



UK Clothing & Footwear

Monthly

SAMPLE

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Clothing
5.4%

Clothing retail sales rose 5.4% year-on-year in March, according to Retail Economics

Clothing Volumes
-1.8%

Clothing sales volumes fell by 1.8% year-on-year in March, according to Retail Economics

Clothing Forecast
X.X%

Retail Economics forecasts Clothing sales to rise by X.X% YoY in 2023.

UK Retail Sales
6.0%

Total retail sales rose 6.0% year-on-year in March, value and non-seasonally adjusted, according to Retail Economics

Average Weekly Sales
£959m

UK weekly sales of Clothing & Footwear averaged £959m in March, according to Retail Economics



Values up but volumes still weak

- Clothing and Footwear sales rose by 5.4% and 7.8% YoY respectively in March, according to the Retail Economics Retail Sales Index (value, non-seasonally adjusted).
- Apparel spending improved in March supported by elevated inflation, weather disruptions and more social gatherings.
- Online Clothing & Footwear sales rose 11.1% YoY in March – its best rise since October.

Apparel growth edges high amid more weddings and events

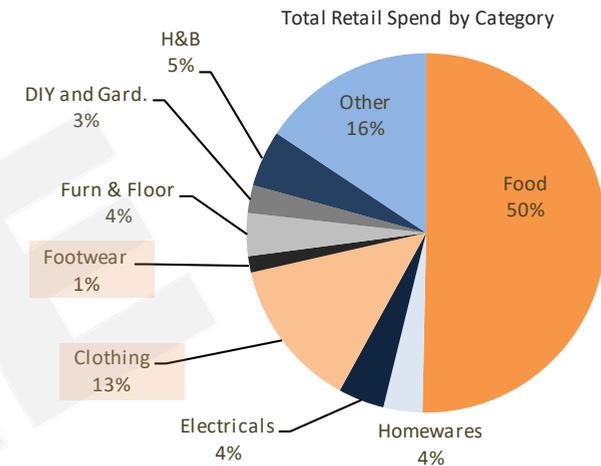
Sector Growth Rankings	Mar-23	3 month avg.	6 month avg.	12 month avg.
Food	11.0%	9.9%	8.8%	6.3%
Footwear	7.8%	7.9%	7.5%	9.6%
Clothing	5.4%	5.3%	4.4%	6.8%
Health and Beauty	5.2%	5.8%	5.4%	4.3%
Furn & Floor	2.9%	2.6%	2.6%	-0.7%
Homewares	-0.8%	-1.4%	-1.0%	-2.7%
Electricals	-1.8%	-2.6%	-2.8%	-3.1%
DIY and Gardening	-3.8%	-2.1%	-3.5%	-5.2%

Source: Retail Economics

Retail market overview

- Total retail sales rose by 6.0% YoY in March, against a 4.7% rise in the previous year, according to the Retail Economics Retail Sales Index (value, non-seasonally adjusted).
- Several factors impacted headline performance in the month, including: adverse local and international weather (discouraging spring sales and impacting fresh food); an earlier Mother's Day this year; and inflation.
- Retail sales volumes have been in decline on an annual basis for 13 consecutive months, as inflation persists (10.1% YoY in March).

Clothing & Footwear accounts for 14% of March retail spend



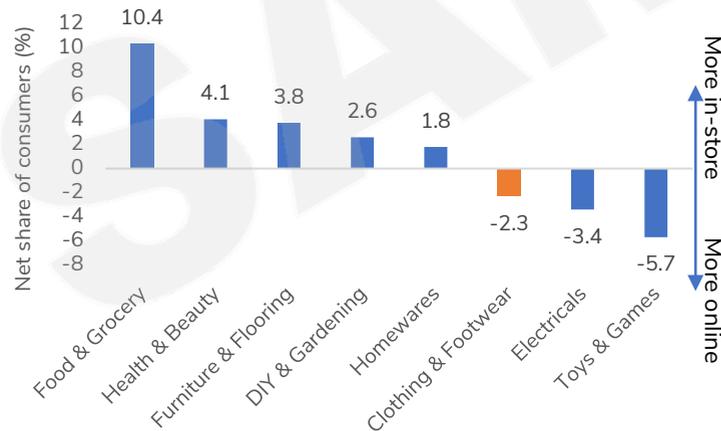
Source: Retail Economics

More online shopping this year

- There continues to be a notable rise in in-store performance with Primark the latest retailer to report a boost in shopper numbers across its store base leading to a 15% rise in LFL sales.
- But Retail Economics research suggests that consumers are less likely to shift their Clothing and Footwear spending to stores compared with categories where small basket values and physical touch are more critical.
- A net -2.3% share of consumers plan to shop more online for Clothing and Footwear in 2023.

Consumers intend to shop more online within apparel

Q. Thinking about your shopping habits throughout 2023, do you think the proportion you will spend in-store or online will change?



Source: Retail Economics. Note: Net balance = more often minus less often.

2023 Forecasts

- We anticipate a 'year of two halves' for Clothing & Footwear in 2023. The first six months will be tough as cost pressures remain intense for consumers and businesses, but we expect sales volumes to recover over H2 2023 as confidence picks up and inflation unwinds.
- Retail Economics forecasts Clothing sales to record slower growth of X.X% YoY in 2023, with total sales hitting close to £XX.Xbn. Footwear sales are projected to rise by X.X% YoY, reaching £XX.Xbn.
- However, the projected growth for 2023 reflects high inflation, which will lift retail sales in value terms, but result in falling volumes.

