

9 Tips to Curb Online Shopping Addiction

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Online shopping was already taking off before the pandemic but now, its popularity has inevitably skyrocketed. Getting hooked to online shopping is even easier than regular shopping. Anything you want is just a click away and the search bar saves you the countless hours you would have spent browsing at the mall.

There's nothing wrong with indulging yourself occasionally, but if you always find yourself feeling guilty afterwards, it might be time to rethink your hobby. Here is what you can do.

1. Soul searching

Compulsive habits usually have some underlying reasons. Try to find a pattern in your past behaviour. Some people shop as a way of fighting boredom, some get a temporary high after making a purchase, some just do it because it's plain fun. Whatever the cause is, identifying these triggers will help you be self-aware on your journey to be financially responsible.

2. Get a parent/friend involved

If there's anyone who can convince you that you don't really need a Pikachu LED desk lamp, it's your mom. Or maybe a very strict friend. Going over your potential purchases with someone else might provide some insight on whether you really need an item or not.

3. Limit the amount of easily available cash

Aside from some emergency cash, try to keep your money where it's not easily accessible to you. It could be a savings account or with a parent. That way, even if you get the urge to binge-shop, you won't have the resources to pull it off.

4. Target the source

Both iOS and Android devices have specific settings to stop the targeted advertisements that pop up in our social media. If you use

a laptop, try deleting cookies to prevent seeing personalised ads. It might also be time to leave a Facebook shopping group or two.

5. Make a budget

It's important to be realistic here. There's no point in depriving yourself completely. Effective financial management always starts with a good budget. Keep a specific amount of "fun money" for shopping each month. Once it's gone, it's gone. Wait until the next month to buy something from your wishlist.

6. Maintain a log

Keep a list of all the things you buy, along with their prices. If maintaining a diary is too much of a hassle, there are budgeting apps like Mint or Wally to keep track of expenses. These personal finance tools will not only help with tracking purchases, but also present feedback on your spending.

7. Don't impulse-buy

That's it. That's the tip. But we'll reiterate. Read on.

8. "SALE! BUY IN THE NEXT 3 DAYS AND GET 40% OFF"

These tactics are usually employed to prey on people's impulsiveness. Take at least two days to assess if the item is worth it. This waiting period alone will make you realise you were about to make a frivolous purchase just to get free shipping.

9. Do a shop-free challenge

Going into full cold turkey mode rarely works. Building a habit is more dependable in the long run. Try to go 15 days without making an unnecessary purchase, and then gradually increase that number, until the tendency to overspend abates.

Developing these habits might be painful in the short term, but they will definitely transform you into a financially responsible adult in the future.

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DESIGN: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

Here's Why You Should Own a Punching Bag



AMRIN TASNIM RAFA

Next time you feel a burst of motivation where you're convinced that a certain piece of exercise equipment is all you need to turn your life around, buy a punching bag. It's versatile, and once you lose motivation to work out after about a week or so, a world of possibilities opens up.

Stress Relief

I know. Pretty obvious, right? You punch it over and over and let out whatever pent-up emotion you had building up inside. However, some days you just don't want to move. The punching bag is your buddy now, and arguably a better listener than your other friends. As you rant, your buddy Punchie will listen supportively and never divert the topic toward itself. It won't judge you for complaining/being upset about something seemingly minor, nor will you feel guilty for troubling it with your silly problems.

Snack Sanctuary

If you're tired of your drawers eating your snacks as your siblings claim they didn't know you even had them, you're in luck. Most punching bags come with a zipper. Open it, take a little of the filling out, and stuff your snacks inside before zipping it back up. I guarantee you, Punchie will never let you down and eat your snacks. Or maybe when you can't find a big enough container for the popcorn you intend to eat while binge-watching all night, you could stuff the whole punching bag with popcorn and eat out of it. However, I personally haven't tried this one out yet, for fear that Punchie might never be the same again.

Guardian Angel

The looming, ominous figure in your room has no purpose in mind but your protection. Feel free to feel invincible. It's over for the demons under your bed; you no longer need to run to your bed after switching the lights off for the night. Now that you have company, you can watch horror movies at night and still be able to sleep. Strong and sturdy Punchie will be right there, ready for a fight in the event that the demons in the movie select you as their next victim. This you know they will.

Keeping Up Appearances

Are you tired of feeling left out as all your friends become fitness gurus? Fret not, for Punchie is here to save you. For every mirror selfie your gym bro friend posts from, well, the gym, post two yourself with your punching bag clearly visible in the background. Whenever your friends come over, make sure Punchie is present where they'll see it, and leave a few boxing gloves lying around nearby. Do everything you can to bring up your commitment to boxing training at least once in every conversation you engage in. And congratulations, you're officially a part of the trendy fitness community.

If you're still not convinced, a punching bag is a deeply subjective experience. At the end of the day, there is much to learn from a punching bag, such as when life hits hard, you don't put up with it and hit back harder.

Amrin Tasnim Rafa is always confused, it's literally her dominant personality trait. She challenges you to find something she won't think is confusing. Try your luck at amrinrafa@gmail.com