



Consumer sustainability practices during the online shopping journey

A CouriersPlease study | February 2024



About the study

CouriersPlease commissioned a survey of an independent, nationally representative panel of 1005 Australians to identify the rates of environmentally friendly choices made while online shopping.

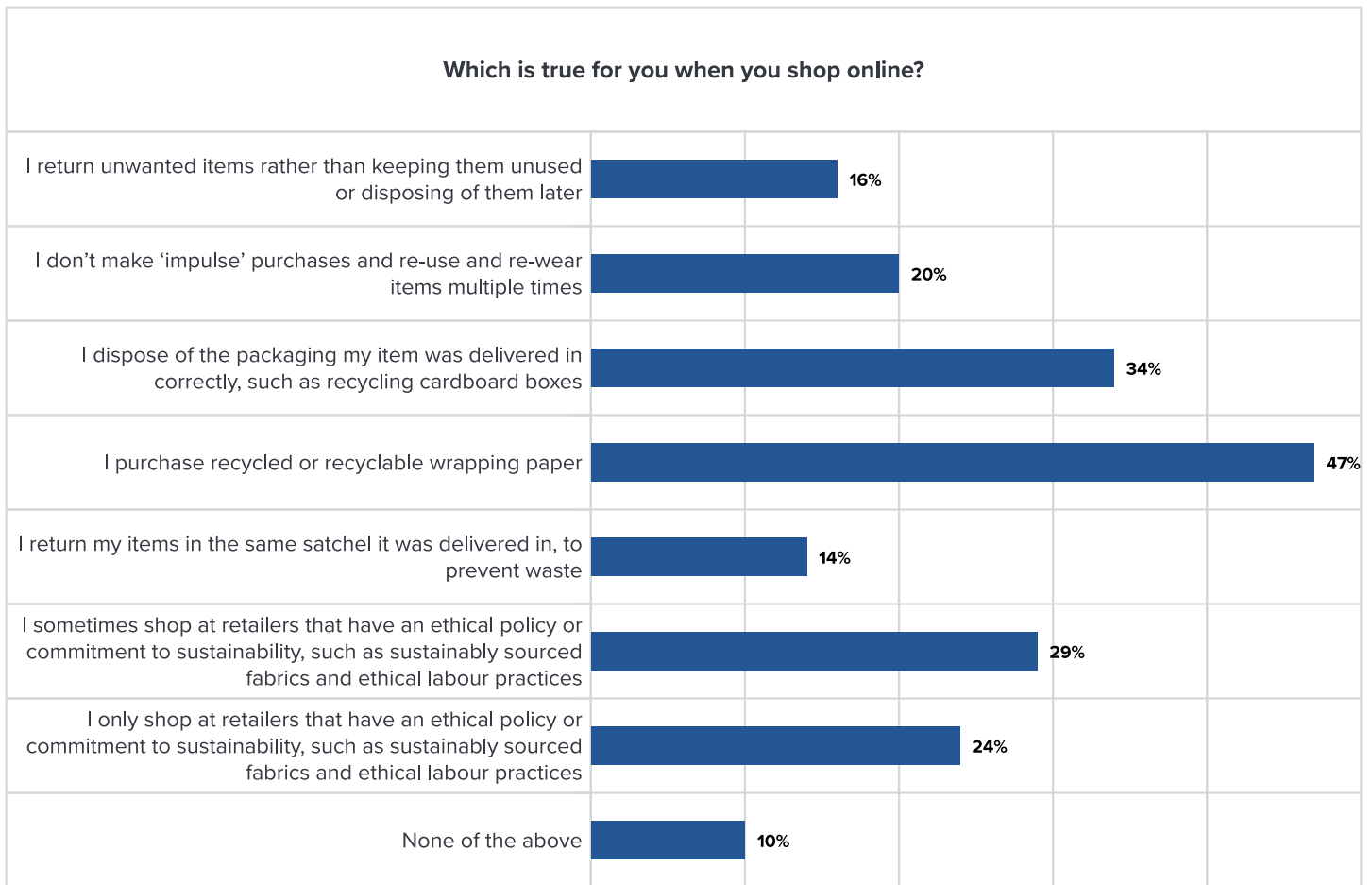
The survey respondents matched the geographical population spread of the Aussie population.