Solid growth projected for Clothing & Footwear driven by inflation

2022: [Blurred]

Source: Retail Economics

Clothing & Footwear – Retail Economics Index

- Clothing and Footwear sales rose by 5.4% and 7.8% YoY respectively in March, according to the Retail Economics Retail Sales Index (value, non-seasonally adjusted).

Performance reflects:

Elevated inflation – Headline inflation persisted in double digits in March, supporting top line sales growth in value terms. Apparel inflation eased to 7.2% but Clothing sales volumes remained in negative territory, falling by an estimated 1.8% YoY (from -3.7% in February).

Weather disruptions – The UK’s wettest March for 29 years dampened the sale of spring collections but boosted outerwear.

More social gatherings – The category benefitted from a resurgence in weddings, events and a gradual return to offices among workers which boosted demand across the sector.

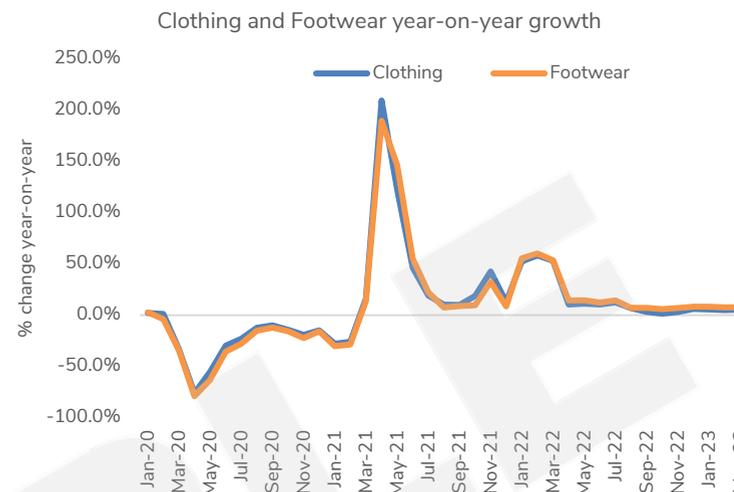
Mixed March performance

- March’s performance is typically driven by changing seasonal stock, preparations for Easter getaways and improving weather after cooler winter months.
- But this March was characterised by dull conditions and heavy downpours which culminated in the sixth wettest March on record. Resultantly, demand for seasonal lines remained muted for the second month in a row following a discount-led boost in January.
- Despite the gloomy conditions, the rainier weather led to higher demand for outerwear such as coats while jumpers also received a boost as temperatures eased on the previous month.

- Elsewhere, preparations for the impending wedding season boosted sales of men’s suits while formal and dress shoes were said to have been popular in both men’s and women’s segments.

Economic prospects improve but inflation sticky

- Household budgets were kept under pressure in March, despite headline inflation easing to 10.1% from February’s unexpected jump to 10.4%.
- Notably, annual inflation rates for men’s and women’s clothing are rising at a slower pace than headline inflation, up 8.4% and 7.1% respectively (ONS). Within footwear, women’s (3.2%) demonstrated a lower inflation rate than the men’s (5.5%) component.
- But regular and total pay growth remained under pressure, recording near-record falls in real terms (adjusted for inflation), eating into household budgets.
- Inflation is forecast to fall back significantly when April’s data is released as last year’s sharp rise in energy prices fall out of annual comparisons.
- Consumers are feeling more optimistic as a result, with GfK’s headline confidence measure edging up two points to -36 in March, following a seven point rise in February.
- However, the return of ‘normal’ spending patterns are some way off with consumers prioritising spending in areas they missed out on during the pandemic.
- This is supporting demand within the travel industry, with travel agents (30.1%) and airlines (28.5%) reporting a surge in spending growth YoY, outstripping all other sectors (Barclaycard).



Source: Retail Economics Retail Sales Index, value, non-seasonally adjusted.

	Clothing, annual % growth	Avg. weekly spend (£m)	Footwear, annual % growth	Avg. weekly spend (£m)
Oct-22	1.5%	£856	5.9%	£92
Nov-22	3.1%	£1,045	7.0%	£108
Dec-22	6.1%	£1,237	8.3%	£126
Jan-23	5.5%	£800	8.2%	£94
Feb-23	5.0%	£807	7.6%	£83
Mar-23	5.4%	£865	7.8%	£95

Source: Retail Economics: Retail Sales Series – value, non-seasonally adjusted
*Period aligned to ONS trading calendar 26 February – 01 April 2023

Clothing
Year-on-year growth

5.4%

Clothing sales rose 5.4% YoY in March (Retail Economics)

Footwear
Year-on-year growth

7.8%

Footwear sales rose 7.8% YoY in March (Retail Economics)

Annual inflation rates for men’s and women’s clothing are rising at a slower rate than headline inflation, up 8.4% and 7.1% respectively in March (ONS)

- The fact that some customers may be embarking on their first trip in three years could contribute to a feel good factor, leading to increased spending in the clothing and footwear sector as they update their summer wardrobes.

Price key driver of demand

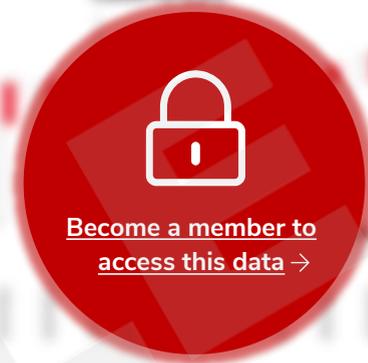
- But holiday spending alone won't be enough to prop up the sector, with consumers likely to take a cautionary approach to spending even after household budgets improve.
- This will continue to support retailers at the value end of the market as consumers favour lower prices over quality and convenience.
- Primark recorded a 15% rise in like-for-like UK sales in the six months to 4 March, despite passing on a 7% price rise to consumers.
- Performance was supported by increased shopper numbers across high street and shopping centres but also city centres which were boosted by the return of tourists and office workers.
- Primark's increased store performance fits in with the wider narrative of changing consumer behaviour amid cost of living pressures which has seen spending shift back to stores at pace.
- But Retail Economics research suggests that consumers are less likely to shift their Clothing and Footwear spending to stores compared with categories where small basket values and physical touch are more critical.
- A net -2.3% share of consumers plan to shop more online for Clothing and Footwear in 2023.

