

20 Amazing Benefits of Thrift Shopping You Probably Never Expected

Juliana Weiss-Roessler

You may remember checking thrift shops for cheap furniture to outfit your first apartment, or you may be someone who checks thrift stores around Halloween to assemble the perfect costume. However, thrift and consignment shops have a lot of benefits that extend far beyond that once or twice-yearly opportunistic trip to the local Goodwill.

Read on to learn about some of the benefits of thrift shopping that you may not have considered. Hopefully at least a few of those benefits will encourage you to forego your trip to a big department store and check out a secondhand shop instead.

1. You may discover designer products at a fraction of the price.

Blogger [Angie Tarantino](#) writes that her first great experience thrift shopping as a teenager was finding a designer dress that would normally sell for about \$80 for only \$5 at a local thrift store. I've bought several J. Crew shirts—which would normally retail between \$50-\$90—for about \$0.50 at a pay-by-the-pound thrift store. If you dig through the racks, you might be surprised by the quality brands you can purchase at a steep discount.

2. You'll develop a unique wardrobe.

Purchase new summer looks from Macy's or Nordstrom and you're bound to run into other people wearing the same outfits. Thrift shops have a much more diverse assortment of clothing, meaning you're less likely to find yourself wearing the same top or sweater as a friend or co-worker.

3. Thrift shops have a constantly changing selection.

Because thrift stores receive donations, you can expect to see completely different products at your local thrift store from one week to the next.

4. You'll get to take a trip down memory lane.

Remember when the Backstreet Boys released their music videos on VHS, or when Care Bears were all the rage? When you visit a thrift store, you'll find all kinds of pop culture mementos to bring back fond memories.

5. You can instill good spending habits in your kids.

If you have children, taking them to a thrift store is a good way to teach them how to find good products while saving money.

6. The clothes are already broken in.

Sure, you'll want to avoid those shirts with stretched out necklines and the unraveling sweaters, but in many cases, buying clothes secondhand is advantageous because items are prewashed and preshrunk. That means if something fits in the store, you don't have to worry about losing that fit when you throw it in the laundry.

7. Thrift shopping is like going on a (slightly competitive) treasure hunt.

If you get bored shopping for clothes at department stores or boutiques where items are neatly laid out and clearly labeled, you may be a natural thrift shopper. Shopping secondhand lets you dig through the racks for your own personal treasures, and a little friendly competition with other serious thrifters adds to the excitement.

8. Thrift stores let you explore diverse styles.

You may not like every item of clothing or piece of furniture you find at your local thrift store, but you can at least have fun looking at ostentatious, retro, or just plain bizarre merchandise.

9. You can find genuine vintage items.

Fashion is cyclical, and designers often try to mimic the looks of different decades. When you shop at thrift stores, you can often find clothing that was actually made in the decade that's coming back into style.

10. You may find something that pays off when Antiques Roadshow comes to town.

Every now and then, you'll hear about a thrift shopper who stumbled across a true treasure, such as [this North Carolina woman](#) who spent \$10 on an abstract painting that is valued at \$15,000-\$20,000.

11. You can furnish your first home on a tight budget.

When you first graduate from college or move out of your parent's home, you may not have a huge budget to buy all the basic furniture, kitchenware, and appliances you need. Most thrift stores have a sizeable furniture section with steep discounts on secondhand items, allowing you to outfit your first home without getting into financial trouble.

12. Thrift shopping sets you up for some great DIY projects.

Whether you want to [transform T-shirts into tank tops](#), [re-cover a dining room chair](#), or anything in between, you can find the basic materials for your DIY projects at a local thrift store.

13. Thrift stores allow you to save money on kids' clothes.

Kids grow quickly, so why would you want to spend \$25 on a new shirt or \$40 on a new pair of jeans when your son or daughter is going to outgrow them in a year or less?

14. You can find items that are no longer made.

Whether you're looking for an out-of-print book or an iconic T-shirt that was only made in the 80s, thrift shops are often your best bet to find items that are no longer in production.

15. You can find unique gifts.

If you have friends or family members who appreciate unique, quirky thrift store finds, you can roam your local thrift shop in search of a great holiday or white elephant gift.

16. Thrift stores are great for intergenerational shopping trips.

Your parents might not be too enthused about being dragged to Anthropologie, and your kids might not want to go on that furniture shopping trip to IKEA, but when you go to a thrift store, there's something for every generation.

17. You don't have to face the mall.

Sure, there are some people who genuinely enjoy going to the mall, but many others dread the crowds, high prices, and sterile environment. If you're in the latter group, you should consider doing the bulk of your shopping at thrift stores.

18. Thrift shopping is environmentally friendly.

Thrift shopping is a great way to recycle; you can donate clothes you no longer wear and buy more clothes, eliminating waste in the process.

19. Your purchases may go towards a charity.

Many thrift stores are non-profits that [partner with local charities](#), and when you make a purchase, part of what you spend goes to a good cause.

20. You can turn thrifting into a business.

If you're someone with an eye for good deals, you can purchase high-quality items at a thrift or consignment shop and sell them for a higher price using an [online marketplace](#). Plenty of online shoppers are interested in purchasing vintage clothes or unique décor items that a savvy buyer has sourced from a thrift shop.