In light of growing environmental concerns, exposure of fast fashion and increased emphasis on corporate sustainability, respondents were asked about their online shopping habits from the below practices. CouriersPlease then compared responses between age groups and geographical locations.

- Returning unwanted items rather than disposing of them
- Avoiding impulse buys and re-using items
- Recycling packaging
- Purchasing recycled wrapping paper
- Returning items in the same satchel they were delivered in
- Favouring retailers with ethical policies or sustainability commitments

CouriersPlease found that almost half of online consumers (47%) make an effort to recycle packaging, just 10 per cent only shop at retailers with an ethical policy or a commitment to sustainability, such as sustainably sourcing fabrics and ensuring ethical labour practices. A higher 24% of online shoppers say they sometimes choose environmentally-friendly businesses, while 80% of respondents admitted they don't return unwanted items.

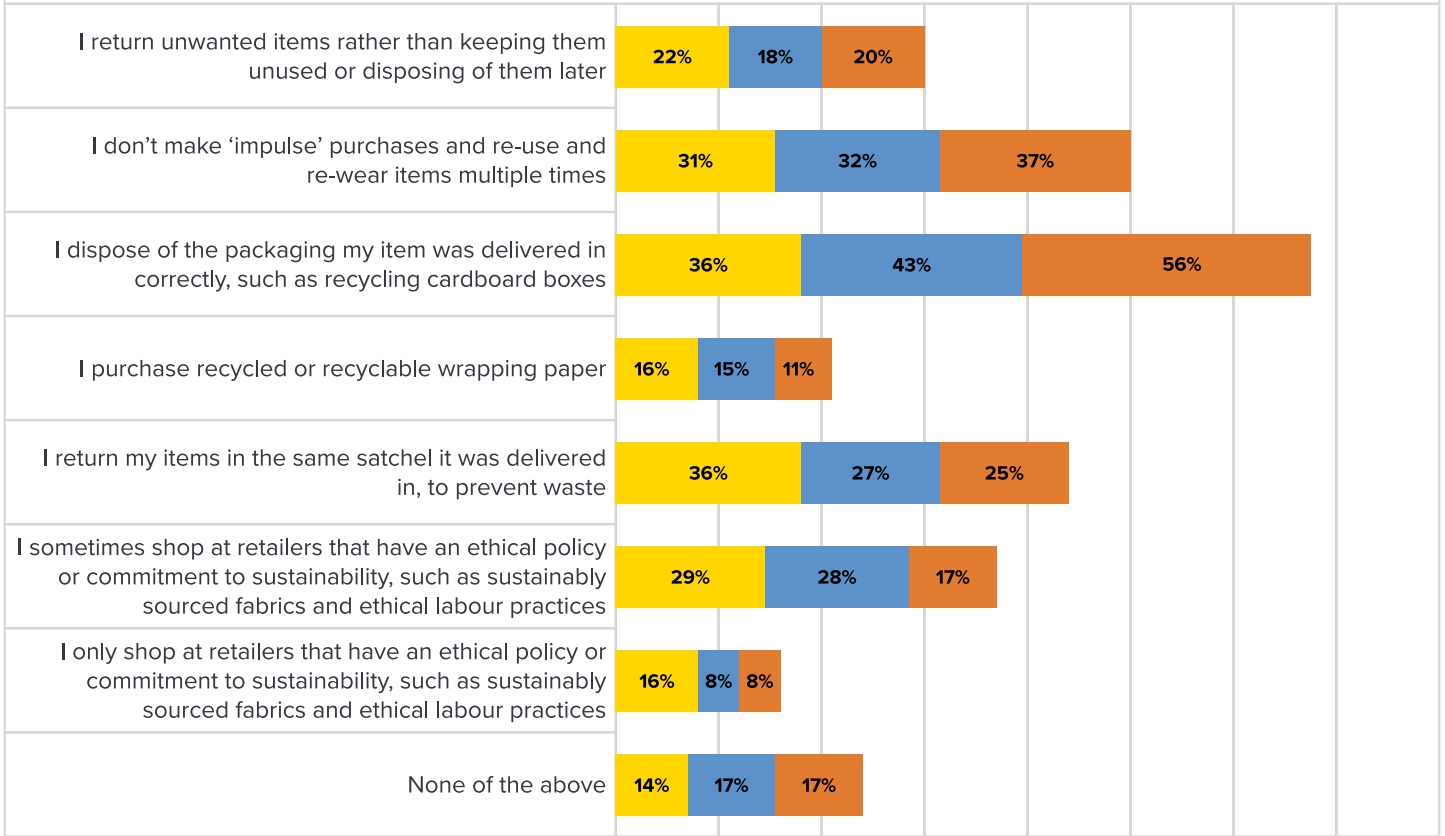
When it comes to avoiding impulse buys and re-using items, just over 1 in 3 Aussies (34%) do their best to shop mindfully, but 86 per cent confess they don't buy recycled or recyclable wrapping paper. Avoiding waste was a higher priority for respondents, with 29 per cent saying they make the effort to return items in the same packaging it arrived in.