- Recognising the importance of the online channel, Primark announced the expansion of its click-and-collect trial this summer, to include a further 32 stores in and around London.
- This will bring the total number of stores in its trial to 57 as it continues its journey into the world of omnichannel retailing, albeit at a slower pace than many of its counterparts.

Outlook cautious

- Apparel retailers have so far taken a cautious approach to predicting a recovery in spending in 2023 despite a number of positive results in recent months.
- Primark warned that sales growth was likely to slow in the coming months citing cost of living pressures and higher interest rates. This echoed similar comments from Next and Quiz Clothing.
- This is despite ongoing improvements in consumer sentiment which hit a 15-month high in April driven by robust wage growth, a brighter economic outlook and extended energy bill support.
- Crucially, rises in consumer confidence don't necessarily lead to a boost in consumer spending with recessionary behaviours likely to be entrenched in the short term.
- The speed at which spending recovers will depend on a number of factors including how quickly inflation falls back and unemployment staying low.
- There's also the lesser known impact of how homeowners will cope with rising mortgage repayments with two million households looking to remortgage fixed rates in 2023.

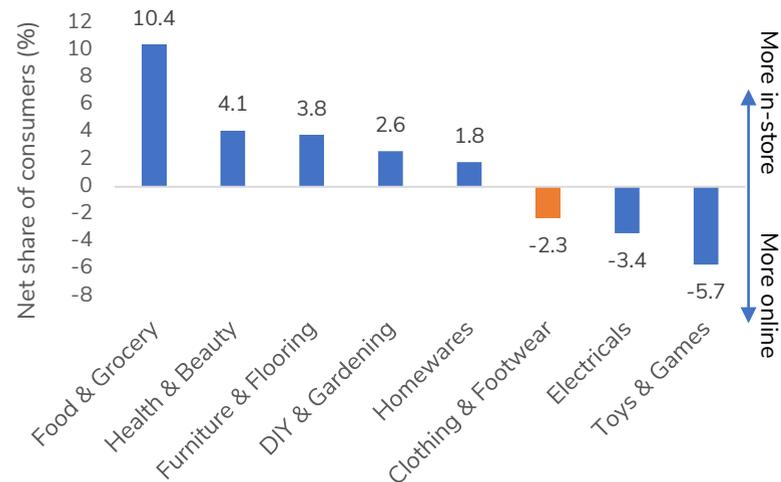
Spending remains cautious despite improved economic outlook Comparison of forecast GDP growth



Source: Bank of England, Retail Economics analysis

Consumers intend to shop more online within apparel

Q. Thinking about your shopping habits throughout 2023, do you think the proportion you will spend in-store or online will change?



Source: Retail Economics. Note: Net balance = more often minus less often.

Clothing & Footwear Average Weekly Sales

£865m

Average weekly spend on Clothing & Footwear in the UK in March (Retail Economics)

Clothing & Footwear Retail Prices

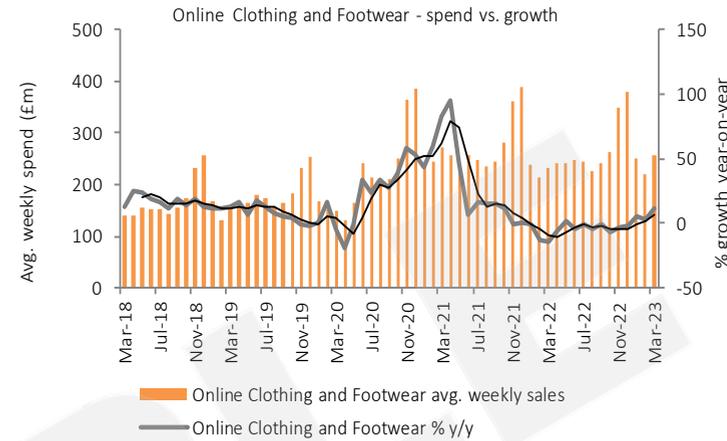
7.2%

Prices at Clothing & Footwear stores increased 7.2% YoY in March (ONS)

Apparel retailers have so far taken a cautious approach to predicting a recovery in spending in 2023 despite a number of positive results in recent months.

Online Clothing & Footwear – Office for National Statistics – March 2023

- Online Clothing & Footwear sales growth rose by 11.1% YoY in March against a weak performance a year ago (-14.5%).
- This was the strongest performance since October 2021 when sales rose 11.7%.
- The category benefitted from a resurgence in weddings, events and a gradual return to offices among workers. Outerwear was also popular due to the unseasonably wet weather during the month which was said to have hampered the performance of seasonal lines.
- Within Footwear, formal shoes and sandals saw robust demand.
- Average weekly spend for Online Clothing & Footwear stood at £258m in March, up on the £232m spent in the same month a year earlier.
- Online sales accounted for 27.1% of total Clothing & Footwear retail sales in March, broadly in line with the 27.2% proportion a year ago.



