-it-yourself shopping experience.'

**Bernadette Benham, Chelmsford**



## Entertainment

You pick independents for your CDs, DVDs and books

Almost a quarter of you said that you don't buy from any of the stores in this category, maybe preferring to shop online. Those that do head out prefer independents.

### Specialist shops win

Local independent retailers come top and, according to our survey, offer the best service, with friendly and knowledgeable staff.

Although they may not have the same range as larger bookshops, you say that staff can often order what you want. 'Prices are not the cheapest, but good service and supporting a local shop are important,' said one respondent.

Of the large chains, Waterstones and Borders do well. You think that they have the best range of stock, but they don't quite match the customer service of the locals. You seem to like the relaxing atmosphere of these stores.

One member said of Borders: 'You can browse to your heart's content, a favourite pastime of mine.'

### Mostly mainstream

Supermarkets might not be your first choice for home entertainment, but, as one respondent told us: 'You go for food and end up buying CDs and paperbacks because they are there and the prices are so good.'

All supermarkets score highly for convenience but are seen as having limited ranges of 'only bestseller books and chart CDs'.

### Big names tumble

Woolworths gets the lowest marks for customer service and shopping experience.

WH Smith is not far behind and is seen as the most expensive store. One WH Smith shopper said: 'Offers are not always good value.' Stores are described as 'cluttered' and 'crowded'.

STORES	CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
	CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	SHOPPING EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
1 INDEPENDENTS (290)	53	73	51	26	47	77
2 WATERSTONES (174)	41	58	49	29	63	70
3 BORDERS (298)	51	49	40	27	69	68
4 GAME (300)	36	47	27	18	45	55
5 BOOKS ETC (277)	35	30	27	21	44	52
= ASDA (257)	70	20	26	55	22	52
7 HMV (297)	32	31	18	20	49	50
8 VIRGIN MEGASTORE <sup>a</sup> (289)	34	29	20	19	49	47
= MORRISONS (95)	56	18	25	49	25	47
10 TESCO (196)	72	13	26	40	23	46
11 WH SMITH (179)	31	15	14	14	26	45
12 SAINSBURY'S (268)	59	16	22	23	17	42
13 WOOLWORTHS (227)	37	11	11	26	24	40
SECTOR AVERAGE (3,147)	46	34	27	27	40	54

Sample size in brackets a Now Zavvi

'JD Sports staff seem more interested in carrying on their own conversations than looking after a customer.'

**Hamish Thompson, Bolton**



## Sports shops

John Lewis, independents and Blacks take gold, silver and bronze positions

While John Lewis and independents do well for service and products, JD Sports stands out from the crowd by having the worst satisfaction score of all.

It comes bottom of our 2008 satisfaction table, and you describe stores as 'messy and haphazard'. One bemused shopper told us: 'Nobody knew where to find stock. The item I wanted was located in a carrier bag on the floor in a corner.'

### JD Sports replies

In response to this year's survey, Wayne Davies, head

of retail at JD Sports, told us: 'JD is committed to continually reviewing and improving all aspects of the retail experience it offers its customers, from store layout to service. JD has recently appointed a research agency to review and improve our customer service.'

You rate JJB Sports and Sportsworld similarly to JD, with staff that 'lack interest' and 'messy' stores. On the plus side, Sportsworld is regarded as the cheapest retailer in this category.

STORES	CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
	CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	SHOPPING EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
1 JOHN LEWIS (295)	56	65	61	43	57	74
2 INDEPENDENTS (286)	35	62	37	21	45	69
3 BLACKS (296)	27	45	32	14	45	58
4 MILLETS (295)	30	34	22	27	29	54
5 SPORTSWORLD (292)	25	7	4	53	22	44
6 JJB SPORTS (295)	30	14	13	21	23	39
7 JD SPORTS (292)	19	6	7	15	14	33
SECTOR AVERAGE (2,051)	32	34	25	28	34	53

Sample size in brackets



'For me, Focus is the bottom of the pile for DIY stores because of limited choice and dubious value, but very occasionally something useful can be spotted there.'

