

UK EDITION

Festive Insights Unwrapped

A clear-eyed look at shopper sentiment, spending plans,
and how merchants can navigate the season.

2025



Festive Snapshot

The 2025 festive season is taking shape in a climate of financial strain. UK consumers are continuing to balance rising costs, economic uncertainty, and tighter savings - shaping how, when, and where they'll spend.

36%

of UK consumers feel financially stressed about festive expenses.

33%

say their stress is higher than last year (vs. 16% who feel more secure).

TOP FINANCIAL PRESSURES:

67%

cost of living

44%

increased bills or debt

35%

reduced savings

SHOPPERS ARE ADAPTING, NOT ABANDONING THIS SEASON:

46%

plan to start festive shopping early

38%

will set budgets

37%

plan to save up and spend less



Tip: Merchants who provide flexible payment options and show value can capture both the budget-conscious and the celebratory shopper.

Festive Stress Is Up, But Spending Remains Resilient.

Against an uncertain economic backdrop, shoppers are strategic about keeping the festive season special.

3 in 4  

Britons (75%) plan to cap their spend under £800.



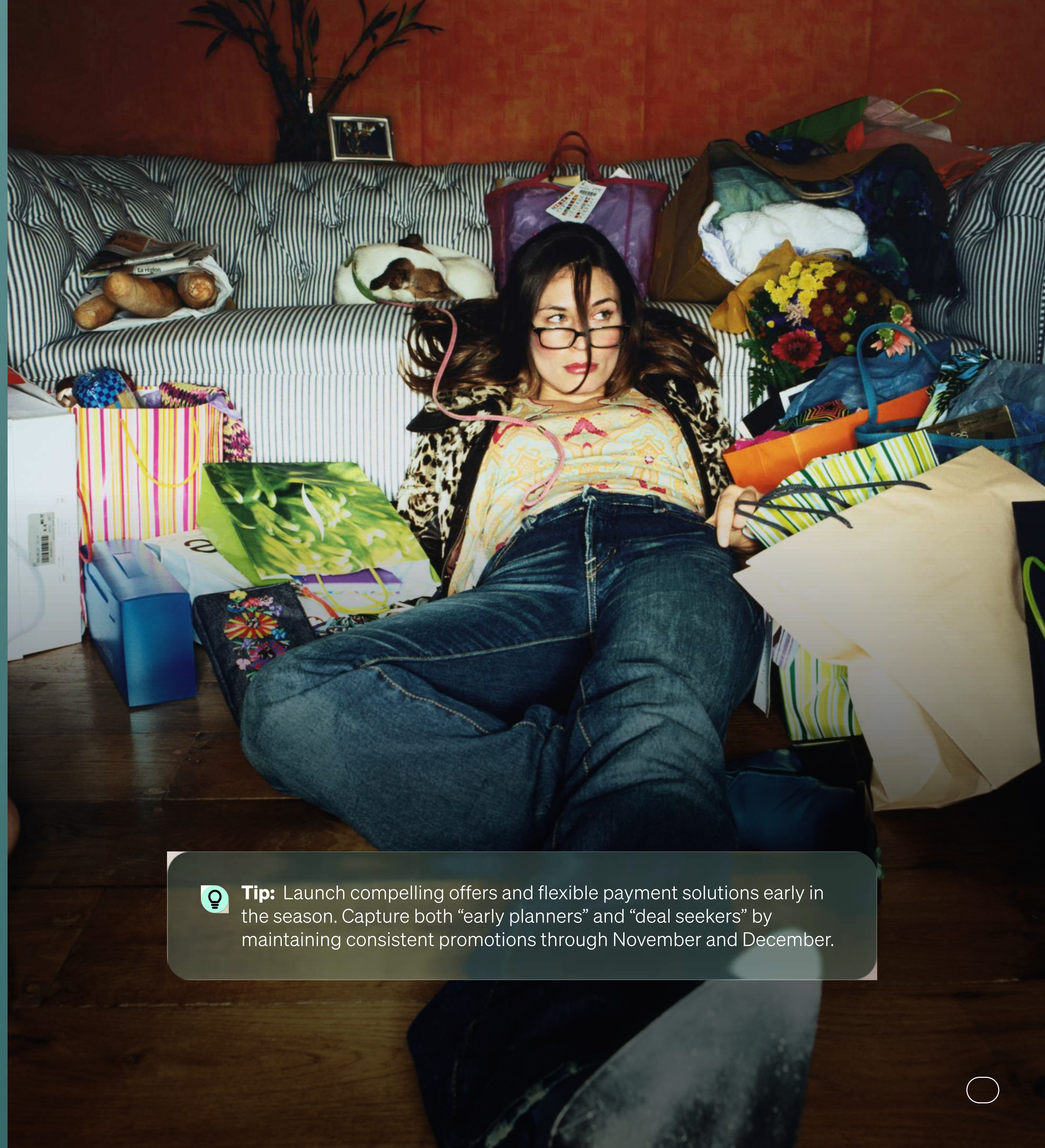
37% plan to shop mainly in September-October