Source: ONS, Retail Economics

Online Clothing and Footwear	Annual % growth	Avg. weekly spend (£m)
Oct-22	-6.9%	£262
Nov-22	-3.3%	£349
Dec-22	-2.4%	£379
Jan-23	5.0%	£250
Feb-23	2.7%	£220
Mar-23	11.1%	£258

Source: ONS: Retail Sales Index – value, non-seasonally adjusted
*Period aligned to ONS trading calendar 26 February – 01 April 2023

Online Clothing & Footwear

11.1%

Online Clothing & Footwear sales rose 11.1% YoY in March

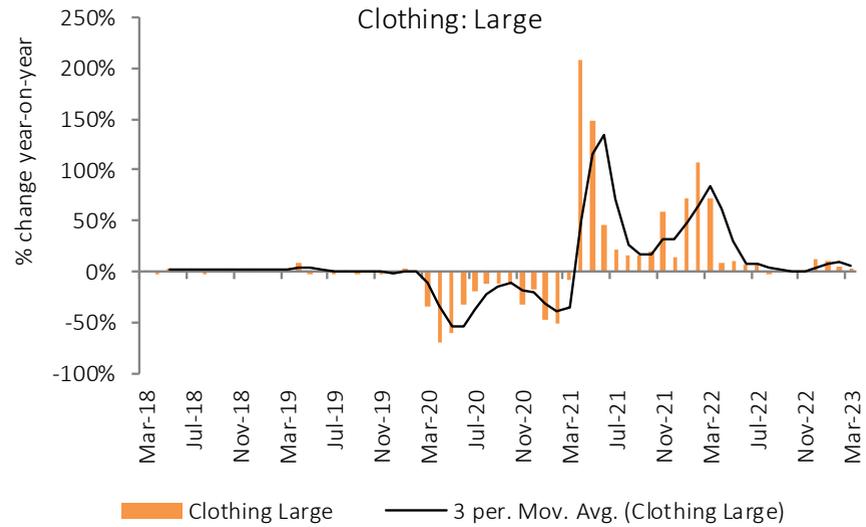
Average Weekly Spend

£258m

Average online weekly spend for Clothing & Footwear was £258m in March

This was the strongest performance since October 2021 when sales rose 11.7%.

By Size of Retailer – Office for National Statistics: March 2023



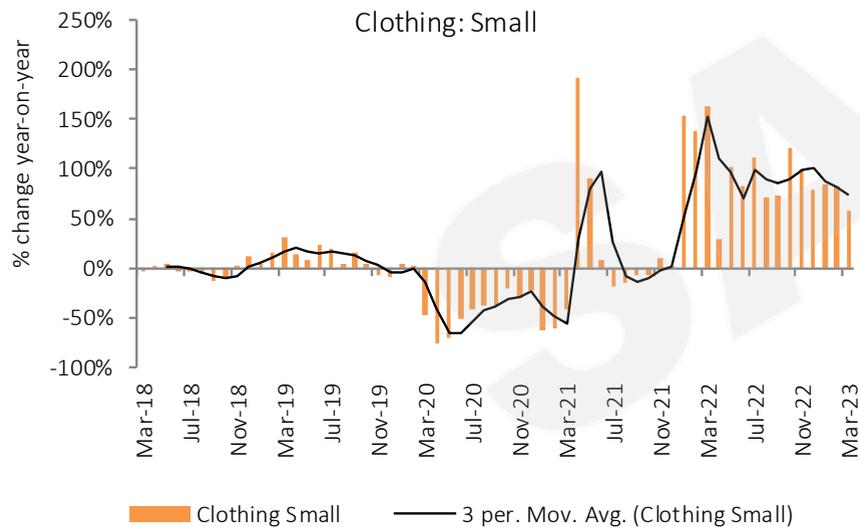
Clothing: Large Retailers	Annual % growth
Oct-22	0.7%
Nov-22	0.6%
Dec-22	12.8%
Jan-23	11.2%
Feb-23	5.1%
Mar-23	3.1%



Large Clothing Retailers

3.1%

Large clothing retailers saw sales rise 3.1% YoY in March (ONS)



Clothing: Small Retailers	Annual % growth
Oct-22	121.2%
Nov-22	99.7%
Dec-22	79.4%
Jan-23	83.7%
Feb-23	81.7%
Mar-23	58.0%



Small Clothing Retailers

58.0%

Small clothing retailers saw sales step up 58.0% YoY in March (ONS)

Source: ONS: Retail Sales Index – value, non-seasonally adjusted
 *Period aligned to ONS trading calendar 26 February – 01 April 2023

