

# back-to-school & back-to-budget

The rise of the deal-driven parent

The back-to-school shopping season is now the second-biggest shopping season of the year, trailing the holiday season, with consumers planning to spend a total of \$82.8 billion in 2018 on items like clothes, accessories, and supplies. And despite the nationwide spend in billions on an annualized season, shoppers are prioritizing finding great deals over completing shopping early – likely because of the costs associated with the season. Families with children in elementary through high school reported they planned to spend an average \$684.79 each, and those with young people heading to college, as well as college and graduate students purchasing for themselves, plan to spend an average \$942.17 each – all according to the [National Retail Foundation](#).





## Why the shift toward deal hunting for the back-to-school season?

Given that millennials range to date from age 23 (born in 1996) to age 38 (born in 1981); **it is possible that more cost-conscious millennials are becoming parents at a time when deal-seeking and comparison shopping is part of everyday behavior.**

According to a study from [Roth Capital and Forbes](#), **“Price is the most important factor that determines whether a millennial makes a purchase. For example, 87 percent will search for discounts or wait for**

**discounts when making a ‘significant’ purchase... and 67 percent will switch brands if they are offered a discount of 30 percent or more.”**

With more than 17.3 million mothers who are of millennial age in the U.S. alone, with an additional 1 million more millennials giving birth each year according to [Pew Research](#), money saving tips & tricks will be the top of the syllabus for more families.

Millennials are also the same generation that took social media by storm and by 2006 had created hashtags to commemorate and relive their life journey – hence #ThrowbackThursday was borne. The hashtag has been used more than 47.2 million times to date and the industry has famously responded with “nostalgia marketing.”

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Looking at 2018’s top-grossing movies, the winners capitalized on franchises established during millennials’ childhoods: Incredibles 2 (\$608.6 million), Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom (\$417.7 million) and Mission: Impossible – Fallout (\$220.2 million) ([Box Office Mojo](#)). One of the reasons millennials may pine for simpler times is they miss the stories, characters and most of all, lower prices of their childhood. In fact, according to a survey of 1,000 respondents, online retailer Zulily, found **74 percent of millennials think school supplies cost more now than they did in the 90s.**

In an analysis conducted on a sampling of merchandise and brands that reached popular status in the 1990’s, here are must-haves and what they cost in the 90s, versus how much they cost now – as well as the Zulily price.

## Back-to-school must-haves index

Back to school must-have	MSRP in 90s*	Zulily Price during Blast-From-the-Past Sale
Crayons (24-count)	\$ 00. <sup>76</sup>	Starting at \$ 00. <sup>39</sup>
Kids’ Graphic T-Shirt	\$ 16. <sup>99</sup>	Starting at \$ 9. <sup>99</sup>
Zipper binder	\$ 10. <sup>99</sup>	Starting at \$ 9. <sup>99</sup>
Kids’ Jeans	\$ 39. <sup>97</sup>	Starting at \$ 12. <sup>99</sup>
Women’s fashion sneaker	\$ 49. <sup>99</sup>	Starting at \$ 29. <sup>99</sup>

\*Source: Wakefield Research

Zulily

## back-to-school by the numbers

With parents seeing dollar signs when thinking about back-to-school shopping, it's no wonder there is a desire to find the best deal they can across all items for the back-to-school season. Zulily back-to-school by the numbers:

Budget is the most important factor for the back-to-school shopping season.

The majority (**58 percent**) of those surveyed marked budget as the most important factor today in making a purchase for back-to-school. Followed by **28 percent** noting convenience and **14 percent** saying being on trend is the most important factor.

In general, most think people spend too much: **71 percent** think shoppers spend too much on back-to-school shopping.

Americans are nostalgic for their old school days, not only for the 90s prices but much more...

Americans miss how much cheaper goods were in their childhood: **37 percent** think their parents spent **\$50** or less on each child in their household, but only **21 percent** think a **\$50** and below budget is appropriate for back-to-school shopping today. **63 percent** of respondents think a more appropriate budget should be either **\$100** or less or **\$200** or less, per child.

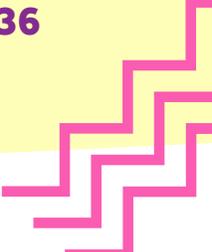




Consumers think school supplies are more expensive now than their childhood: **77 percent** think supplies are more expensive today than the 90s, with **81 percent** of women reporting supplies are more expensive today than the 90s.

On top of prices, adults miss being able to play: **28 percent** say what they miss most about being in elementary school is recess – there’s no such thing as a play break at work! Coming in second place was missing how much cheaper everything was (**15 percent**) and school itself (**11 percent**).

If most (**68 percent**) Americans could choose a product they could purchase today at a 90s price, they’d choose a brand name backpack at **\$26.99 (36 percent)** or a box of 24 crayons for **76 cents (32 percent)**.



## About Zulily’s back-to-school Blast-From-the-Past pricing sale

Zulily, the online retailer that aims to serve unbeatable deals for shoppers is preparing for the back-to-school season and beyond, is launching a special on July 18 and running through Aug. 22, Zulily will curate a special six-week back-to-school sale featuring charmingly retro goods for students and parents alike with prices straight from the 90s (while supplies last). Featuring must-haves from brands like Champion, PONY, Crayola, Silver Jeans, Mead and more, products will debut weekly, launching each Thursday (#TBT) and can be found at Zulily’s Back-to-School shop: <https://www.zulily.com/jump/backtoschool>

Back-to-school traditions have evolved as school, culture and technology have fundamentally shifted, which has influenced consumer expectations and the need for being deal savvy during the shopping season. Getting the best deal possible will only continue to be part of any family’s core curriculum.

### Survey Methodology

Zulily Survey Methodology: Zulily surveyed 1,000 respondents, users on websites in the Google Surveys Publisher Network, aged 18 years or older. The survey was conducted online through Google Surveys (complete methodology can be found here) from June 20 to 23, 2019. The margin of error is +/- 3 percentage points.



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