will hold most shopping until November



Tip: Launch compelling offers and flexible payment solutions early in the season. Capture both “early planners” and “deal seekers” by maintaining consistent promotions through November and December.



Seasonal Shopping Channels

UK SHOPPERS ARE BLENDING ONLINE AND OFFLINE SHOPPING:

64% shop both in-store and online

exclusively online

exclusively in-store



62% apps

e-commerce marketplaces

retailer websites



Tip: Shoppers expect seamless journeys across channels. Ensure BNPL options are prominent everywhere, from app checkout to the in-store till. Highlight payment flexibility as part of your cross-channel messaging.



Popular Gift Categories & Self-Care Trends

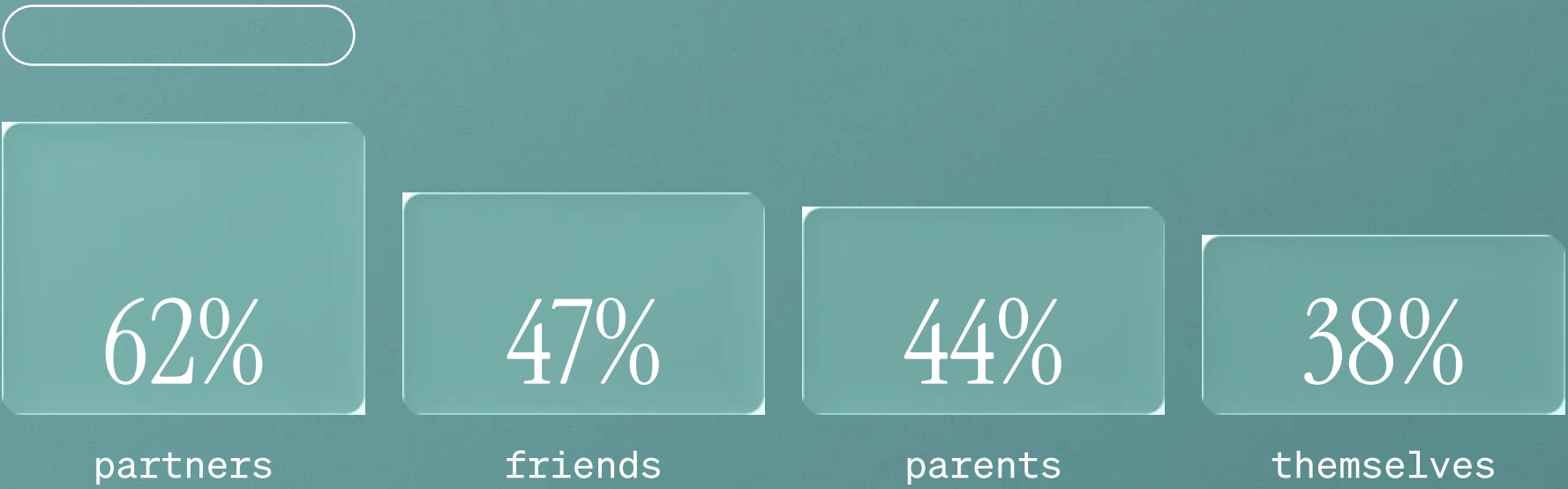
SHOPPERS ARE PRIORITISING A MIX OF NECESSITIES AND TREATS:



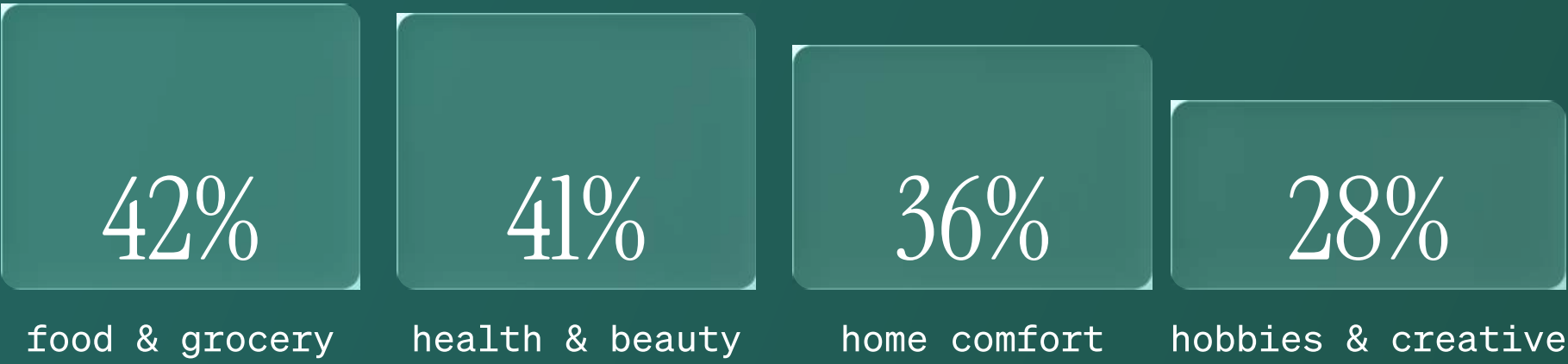
OTHER LEADING CATEGORIES:



SECONDARY CATEGORIES:



SELF-CARE IS A FESTIVE STAPLE:



KEY DRIVERS:



Tip: Position self-care products around their emotional value, such as comfort and stress relief. Framing them as part of a balanced lifestyle can resonate with customers while complementing seasonal gifting strategies.

Sales Event Shopping Behaviour

NOT EVERYONE IS WAITING FOR DISCOUNTS:

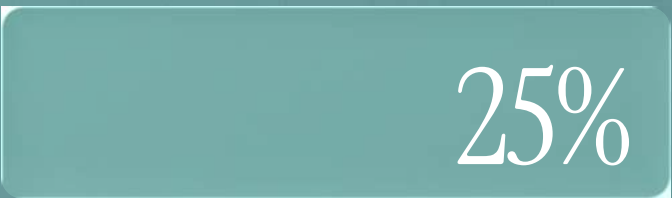
44% say they won't hold off for sales events

will time purchases for sales



clothing & shoes

39%



electronics

25%



nearly half (49%) expect 20–30% off during major events.

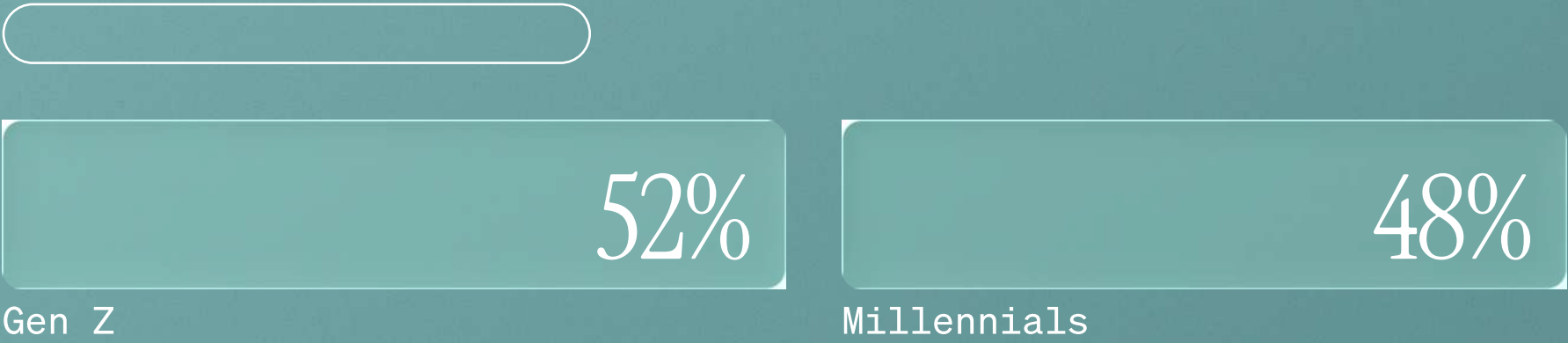


Tip: Capture sales-driven shoppers with targeted promotions, but don't overlook those buying outside of sales events. Continuous visibility of value and flexible payments can win across both groups.