Clothing Outlook

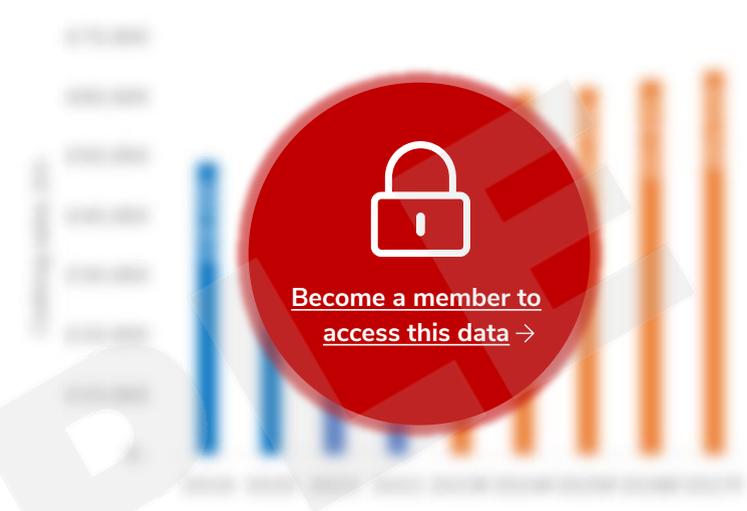
- Retail Economics forecasts Clothing sales to record slower growth of X.X% YoY in 2023, with total sales hitting close to £XX.Xbn.
- Fashion retail bounced back over 2022, experiencing impressive double-digit growth (19.1%) as consumers refreshed wardrobes for post-lockdown holidays and social events.
- The year ahead will be more challenging for the sector as consumers reduce discretionary spending to offset rising living costs.
- The projected growth for 2023 (X.X%) reflects high inflation, which will lift Clothing sales in value terms, but result in falling volumes as consumers purchase fewer items.
- Many consumers will cut back on social occasions for which they may have previously bought a new outfit, further denting demand.
- A polarised market will emerge, as value retailers gain from shoppers trading down and prioritising essential clothing spend.
- Luxury brands are also better positioned in an inflationary environment due to strong pricing power and a more affluent customer base which continues to travel and spend.
- Mid-market players face the greatest challenges as they typically do not have a differentiated proposition, their digital offer lags the competition and they remain heavily weighted towards physical, leaving them over exposed to rising operating costs.
- For those with strong balance sheets, there will be opportunities to invest to gain market share and acquisition opportunities will arise as trading conditions become more difficult.
- Retail Economics forecasts Online Clothing sales to return to growth in 2023, rising X.X% YoY, following a decline of 4.5% in 2022.
- Retail Economics forecasts total Clothing sales to rise by a CAGR of X.X% over 2023-2027, reaching total annual sales of £XX.Xbn by the end of this period.

Retail Economics Clothing Forecasts



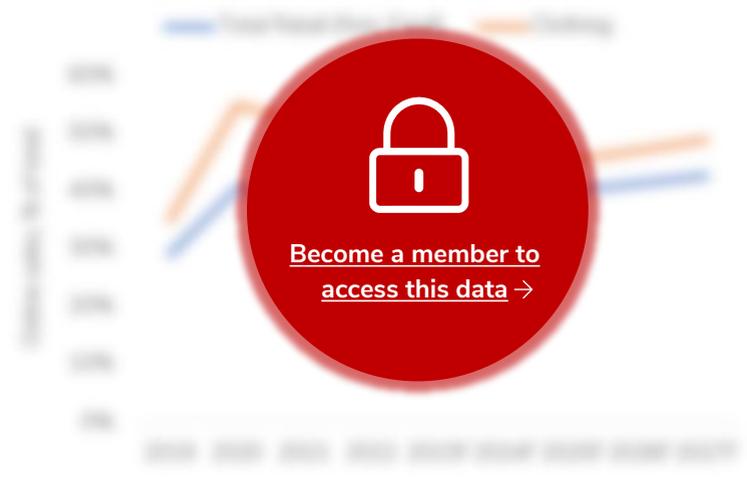
Forecasts updated quarterly. Last update: February 2023

Clothing sales forecast to hit £XX billion in 2023



Source: Retail Economics. F = forecast.

Online penetration flat in 2023 as shoppers find value in-store



Source: Retail Economics. F = forecast.

Clothing 2023 Forecast

X.X%

Retail Economics forecasts total Clothing sales to rise by X.X% YoY in 2023

Online Clothing 2023 Forecast

X.X%

Retail Economics forecasts Online Clothing sales to grow by X.X% YoY in 2023

A polarised fashion market is likely to emerge, with value retailers set to gain from shoppers trading down and prioritising essential clothing spend.

Latest developments

Acquisitions, mergers and partnerships

- **Inditex's** sale of its Zara business in Russia to UAE-based Daher Group was approved by the Russian government. The sale includes the company's 245 Zara stores and the company's trading platforms.

Financial results

- **Primark** recorded a 10% rise in like-for-like sales YoY in the six months to 4 March, despite passing on a 7% price rise to consumers.
- **LVMH** recorded revenue of £18.5bn in its first quarter, 17% higher than the same period last year. The retail group reported an 18% rise in revenue for its fashion and leather goods business group during the period, as well as an 11% increase in revenue for the Christian Dior brand.
- **Quiz clothing** saw revenue increase 17% to £91.7m in the year to 31 March. In-store sales increased 23% YoY while online sales increased 12% in the same period. International sales increased 10% YoY.
- **Sosandar** recorded a 72% increase in sales to £21m in the first half of its financial year, with growth evenly split between the retailer's own website and partner companies. The retailer further reported a profit of at least £1.6m in the year to 31 March, up from a loss of £600,000 in the previous year.

- **Next** recorded a 5.7% increase in pre-tax profits to £870m for the year ending January 2023, £10m above its previous guidance. Total trading sales increased 8.4% to £5.15bn, while online sales fell 2% to £3bn.
- **H&M** saw operating profit increase 57% to £56.5m in the three months to 28 February 2023, up from £35.5m. Operating margins grew to 1.3%, up from 0.9%. Net sales increased 12% to £4.8bn, with a 19% increase in sales of portfolio brands.

Store closures

- **M&Co** saw several stores close this month with the rest to follow this spring, following AK Retail Holdings' acquisition of the fashion retailer for an undisclosed sum in February. AK Retail Holdings also owns Yours Clothing, Long Tall Sally, BadRhino, and Bump It Up.

Diversity through AI

- **Levi's** is set to trial the use of AI-generated models to improve the diversity of models that shoppers come across. The retailer stated that the AI models will "supplement" human models rather than replacing them and has partnered with technology startup Lalaland to create the models, adding a "greater mix of sizes and body types, ages and skin colours".

Market expansion

- **John Lewis** aims to increase its presence in the children's clothing market by introducing an expanded collection featuring debut ranges from its new fashion director Queralt Ferrer. John Lewis currently holds a 16% market share in nursery clothing, but is less dominant in older age groups.

