Black Friday is the Friday after [Thanksgiving in the United States](#). It traditionally marks the start of the [Christmas](#) shopping season and is the busiest shopping day of the year in the United States. Many stores offer highly promoted sales at heavily discounted prices and often open early, sometimes as early as midnight[2] or even on Thanksgiving. Some stores' sales continue to Monday ("[Cyber Monday](#)") or for a week ("[Cyber Week](#)").

"Black Friday" has evolved in meaning and impact over the years, initially referring to calamitous days, with a notable early instance being [Black Friday (1869)](#) in the US. This [financial crisis](#) saw a dramatic plunge in gold prices, affecting investors. The term was later used in American retail, starting ambiguously in the 1950s. Initially associated with workforce absence post-Thanksgiving, it was reinterpreted by [Philadelphia police](#) to describe the shopping-induced congestion. Attempts at rebranding to "Big Friday" failed, and the term "Black Friday" solidified by the 1980s, referring to the pivotal point where retailers purportedly shifted from loss ("in the red") to profit ("in the black"). This day marks the unofficial start of the [Christmas shopping](#) season, with promotional sales aiming to draw large crowds. Black Friday is the busiest shopping day of the year in the United States[3][4][5] and retailers prioritize it and Cyber Monday as highly profitable holiday shopping days.[6]