BNPL as a Festive Strategy

BNPL IS A CRUCIAL BUDGETING TOOL THIS SEASON:

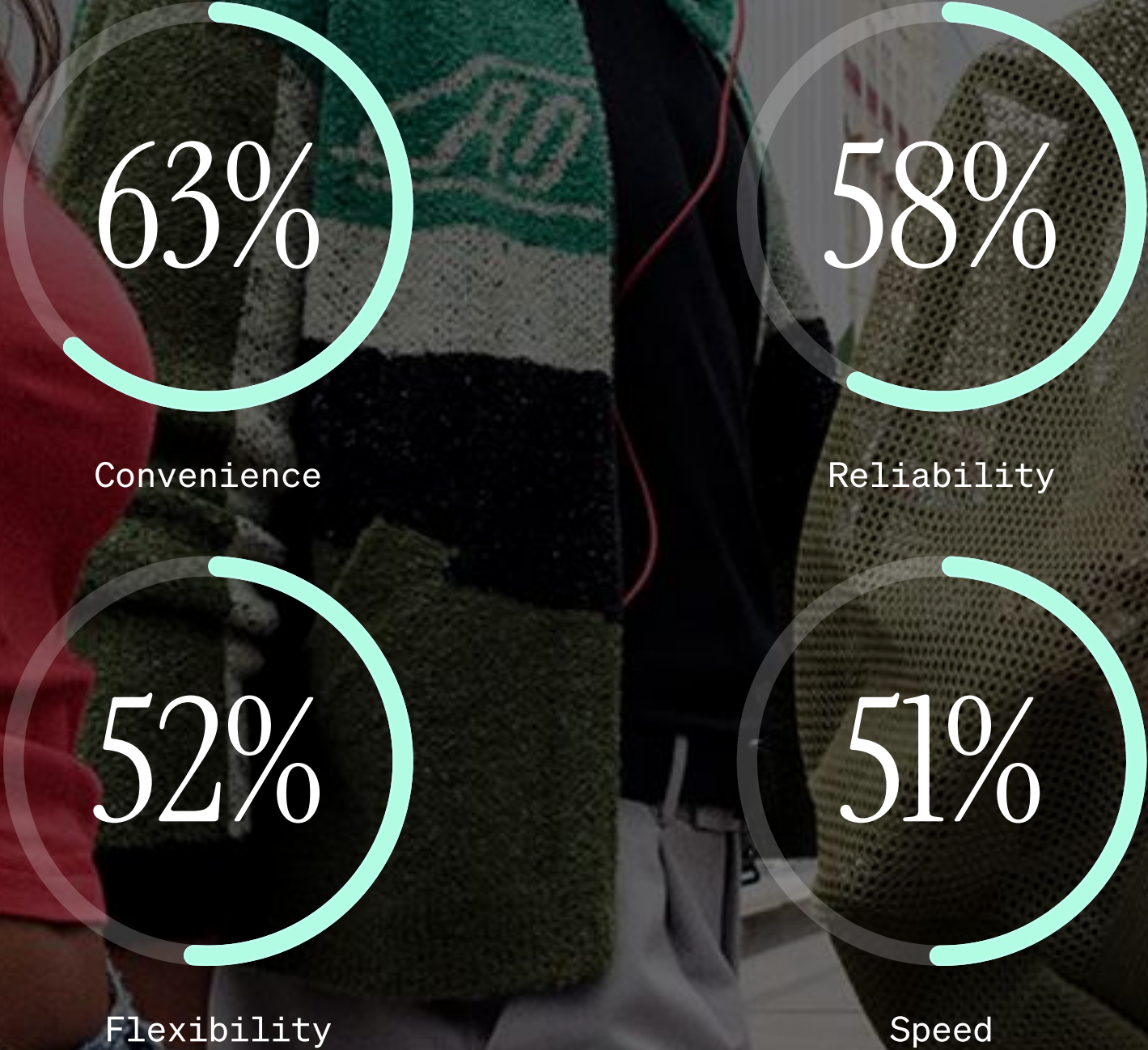
35% of UK consumers plan to use BNPL (rising to 45% among financially stressed shoppers).



