

Black Friday and Cyber Monday have come and gone, but sales continue

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Perhaps you never got around to shopping on Black Friday, and when Cyber Monday blew in, you had other things on your mind.

Is it too late to shop? No. Have the discounts disappeared? Not necessarily.

Could they get even better? Sorry, shoppers, but that's unlikely.

The doorbusters, those handful of items that bring the masses to [retail stores](#) on Thanksgiving and Black Friday, are long gone, but the discounts continue, just not as loudly as last week. Many retailers, most notably Amazon, have turned Cyber Monday into "Deals Week" and will keep the discounts coming.

But "once this week is over, you'll see prices creep back up through Christmas," says Taylor Schreiner, director of Adobe Digital Insights. "Products will be on sale, but the discounts won't be as great."

Retailers' push to kick off the season with a bang worked out to their advantage. Adobe says some \$7.9 billion was spent online for Cyber Monday, making it the biggest online sales day ever. All told, some \$24.2 billion was spent online over the five day sales holiday, beginning on Thanksgiving, says Adobe.

Overall, [retail sales](#) for this season, not counting cars, gas and restaurants, are expected to rise between 4.3 percent and 4.8 percent to roughly between \$717 billion and \$720 billion, according to The National Retail Federation.

Now that the first wave of holidays is behind us, another wrinkle to consider: Shoppers need to be concerned about the availability of stock.

"The later you wait, the bigger chances are that you could be missing out," adds Schreiner.

A retail forecast by Adobe predicts the most popular sporting goods will be out of stock by Nov. 29, hot toys gone by Nov. 30 and jewelry by Dec. 24.

Instead of doorbuster prices, look for more free-shipping offers, and 10 percent to 20 percent [discount](#) promotions in the coming weeks, says Schreiner. "There will be constant e-mails, texts, app alerts, everything you can think of to get you to shop," he says, all leading to a new magic day: Saturday, Dec. 22.

This will be the last day to buy and have products shipped out to arrive by Monday—Christmas Eve, Dec. 24.

According to eMarketer, overall shopping will top \$1 trillion for the first time this holiday season, helped along by a strong economy and a longer 32-day period than in years past.

And once Christmas has come and gone, what

then? More big discounts to look forward to?

Sorry procrastinators, but that's unlikely, says Schreiner, because with the strong economy, retailers will end up selling most of their inventory before Christmas and won't have to slash prices to move them afterwards.

Samantha Matt, the audience director for USA TODAY affiliate Reviewed.com, says savvy shoppers should look for the products they want, put them in their shopping cart and communicate with the merchant in hopes of getting a better price.

"Sign up for their e-mails, their newsletter, and you're usually rewarded with discount offers," she says.

Just place the order sooner than later, so you don't miss out on the product.

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