

IELTS READING- The History of the Supermarket S36GT5



IELTS READING The History of the Supermarket Reading Practice Test has 10 Questions belongs to the Business & Economy subject..

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As recently as the 1950s, most shops were specialized and did not allow people to serve themselves. Back then, it was usually women who shopped, and that would involve visiting the grocer, greengrocer, butcher, fishmonger, and bakery. At the grocer's, the customer would often hand over a handwritten list of what she needed, and the assistant would weigh out and bag up the purchases.

Questions 28-34

Look at the following statements and the list of supermarkets below.

Match each statement with the correct supermarket **A-E**.

Write the correct letter, **A-E**, in boxes 28-34 on your answer sheet

NB You may use any letter more than once.

28 Charges the most for delivery.

29 Has a store where the first non-high street supermarket was.

30 Was the first to allow customers to serve themselves.

31 Was the earliest adopter of online shopping.

32 Sold clothes before it started selling food.

33 Was reluctant to start a loyalty programme.

34 Does not have its own bank.

- A** ASDA
- B** Tesco
- C** Sainsbury's
- D** Co-Op
- E** Marks and Spencer

The first supermarket began in Memphis, Tennessee in the USA. Started by Clarence Saunders, the Piggly Wiggly is widely believed to have created the self-service concept. The brand was also responsible for important innovations, such as the use of shopping trolleys and individual price marking. The idea of helping yourself to the goods you need was popular from the start, and by the 1930s, self-service had become almost standard in the US. Supermarkets took a little longer to get going in the UK. A branch of the Co-Op in Romford, Essex tried to become self-service in 1942, but due to wartime rationing, it proved impossible. However, six years later, a different branch of the same chain in East London successfully introduced the concept, and the UK's first supermarket was born.

During the 1950s and 60s, supermarkets were still small and located on the high street. Nevertheless, they made life much easier for housewives, many of whom were starting to be employed and no longer had the time to visit 5 or 6 different shops. Shopping still had to be done every few days because just 47% of UK households had a fridge in 1967, compared with around 90% in the US. The first out-of-town supermarket was opened in 1964 near West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire, now the site of an ASDA store. With 10, 200 meter square area and 50 different departments, this was a completely new phenomenon. That first weekend, over 30,000 people and 5,000 cars visited the superstore, causing traffic jams for miles around. However, the store was criticised locally for taking trade away from high street shops.

Questions 35-40

Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C or D**.

Write the correct letter in boxes 35-40 on your answer sheet.

35 In the UK, food shopping in the 1950s:

- A** ☐ was done exclusively by women.
- B** ☐ involved going to several shops.
- C** ☐ was mainly self-service.
- D** ☐ required a shopping list.

36 The text suggests that in the UK:

- A** ☐ people disliked the self-service concept.
- B** ☐ supermarkets were popular from the start.
- C** ☐ people preferred to visit multiple shops.
- D** ☐ the war delayed the launch of supermarkets.

37 Competition between major supermarkets:

- A** ☐ is a fairly recent development.
- B** ☐ reduced after the launch of 'Clubcard'.
- C** ☐ has led to several innovations.
- D** ☐ led to greater customer loyalty.

From the advent of the supermarket era, the big names have contributed to the development of the sector. As the twentieth century progressed and turned into the twenty-first, the leading supermarkets grew increasingly competitive. In 1995, Tesco launched the hugely popular 'Clubcard', giving customers the incentive to shop only or mainly with them. At that time, Sainsbury's doubted whether loyalty cards offered value for money. When they introduced the Nectar Card in 2002, it was in collaboration with several other retailers.

The major UK supermarkets have almost all branched into fashion. Both Sainsbury's and ASDA began selling clothes in 1990. Whereas Sainsbury's has rebranded its clothing offer several times, ASDA's 'George at ASDA' clothing range, developed by George Davis in 1989 is still one of the most popular supermarket clothing brands. UK shoppers have got used to shopping for clothes alongside the weekly food shop and welcome the range of quality items at reasonable cost. Three supermarkets feature in the top ten UK clothing retailers, including Marks and Spencer, which was the only major supermarket to have begun by selling clothes and moved into food later.

All the major supermarkets now offer both home delivery and 'click and collect'. Tesco recorded the first ever online grocery shop in 1994 and launched their Tesco Direct service in 1997. A proactive approach to the emerging technology in the early 1990s gave Tesco the edge and it is still the leading supermarket for online grocery shopping. ASDA introduced the first drive-through click and collect service in 2012 and just two years later, had over 600 click and collect points across the country.

Most people now recognize the benefits of ordering their groceries online. In addition to saving time, many believe they save money as they are no longer tempted by offers which might lead to impulse buying. However, few supermarkets deliver for free. Although ASDA is one of the cheaper supermarkets, delivery slots can cost as much as £6.50, compared with a maximum of £6.00 at Sainsbury's, a slightly higher end chain. Tesco delivery is more economical at between £2.50 and £3.00, but not as good value as some of the low-end chains such as Aldi and Lidl. Some shops have minimum spends, which makes it impractical for one-person households.

Nowadays, supermarkets offer a range of financial services from credit cards to insurance for your home, car, holiday, and even pets. Marks and Spencer bank opened in 1985, while both Tesco and Sainsbury's introduced their banking services in 1997. ASDA offers travel money, credit cards, loans, and insurance, but stops short of a full banking service. Financial services are often linked to supermarkets' loyalty programmes, with customers getting better deals on car and home insurance, for example.

38 What does the text suggest about shoppers' attitudes to supermarket clothing?

- A** ☐ They now prefer it to high-street brands.
- B** ☐ They have become accustomed to it.
- C** ☐ They are frustrated by the constant rebranding.
- D** ☐ They question the quality of the products.

39 One problem with online shopping is:

- A** ☐ the groceries cost more.
- B** ☐ the choice is more limited.
- C** ☐ offers are not available.
- D** ☐ the high cost of delivery.

40 The text suggests that in the future, supermarkets:

- A** ☐ will probably not change very much.
- B** ☐ will become more competitive.
- C** ☐ will stop striving for loyalty.
- D** ☐ will find new ways to win customers.

Market research constantly highlights the fierce competition for market share between UK supermarkets. Despite the rewards schemes and aggressive advertising of the main chains, most customers do not have loyalty to any particular brand. Research shows that convenience is overwhelmingly the most important factor for customers, and few will drive past one supermarket to get to another. Supermarkets continue to discount, advertise and reward and the battle for market share looks set to intensify in the future.

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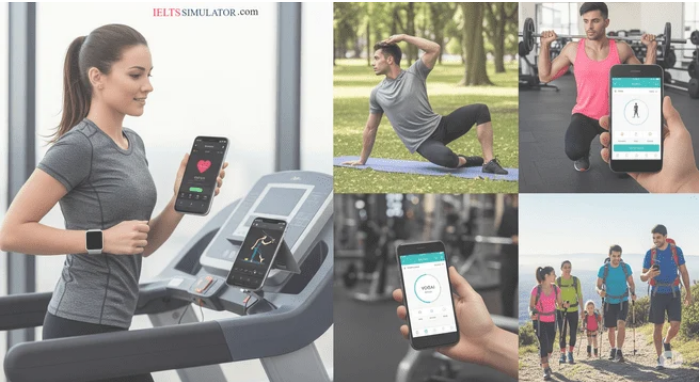
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