Staff changes

- **PrettyLittleThing** founder and chief executive Umar Kamani is stepping down after 12 years at the business. Kamani co-founded the company with his brother Adam in 2012 and cited his desire to pursue new challenges and goals, and to build new brands as reasons for his departure.
- **N Brown** appointed former Hobbs chief executive Meg Lustman as a non-executive director, responsible for chairing the group's remuneration committee.
- Several **New Look** department leaders have departed as the retailer cuts head office staff. They include Mark Hopkins (head of menswear, boyswear, global partnerships, brands and concessions), Michele Lockwood (head of performance marketing and CRM), Victoria Harris (head of international business development) and Claire Ralphson-Cook (head of customer market insight).

Total Clothing Market



Retail Economics forecasts Clothing sales to reach almost £XX.Xbn in 2023

Womenswear

58.2%

Womenswear accounts for 58.2% of total Clothing sales

M&Co was bought out of administration by AK Retail Holdings. The retailer was acquired for an undisclosed sum, but its physical stores will not be included in the purchase.

Footwear Outlook

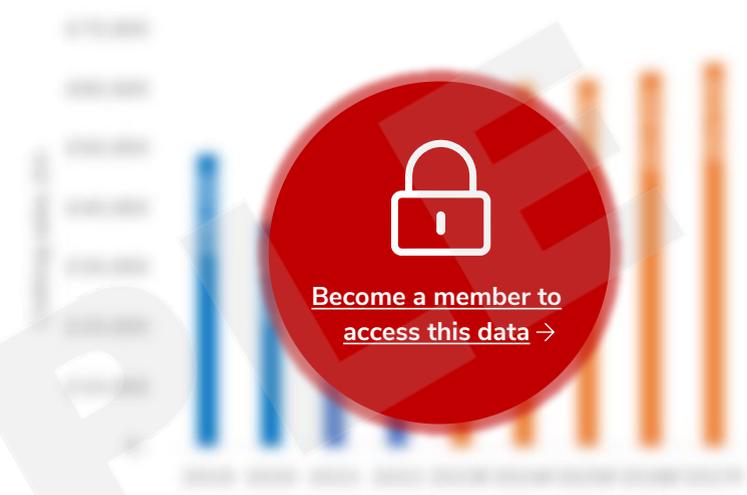
- Retail Economics forecasts Footwear sales to rise by X.X% YoY in 2023, reaching £XX.Xbn.
- Like clothing, the return of holidays, weddings and nightlife helped footwear sales surpass pre-pandemic levels over 2022. A gradual return to office working has also seen demand for formal footwear recover.
- However, inflation, rising interest rates and high energy bills are now putting household budgets under pressure.
- Many consumers will adopt recessionary behaviours in 2023, including trading down, switching to cheaper stores, shopping second-hand, and cutting back on non-essentials.
- To entice shoppers and shift stock, some brands are resorting to more frequent and deeper discounts. But discounting, rising return rates and higher operating costs will continue to squeeze profit margins.
- The silver lining is that many clothing and footwear businesses are better prepared to respond to the current headwinds.
- The tumultuous years of the pandemic forced companies to react quickly by pivoting business models, gaining greater control over supply chains and forming new partnerships to establish a more direct and meaningful relationship with customers.
- Direct to consumer (DTC) channels are increasingly prevalent. Nike, Adidas and others are implementing clear strategies to increase their market share in this way.
- Online is projected to account for XX% of total Footwear sales in 2023, up from 43% in 2022.
- Over a five-year horizon, Retail Economics forecasts Footwear sales to grow by a CAGR of X.X% (2023-2027), reaching annual sales just over £XX.Xbn by the end of this period.

Retail Economics Footwear Forecasts



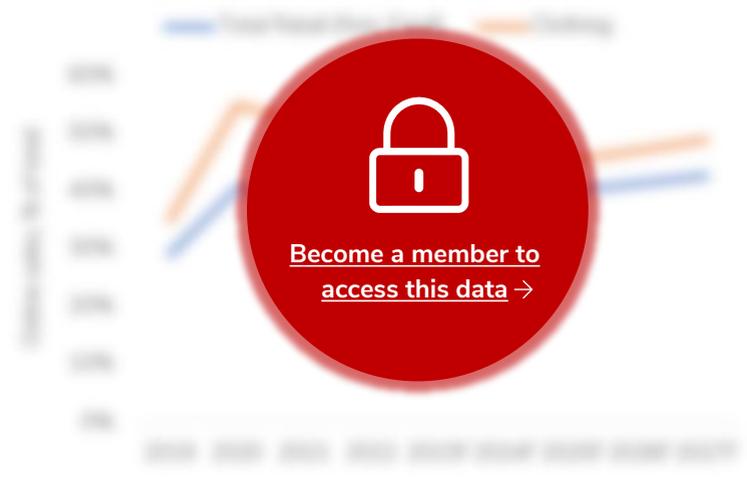
Forecasts updated quarterly. Last update: February 2023

Inflation to lift Footwear Sales over £XX billion in 2023



Source: Retail Economics. F = forecast.

Online to account for XX% of Footwear sales in 2023



Source: Retail Economics. F = forecast.

Footwear 2023 Forecast

X.X%

Retail Economics forecasts total Footwear sales to rise by X.X% YoY in 2023

Online Footwear 2023 Forecast

X.X%

Retail Economics forecasts Online Footwear sales to grow by X.X% YoY in 2023

Direct to consumer (DTC) channels are increasingly prevalent. Nike, Adidas and others are implementing clear strategies to increase their market share in this way.