**David Abbott,**  
East Yorkshire

## Home and garden **Woolies is not wonderful for your home. John Lewis leads the way**

While John Lewis and M&S do predictably well, discount stores Wilkinson and TK Maxx are the surprise challengers in this category, scoring well for their excellent pricing but failing dismally on service and shopping experience.

### Maxx factor

TK Maxx gets just 6 per cent for shopping experience, with lots of you referring to it as a 'jumble sale'. As one respondent said: 'You have to be feeling strong to go there and forage.' But the consensus of opinion is that it's worth hunting to find that quality bargain. Indeed, 67 per cent of you believe that TK Maxx's pricing policy is either excellent or very good. Ikea (10), Asda (12), Tesco (12) and Matalan (17)

also do well on price, although Ikea's products are seen as far better.

### Bottom of the pile

Woolworths came last in this sector, but Homebase, MFI and Focus should be more worried. All are in the bottom five, and home and garden products are their primary reason for being. They receive low marks for service and shopping experience. Focus and Homebase are also seen as expensive. One member's view was that: 'Focus is best avoided – very expensive.' MFI was regarded as having more reasonable prices. As one member put it, at least 'you get what you pay for'.

Of the big DIY chains, you rate Wickes as the top choice, followed by B&Q (16).

STORES <sup>a</sup>	CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION
	CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	SHOPPING EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
<b>1 JOHN LEWIS</b> (141)	46	71	66	39	68	83
<b>2 MARKS &amp; SPENCER</b> (278)	53	47	43	25	50	66
<b>3 WILKINSON</b> (299)	35	20	13	60	37	62
<b>4 LAURA ASHLEY</b> (265)	34	41	42	22	46	60
<b>5 TK MAXX</b> (305)	41	11	6	67	28	59
= <b>WICKES</b> (302)	47	25	18	34	29	59
= <b>DFS</b> (139)	51	44	53	41	37	59
<b>19 DEBENHAMS</b> (236)	35	21	24	27	29	49
<b>20 HOMEBASE</b> (174)	47	20	16	18	25	47
= <b>HALFORDS</b> (112)	41	19	24	15	31	47
<b>22 MFI</b> (246)	37	19	30	31	21	45
<b>23 FOCUS</b> (294)	43	14	14	18	19	43
<b>24 WOOLWORTHS</b> (222)	27	9	10	28	9	37
<b>SECTOR AVERAGE</b> (5,827)	44	24	24	35	31	55

Sample size in brackets. <sup>a</sup> There are 24 retailers. We have shown the top seven and bottom six



'Excellent, [my local phone shop] knows its subject and looks to give the best deal for the customer.'

**Paul Foulger,**  
Chelmsford

## Mobile phones **Locals are top of the shops but Tesco is closing in fast**

According to our survey, if you need advice, local retailers are the way to go. You give them 60 per cent for customer service, way above the 36 per cent average. If you already know what you want, and are looking for a good deal, Tesco is a good choice. In your opinion, it's the cheapest place to buy a mobile, although you don't 'get much help from assistants'.

### No ties preferred

Our top two retailers in this category offer deals from a range of networks and, from your comments, seem less likely to try the hard sell. Maybe that's why you like

them. One respondent explained his preference for local stores: 'Small and friendly, keen to help and open to offering deals. I feel that, being a small independent outfit, the shop is not under the same target pressures as a chain.'

Phones4U came bottom of our table, with mediocre scores rather than terrible ones. However, there were a few complaints about selling techniques. One customer said: 'Sales staff were trying to push the tariff exceeding my budget and were not really interested in what I was asking.' Another complained: 'I find the staff too pushy, which has put me off returning.'