Older Aussies are leading the recycling charge

The survey results found that Australians aged over 50 were almost twice as likely to recycle their packaging, with just 36 per cent of respondents aged between 18 and 30 saying they made the effort. While older online shoppers were far more likely to dispose of their packing correctly (56%), Australians aged under 50 are almost twice as likely to favour sustainable retailers, with 45 per cent of 18-30s saying they sometimes or always shopped at environmentally friendly online stores, and 35 per cent of Aussies aged between 31 and 50 following suit. Just 25 per cent of respondents aged over 50 consider where they spend their online dollars. While it was clear that no age group prioritised buying recyclable or recycled wrapping paper, 89 per cent of over 50s confessed they don't buy recycled or recyclable wrapping paper, compared with 84 per cent of under 30s.

Which is true for you when you shop online? (By Age)



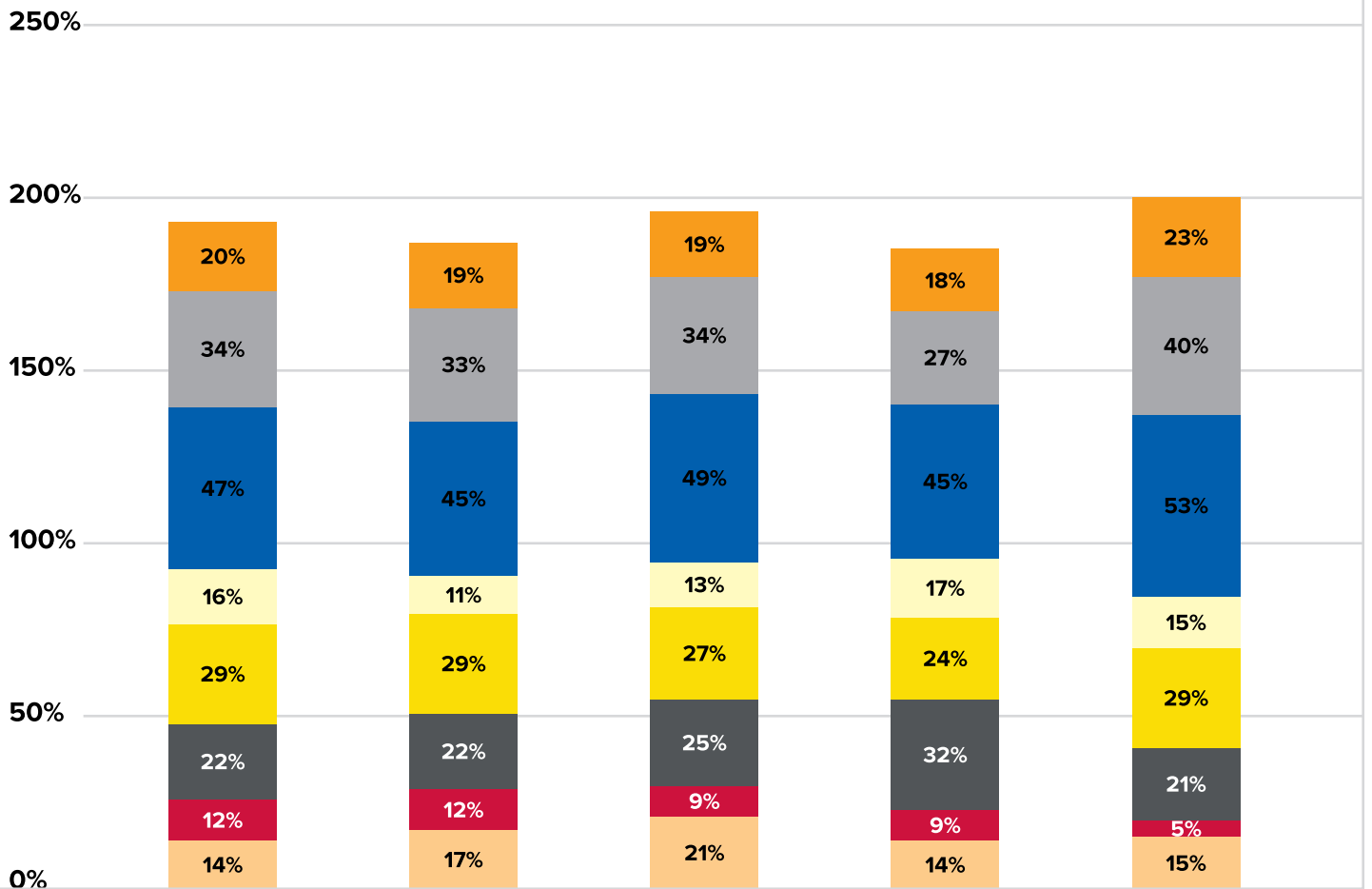
■ 18-30 years
 ■ 31-50 years
 ■ Over 50 years

West Australians win the green medal when it comes to reusing and recycling

Among the mainland Aussie states, West Australian shoppers seem to have the greenest mindsets when it comes to shirking impulse buys and correctly disposing of packaging. Two out of 5 (40%) said they don't impulse buy and 53 per cent recycle their packaging. Queenslanders were the second most likely to recycle their packaging with almost 1 in 2 (49%) making the effort to correctly dispose of packaging.

South Australians seem to be the worst offenders for impulse buys, at 27 per cent, however SA respondents top the rankings for selecting sustainable retailers, with 41 per cent saying they sometimes or always favour environmentally-friendly online stores. Respondents from NSW and Victoria are the most likely to always choose green or ethical retailers, at 12 per cent.

Which is true for you when you shop online? (By State)



- I return unwanted items rather than keeping them unused or disposing of them later
- I don't make 'impulse' purchases and re-use and re-wear items multiple times
- I dispose of the packaging my item was delivered in correctly, such as recycling cardboard boxes
- I purchase recycled or recyclable wrapping paper
- I return my items in the same satchel it was delivered in, to prevent waste
- I sometimes shop at retailers that have an ethical policy or commitment to sustainability, such as sustainably sourced fabrics and ethical labour practices
- I only shop at retailers that have an ethical policy or commitment to sustainability, such as sustainably sourced fabrics and ethical labour practices
- None of the above

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