Latest developments

Financial results

- **Dr Martens** warns of lower profits for 2023 due to high costs from ongoing issues with its LA distribution centre. Expected EBITDA is now £245m, lower than previous estimate.

Store opening

- **Footasylum** plans to expand its UK presence with new and upsized stores. A 6,000 sq ft store is planned for Atria Watford shopping centre, bringing Footasylum's total store count to 60. A "high-profile site" in central London is also being planned, with more store locations to be announced.

Staff changes

- **Clarks** managing director of the UK, Ireland and MEA Joe Ulloa has stepped down, with chief executive Jonathan Ram heading up the UK and Ireland team until a successor is found.
- **Nike** saw a 14% YoY increase in revenue to £10.1bn in the third quarter ending 28 February 2023. Wholesale revenues increased 12%. The retailer reported a 17% increase in Nike Direct sales to £4.3bn and a 20% increase in Nike Brand Digital sales.
- **Adidas** recorded a gross profit of £9.45bn in the year to 31 December 2022, down 1% from the previous year. The retailer's EBITDA fell to £1.6bn in the period, down 39% from the previous year, while operating profits plummeted 66% to £596.32m. However, net sales increased 6% YoY to £20bn.

Funding expansion

- **Dune** appointed KPMG to find new investors as it seeks to expand. The company plans to open 25 new UK stores in three years and invest in its digital capabilities. Dune's turnover for the year to January 2023 was £139m with EBITDA of £10.1m.

Acquisitions, mergers and partnerships

- **Clarks** have teamed up with Zara for a new collaboration that will reboot and update some of its classic footwear designs, including the Wallabee and Desert Boot. The ranges will be exclusively available from selected Zara stores and on its website

Pricing and loyalty

- **Deichmann** launched its latest Price Promise campaign with an additional exclusive offer of 'Buy One, Get One Half Price' on Fila and Skechers styles launching on March 27th. Its Price Promise allows customers to price match or refund the difference plus gives the customer an additional £1 back, should any identical footwear be found cheaper at another UK retailer

Total Footwear Market



Retail Economics forecasts total Footwear sales to reach £XX.Xbn in 2023

Women's Footwear

45%

Women's footwear accounts for 45% of total Footwear sales

Footasylum plans to expand its UK presence with new and upsized stores



Most consumers (64%) are Omnichannel shoppers when buying apparel, regularly switching between online and in-store.

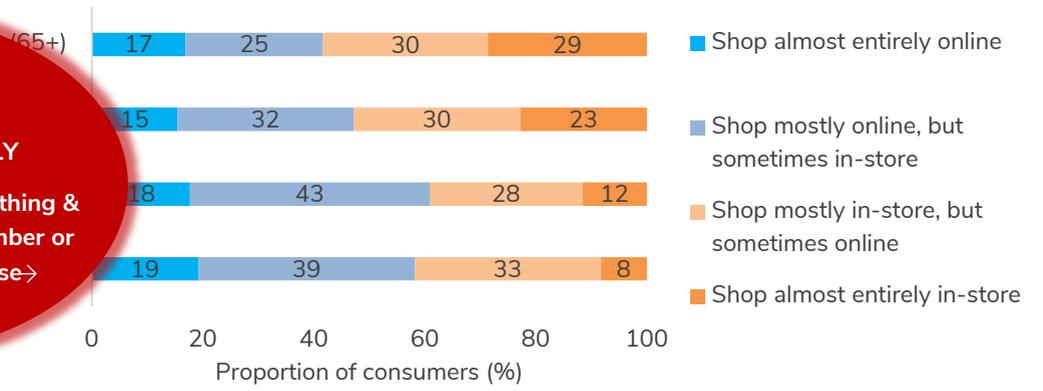
UK Omnichannel Retail 2023
Understanding consumer segmentation for in-store & online market trends

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Age: Millennials & Gen Z are online-first, Gen X & Boomers are store-first

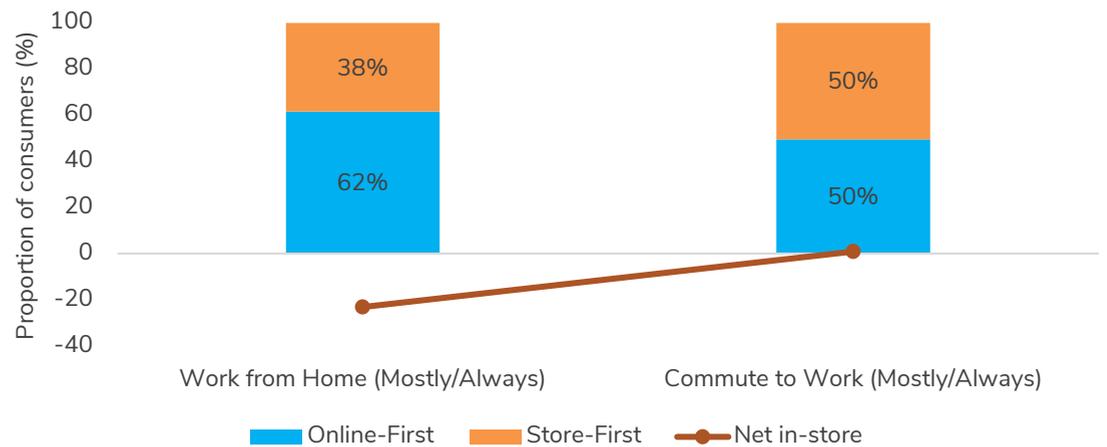
EXEMPLARY DATA ONLY
Access the actual data for Clothing & Footwear by becoming a member or making a one-off purchase →



Income: Least affluent shop more in-store, Most affluent shop more online



Work location: Even split between online and physical channels for commuters



Source: Retail Economics. N=2000. Net in-store = % of consumers that shop more in-store minus % that shop more online

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We're trusted by world class corporations...