STORES	CATEGORIES (%)					OVERALL SATISFACTION (%)
	CONVENIENCE	CUSTOMER SERVICE	SHOPPING EXPERIENCE	PRICING	PRODUCT	
<b>1 INDEPENDENTS</b> (266)	48	60	41	33	39	62
<b>2 TESCO</b> (298)	75	20	33	50	37	61
<b>3 CARPHONE<sup>a</sup></b> (292)	38	40	28	27	44	53
<b>4 VIRGIN MEGASTORE<sup>b</sup></b> (234)	39	39	24	23	45	52
<b>5 T-MOBILE</b> (293)	33	35	32	26	38	49
<b>6 O2</b> (282)	32	34	32	20	36	48
<b>7 ORANGE</b> (289)	29	30	30	15	32	47
= <b>VODAFONE</b> (288)	31	34	26	17	42	47
<b>9 PHONES 4 U</b> (222)	33	30	26	24	35	43
<b>SECTOR AVERAGE</b> (2,499)	40	36	30	26	38	51

Sample size in brackets

<sup>a</sup> Carphone Warehouse <sup>b</sup> Now Zavvi

## Which? Local

The place to find the best local shops

Independent shops have performed exceptionally well in this year's survey. While we can't name individual independents in this report, the Which? Local website allows Which? members to share their thoughts about services and traders in their local area. The site currently features more than 9,000 recommendations from members, including local



bookstores, sports shops and electrical retailers, as well as tradespeople, restaurants, garages and many other professional services. For more details, visit [www.which-local.co.uk](http://www.which-local.co.uk).

### OUR RESEARCH

In September to November 2007, we asked 10,963 Which? online panel members to rate their satisfaction with the retailers they use from a list of 77 well-known stores and independent retailers. Based on the answers, we compiled a list of the top 77 stores overall and in each sector.

### EVEN MORE ONLINE

## Welcome to the Which? podcast

Now you can listen to Which? whenever you want

You can now access the latest Which? news and advice through our new monthly podcast. This month, find out even more about our new shopping satisfaction survey. Simply log on to [www.which.co.uk/podcast](http://www.which.co.uk/podcast) and follow the simple instructions

## CHAMPS AND CHUMPS

Check out the highest and lowest scorers in our survey

### CONVENIENCE

**Tesco**  
With more than 1,900 stores around the UK, it's not surprising that Tesco tops our table for convenience. You're practically tripping over them.

**JD Sports**  
Stores are often located in out-of-town retail parks, making them hard to reach.

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

**Waitrose**  
Your love for Waitrose knows no bounds: 75 per cent of you rate it as excellent or very good for customer service.

**JD Sports**  
Goodness knows what JD is doing to get a score this low. The store scores a woeful 6 per cent for customer service.

### SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

**Waitrose**  
Waitrose tops our survey again, with 65 per cent of you rating it as your favourite shopping experience.

**Sportsworld**  
Stores are 'overcrowded', 'cluttered' and 'messy', according to you. That's why, with only 4 per cent, Sportsworld is your least favourite shopping experience.

### PRICING

**Lidl**  
Almost eight out of ten of you think that Lidl offers excellent or very good value.

**River Island**  
You rate clothes store River Island as the retailer that offers the worst value for money.

### PRODUCT

**Waitrose**  
With 78 per cent of you rating it as either excellent or very good, Waitrose is top for the availability, range and quality of its products.

**Somerfield**  
Only 13 per cent of you rate Somerfield's products as excellent or very good, which makes it the worst overall.

## BEST BUY COMPETITION

# £2,500 worth of John Lewis and Waitrose vouchers to be won

We are offering five lucky winners the chance to each win £500 worth of John Lewis and Waitrose vouchers.

### TO ENTER, SIMPLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

According to this report, the Which? Local service currently features how many member recommendations about local traders and services?

(a) 9,000 (b) 2,364 (c) 1,200

To enter online, go to: [www.which.co.uk/bestbuycompetition](http://www.which.co.uk/bestbuycompetition) or send your entry on a postcard to 'Best Buy February 08', Which?, PO Box 44, Hertford X SG14 1SH. Include your name, address and postcode, daytime phone number and Which? membership number (found on your Which? membership card as your user name). Entries received by 17 February 2008 will be entered. Our competition is open only to current Which? members. Only one entry per household. Usual rules apply.

See [www.which.co.uk/bestbuycompetition](http://www.which.co.uk/bestbuycompetition) or Which?, December 2007, p82 for a full set of rules.

**November 2007 Best Buy competition winner**  
Congratulations to one of our members who has won a Best Buy Sony Bravia KDL-32D3000 flat-panel TV and an LG BH1000 high-definition DVD player  
Mr D Field, Cardiff

