

# BBC Learning English

## 6 Minute English

### *Shopping Centres*



NB: This is not a word for word transcript

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**Dan:** Hello, I'm Dan.

**Rob:** And I'm Rob.

**Dan:** And this is 6 Minute English from the BBC. Last week Alice and I were talking about shopping malls or shopping centres – the large buildings which contain lots of shops and restaurants. And this week Rob and I are talking about shopping centres! So Rob, do you like shopping?

**Rob:** I like quick shopping. I like going in, finding what I want and coming out again.

**Dan:** You don't like hanging around and seeing the shopping centre?

**Rob:** No, I don't. Get out quick.

**Dan:** Well, we spoke to people in shopping centres in London about what they liked about shopping centres. But before we hear from them Rob, I have this week's question for you. The Bullring in Birmingham is the UK's busiest shopping centre, but how many people, on average, visit the Bullring each year? Is it:

- a) 27 million
- b) 37 million
- c) 47 million

**Rob:** I know shopping is very popular so I'll go for 47 million.

**Dan:** OK, we'll see if you're right at the end of the programme. Now there are a lot of shopping centres in the UK, and we went to the Canary Wharf Shopping

Complex in East London to talk to some of the shoppers about what they like or dislike about shopping centres. One man compares the experiences of shopping centres with shopping at boutiques on a local **high street**.

**Rob:** The high street is the main shopping street in a town or area; in America they call it '**main street**'. And a **boutique** is a small shop, which usually specialises in fashionable items.

**Dan:** So let's listen to the speaker as he compares shopping in a local high street and a shopping centre; what does he say is the advantage of going to a big shopping centre?

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*I love the choice in a big shopping centre; I don't think it replaces localised shopping so a nice boutique in a local high street I think always has a place. But that said if you want a good deal, a good discount, a good sale I think you need to go to a big shopping centre really.*

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**Dan:** So the shopper there said he liked the choice of a big shopping centre. It's the place to go if you want a good deal, a good discount or a good sale.

**Rob:** A **discount** is a reduced price – it's when something costs less than normal. A **good deal** means the same – it's when you buy something for a good price.

**Dan:** We have a clip here from another shopper describing shopping centres in the UK. She says they're quite **vast** and open and have a massive variety of shops.

**Rob:** Both **vast** and massive mean very large. So there's a massive variety of shops in the shopping centres.

**Dan:** So let's listen to the clip. What types of restaurant can you find in British shopping centres?

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*Shopping centres are usually quite vast and open and full of a massive variety of shops but they're quite standard. So each shopping centre tends to have exactly the same basic shops that you come to expect. You sort of tend to get the same standard restaurants and food outlets as well in shopping centres, so either fast food or slightly more upmarket restaurants.*

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**Dan:** She says you get the same standard restaurants in a British shopping centre: either **fast food** or more **upmarket** restaurants.

**Rob:** **Fast food** is what we call anything that can be served and eaten quickly, often from restaurant chains, such as McDonalds, Burger King or Subway.

**Dan:** And what about the **upmarket** restaurants?

**Rob:** **Upmarket** means something of high quality that generally appeals to people from higher social classes. The opposite is **downmarket**.

**Dan:** Of course, not everyone likes shopping centres. Some people say they find them too **crowded**.

**Rob:** Mm, **crowded**, when there are too many people. I agree, particularly at weekends or during the holidays when there are lots of people, a lot of these shopping centres are far too crowded to shop, or walk, or even move!

**Dan:** Rob, we're almost at the end of the programme, so let's go back to today's question. The Bullring in Birmingham is the UK's busiest shopping centre, but how many people visit the Bullring, on average, every year? Is it:

- a) 27 million
- b) 37 million
- c) 47 million

**Rob:** And I said 47 million, am I right?

**Dan:** No! You are not, I am afraid. In fact the Bullring gets around 37 million visitors every year. Europe's largest shopping centre, the Westfield Shopping centre in West London, attracts around 25 million shoppers every year, and in just a few months, a *new* Westfield shopping complex is opening in East London, next to the Olympic site, which may attract even more visitors. So the Brits clearly love to shop, even in these tough economic times.

Anyway, Rob, before we go, I was wondering if you could just remind us of some of the vocabulary we've heard in today's programme.

**Rob:** OK, we had:

**Boutique**

**High street or main street**

**Discount**

**A good deal**

**Vast**

**Fast food**

**Upmarket**

**Downmarket**

**Crowded**

**Dan:** Thanks, Rob. Why don't you get in touch with us and tell us your favourite place to shop. Do you prefer the big shopping centres or the boutiques on the high street? Do you prefer upmarket venues or downmarket ones?

Are shopping centres near you too crowded? And where can you go to find the best discounts or deals?

**Rob:** We would love to know. So, let us know at [learningenglish@bbc.co.uk](mailto:learningenglish@bbc.co.uk) or leave a message on the BBC Learning English Facebook page.

**Dan:** See you next time!

**Both:** Bye!

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>Boutique</b>	Small shop that sells fashionable items
<b>High street / main street</b>	A street of a town where the most of the shops are
<b>Discount</b>	A reduction in the price
<b>A good deal</b>	Here, a good price of something
<b>Vast</b>	Extremely large
<b>Fast Food</b>	Food which is prepared and served very quickly
<b>Upmarket</b>	Things which appeal to or designed for people with higher income
<b>Downmarket</b>	Things which appeal to or designed for people with lower income
<b>Crowded</b>	Full of people or things

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