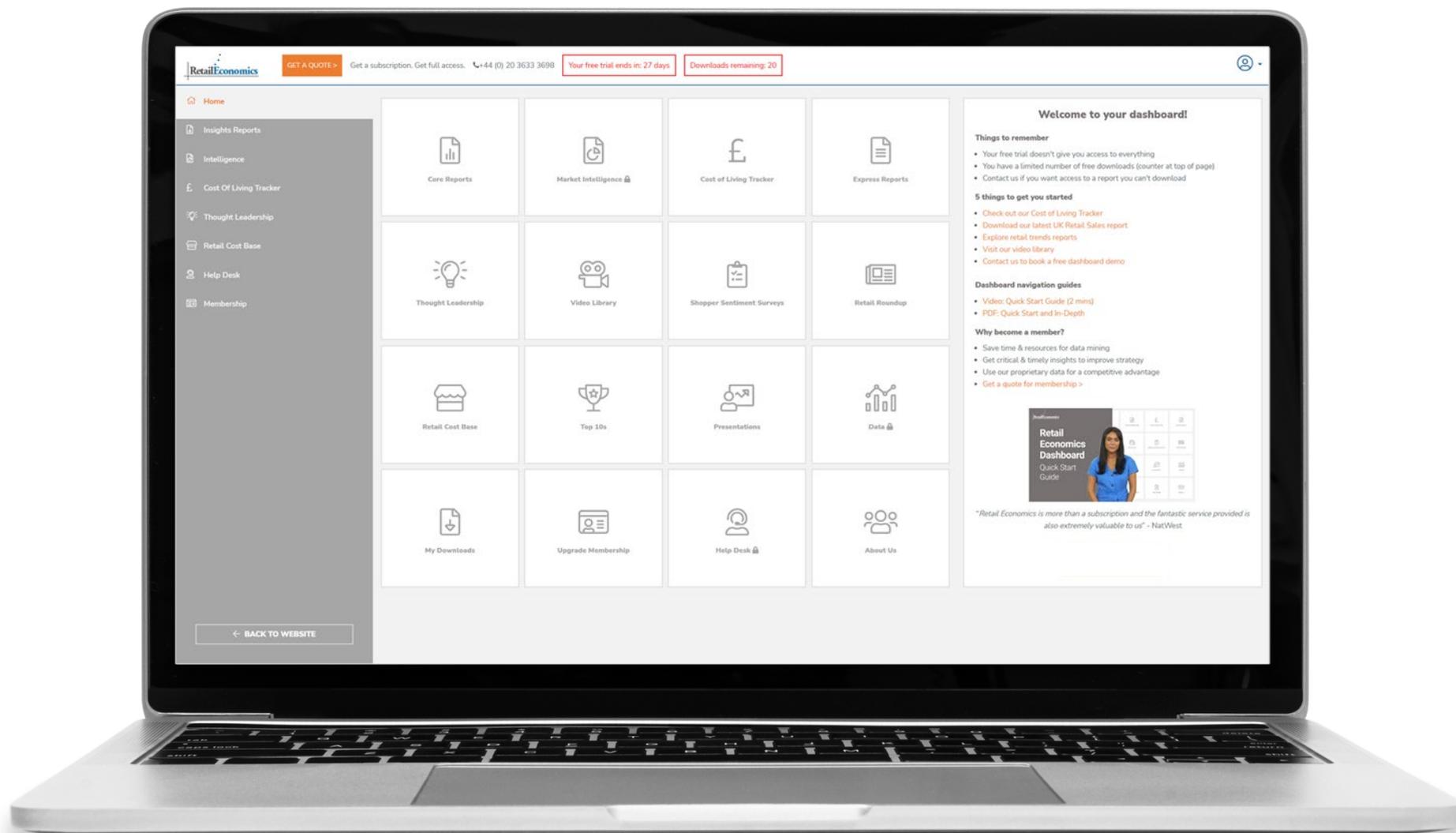
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Analysis by 5 key metrics: Market size, in-store spend, online spend, online penetration, spend per capita

Services



Membership →

Your complete retail intelligence service: tailored to give you powerful insights



Thought Leadership Research →

Publish co-branded thought leadership white papers. Be seen as an authority in your field. Get in the media, boost your brand awareness and profile



CEO Presentations →

Get the personal touch and interact face-to-face with the Retail Economics CEO (LinkedIn Top Voice, Rethink Retail Top Retail Influencer 2023).



Media, PR & Comms →

Maximise impact and media traction for your projects and campaigns. Tap into our extensive media and industry networks



Data & Benchmarking →

We provide bespoke proprietary data and benchmarking services allowing you to accurately measure and monitor performances



Economic modelling →

Better understand how your key industry variables affect your organisation: demography, socio-economic profiles, regional, sector, policy, industry and skills etc.



Advisory & Business planning →

Accelerate and grow your business with intelligent planning, forecasting and risk management using our business advisory service

About

Retail Economics is an independent economics consultancy focusing on the retail and consumer industry. Our membership service empowers you with a deeper understanding of the key economic drivers within the UK retail industry, giving you a competitive edge needed to make critical business and investment decisions.

+44 (0)20 3633 3698

www.retaileconomics.co.uk

amy.yates@retaileconomics.co.uk

[@retaileconomics](https://twitter.com/retaileconomics)

linkedin.com/company/retail-economics

Retail Economics
4th Floor
86-90 Paul Street
London
EC2A 4NE

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