TOP BNPL CATEGORIES:



WHY SHOPPERS CHOOSE BNPL:



The Clearpay Opportunity:

Clearpay is already seen as

45%

convenient

35%

reliable

It has a strong Gen Z and Millennial customer base, that their partners enjoy access to. Features like clear payment schedules (41%) and payment reminders (38%) matter most to Clearpay customers.

41%

payment schedules

38%

payment reminders



Tip: Emphasise Clearpay's budgeting support and transparent schedules in campaigns. Position BNPL as a tool for responsible spending, as well as festive joy.

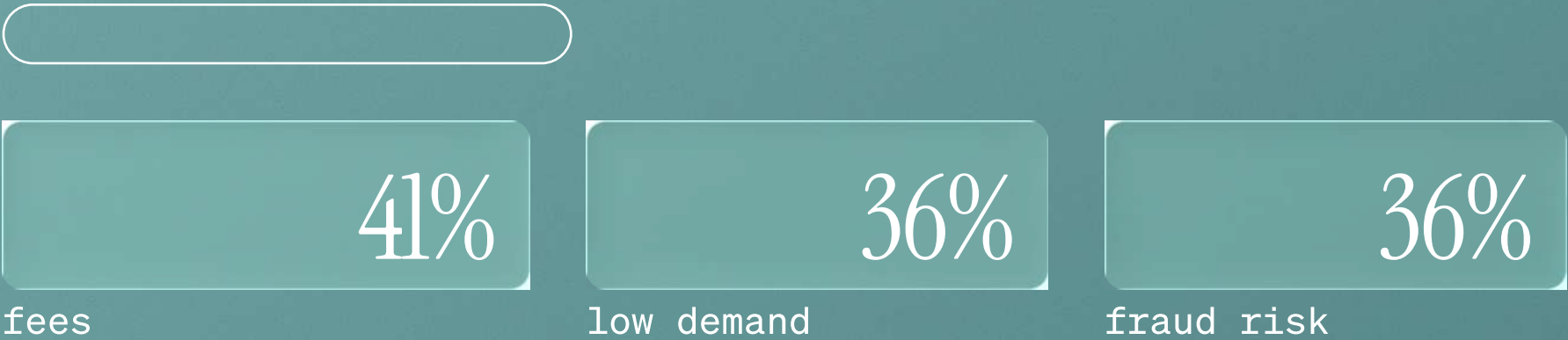
Merchant Impact & Retailer Perspectives

RETAILERS SEE BNPL AS A GROWTH DRIVER:

45% of UK retail business decision makers (BDMs) currently offer BNPL.

adoption is highest among midsize BDMs.

of BNPL-offering retailers say it's important to their business.



BENEFITS MERCHANTS CITE:



attracting new customers



improving customer experience



staying competitive



increasing sales

Tip: Adding BNPL can be a powerful growth lever. Nearly half of UK retailers already offer it, citing benefits like attracting new customers, boosting sales, and staying competitive.



The UK festive shopper is financially cautious yet determined to keep the season alive. They are spreading costs, budgeting tightly, and leaning into self-care gifting.

BNPL, and Clearpay in particular, is positioned as a crucial tool for both consumers managing spend and retailers seeking to grow sales. Merchants who meet shoppers early, promote value, and offer flexible payments stand to win this season.

Learn how Clearpay can grow your sales this festive season with our ROI calculator

[View our ROI calculator](#)

METHODOLOGY:

Morning Consult's Afterpay Global Holiday Shopping Survey (July 2025) was conducted between July 17th - 28th, 2025 among n2,202 Adults aged 18-65 and n240 Retail BDMs in the UK. All interviews were conducted online. The margin of error was +/- 2% for Adults, +/- 6% for Retail BDMs, and varied among subgroups. All subgroups highlighted in reporting have a base N size of 50 or more unless otherwise stated.

SUBGROUPS:

Retail BDMs, Small-medium retail BDMs, Midsized retail BDMs, Gen Zers, Millennials, Gen Xers, and Boomers