



BACK-TO-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS INFLATION REPORT



CRAYONS, HIGH-TOP SNEAKERS, SUPPLY ORGANIZERS: ZULILY TAKES A LOOK AT BACK-TO-SCHOOL PRICES OVER THE DECADES

As inflation rises and moms everywhere prepare their kids to return to the classroom, online retailer Zulily explores the cost of staple back-to-school items of the past compared to today's prices to offer insights into how inflation has impacted back-to-school shopping from the 1950s to today

With inflation at an all-time 40-year record high, moms' household budgets are feeling the pinch, from gas, to groceries, to everyday shopping for a growing family. Last year, the average household planned to spend **\$414** per child on back-to-school clothing and shoes¹. This year, back-to-school spending is estimated to increase by +7.5% compared to last year² now that school life has transitioned from hybrid to in-person.

MOTHERS KNOW BEST: There are 85 million moms in the U.S.³ finding ways to outsmart inflation. With the median household income across the U.S. at \$61,937⁴, **household dollars are being stretched to the limit**, which means finding ways to maximize savings – and time – while not sacrificing the brands and items one loves this back-to-school season becomes more challenging than ever before.

With rising inflation, families plan to spend \$1,248 on back-to-school this year⁵, compared to last year's average of \$849². Millions of moms shop Zulily, and to help outsmart inflation, **beginning July 8 until August 26, Zulily is offering an additional discount to match the inflation rate off selected back-to-school items every Friday.** And research shows that planning ahead this season leads to more than just cost savings. For the 71% of moms that define themselves as planners and say they shop as early as possible, planning helps them feel less stressed (75%), saves time (62%) and saves them money (54%)⁶.



MOMS PURCHASING POWER:

Moms are responsible for **70% of all household purchases** and now are feeling the impact of inflation pressures on all family needs, which is not surprising because the amount of goods and services that can be bought today has decreased over time and prices have increased. Over the past 45 years alone, industry-wide prices for girls' apparel are **+8.10% higher**, prices for boys' apparel are **+36.63% higher** and prices for boys' and girls' footwear are **+116.75% higher**⁷.



LET'S GIVE A DOLLAR'S WORTH SOME COLOR:

The buying power of \$1 has decreased over time due to rising inflation and cost of goods and services. For example, \$1 could buy a 64-count of crayons in 1958. Today, that same \$1, based on purchasing power means that you'd only be able to buy 10.5 crayons.



COLOR CONTEXT THROUGH THE DECADES

Back-to-school essentials, such as kids’ shirts, pants, dresses, skirts, and shoes, backpacks, lunchboxes, and school supplies have changed dramatically over the decades – not just in style, but also in price. Here’s a look at some of our back-to-school favorites then and now.

MILESTONES FROM THE DECADES	BACK-TO-SCHOOL ESSENTIAL	THEN*	NOW*
1958	A 64-pack of crayons debuts and mini artists cheer everywhere	\$0.49	\$4.99 for a 64-pack of crayons
1967	JanSport backpacks find their way into university bookstores	\$4.12	\$36.00 for a “Superbreak” backpack
1973	Bonnie Bell introduces Lip Smackers and tweens and teens go wild with strawberry, green apple, and orange chocolate	\$1.74	\$11.50 for an 8-pack of LipSmackers
1981	Trapper Keepers with their colorful and creative designs, are in backpacks and lockers everywhere	\$4.67	\$15.00 for a Trapper Keeper binder
1995	High top sneakers reach exponential popularity	\$33.85	\$65.00 for a pair of iconic high tops
2005	Caboodle organizers take middle and high schools by storm	\$16.70	\$24.99 for a Caboodle organizer
2010	Leggings go neck-and-neck with the denim industry as “all around wear”	\$12.54	\$16.80 for girls’ leggings
2022	Stay-at-home and hybrid learning dominated personal electronics and kids’ headsets became a school essential	\$26.31	\$29.99 for a kids’ headset

*Methodology: Zulily used the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index to calculate the price “then” vs. “now” by taking the current retail price of each product as provided by the manufacturer.

CONCLUSION

We know all moms are creative about how to maximize their household budgets without sacrificing the brands and quality they love, and the life experiences and moments they want to create. Zulily is finding ways to maximize mom's budget so she can enjoy an easy and stress-free shopping experience during the second biggest spending event of the year for moms. As moms everywhere are navigating macroeconomic factors that are stretching their dollar further and requiring some trade-offs, Zulily offers the best value on the products and brands their kids love, plus an inflation-friendly shopping experience that saves her time and money, so she can outsmart inflation and make sure her family is set up for back-to-school success.

Find more information and back-to-school shopping tips on Zulily's **"The Find"**.



SOURCES

¹ Source: The National Retailer Federation, 2021 Back-to-School Spending Survey, July 2021

² Source: Mastercard Spending Plus, June 2022

³ Source: United States Census Bureau, 2020

⁴ Source: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), September 2019

⁵ Source: Ziff Media Group Research Insights, 2022 Back-to-School & Prime Day Survey, May 2022

⁶ Source: Zulily, The Brain of the Planner Study, August 2021

⁷ Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/>, May 2022