



## Buying

Often seen as retail's dream job, buying is one of the most popular areas of the industry to work in. However, the glamorous and glitzy image of jetting around the world choosing tomorrow's trends is only a small part of the whole story.

Buyers have the responsibility for selecting and purchasing the items that make or break retail businesses, so they need to be able to predict the future and ensure that price, quality and availability meet customer demand. This means buyers are under intense pressure to get it right and need to be a multitude of things: quick-thinking, experts on the products they source, skilful negotiators and accomplished data analysts.



It doesn't matter if they are sourcing sauces for Sainsbury's or hunting for the hottest hats for H&M, buyers need to stay informed and ahead of the competition. They do this by attending trade shows, visiting rival stores, trawling the internet for new products and managing suppliers.

The ability to prioritise work, meet strict deadlines and multi-task are all essential and the job can involve long hours and lots of travelling, but the buzz of seeing products that they have discovered selling like hotcakes is hugely satisfying.

### What can you earn?

Starting salaries for junior buyers range from £19,000 and £25,000, depending on the retailer. Assistant buyers/buyers can expect between £27,000 and £40,000 and the top purchasing managers over £55,000 per year.

### Routes in (click for links):

Steps to becoming a retail buyer

Retail Apprenticeships (England, Wales, NI) Modern Apprenticeships (Scotland)  
Diploma in Retail Business (England from 2010)

Job websites (UK): in-retail, Total Jobs, retailcareers, jobsinretail, RetailChoice  
National Skills Academy for Retail skills shops (England)

Graduate recruitment schemes (UK)