



# Covid-19 convenience shopping and at-home cooking report

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## Introduction

**As we entered a new decade in January, the transformational shift that impacted retail, including the convenience retail sector, brought modernisation and innovation to the way in which consumers shop.**

The convenience retail market within the UK is set to grow 8 per cent to £44.7bn in 2020 which is up from 2.6 per cent growth in 2019\* and is the only channel to out-pace over the decade alongside online, discounters and bargain stores.

And this was all turbocharged as the UK was thrown into lockdown and households became a nation of home-workers, home schoolers and the hospitality industry came to a standstill. Naturally, local community retailers saw a significant shift in volume and sales and the way in which consumers were shopping.

Non-essential shops closed and the main priorities for councils and organisations was to ensure everyone had access to the food they needed, which put extraordinary amount of pressure on grocery supply chains – an increase in demand that even online retailers struggled to keep up with.

The most recent data shows that take home grocery market has increased by 1 per cent and currently sits at 20 per cent with the convenience channel growth peaking during lockdown at 45 per cent. And as a result of the unprecedented effects on shopping behaviours, Co-op's market share has increased to 7.4 per cent, the highest since 2001, as customers opted to shop in smaller local stores. When surveyed, a quarter of the nation have shopped more in convenience stores since the start of March and 64 per cent say they will continue to do so. This rises to 73 per cent for those aged 55+ who are planning to continue to shop in a convenience store.





# How we shopped\*\*

Convenience and online are both growing with customers switching from supermarkets and discounters to a quicker and easier grocery shop.

Lockdown has turbocharged a pre-coronavirus growth trend in planned top-up shopping as shoppers have turned to convenience for main and planned top-up shopping, which now accounts for 22 per cent of all convenience trips in 2020\*.



Demand for online grocery shops continues to outstrip supply and this channel has large headroom for growth. We are seeing rapid innovation across the market in this space as the weekly capacity expands. **19 per cent of households have done an online grocery shop during lockdown with 1 in 4 of those customers being new to this channel.** The expansion of online and by using partners such as Deliveroo has allowed retailers to reach customers quicker and in many more locations, easing some of the pressures in store.

A shift in shopper missions has resulted in increased basket spend and size and the number of items per basket has increased significantly since lockdown from 4.4 items and peaking at 7.1 at the peak of lockdown. As the country is prepared for what could be their last trip to the food store for a number of days or weeks, consumers are shopping for supplies to last them longer than normal.

Week one of lockdown saw people shopping for more than nine days at a time, compared to what would previously be four. This has dropped off slightly but still shows households shopping to last them eight days^\*. And when looking at items in the basket, consumers are shopping for long-life products which could be stored and last them if needing to isolate.

Store cupboard item increase in volume pre v post	
1.	Tinned fish (661%)
2.	Canned meat (542%)
3.	Tinned fruit (366%)
4.	Jelly (342%)
5.	Canned milk (282%)
6.	Basmati rice (251%)
7.	Dried pulses and grains (74%)
8.	Dried potato (149%)
9.	Tins of soup (52%)



# What's on the menu

With the closure of the hospitality industry, sales show that beer, wine and spirits have spiked as households recreate bar tipples at home, and also rustle up local pub favourites, such as chicken tikka masala, cottage pie, macaroni cheese, beef lasagne, sausage and mash, toad in the hole and beef stew and dumplings.

The most significant impact across the whole alcohol industry has been on beer and cider sales as pubs and restaurants would usually take 50 per cent~ of beer volume produced in the UK. In order to meet demand, grocery retailers are picking up 45 per cent of this lost volume in a bid to also reallocate products destined for pubs. At Co-op, **sales of packs of 15 tins or more are growing over 1000 per cent** YoY, and in order to keep up with this demand, re-routed large packs of beer and cider that were due for on trade.

For those that enjoy a nice glass of vino, in the last month have been buying into sparkling which has seen a sales uplift of 42 per cent and consumers have been trading up as Champagne has seen sales uplift of 40 per cent.

With the sun shining through, sales of Rosé wine have consistently increased by at least 47 per cent each week and has been the best-selling of the whole Co-op French wine offering. Since the start of lockdown sales of premium Rosé have increased by as much as 186 per cent.

As customers are buying more in a single purchase, sales of bag in box wine have also increased by up to 300 per cent and Co-op has extended this range to meet demand.



In addition to the booze aisle, frozen ingredients have seen the largest increase in sales as customers are buying in larger baskets less frequently and wanting to keep stocked up for several days. The data shows that **36 per cent of people are keeping their freezers well stocked and 23 per cent think that they will continue to do so after lockdown.**

### Top convenience ready meals eaten:

1. Chicken tikka masala
2. Cottage pie
3. Macaroni cheese
4. Beef lasagne
5. Sausage and mash
6. Beef stew and dumplings
7. Toad in the hole
8. Cod, chips and peas
9. Braised steak and mash

Brits have also turned to nostalgic, quick-fix, packet desserts while stuck at home. This resurgence has seen a massive **738 per cent sales increase in dried trifle and 336 per cent increase in custard powder**, further supporting the nation's return to more simplistic flavours and traditional comfort products.

### Top comeback items in volume:

1. Packet trifle - 738%
2. Tinned pineapple slices - 343%
3. Custard powder - 336%
4. Tinned mandarins - 334%
5. Jelly - 342%
6. Canned ham - 179%
7. Pickled onions - 166%
8. Canned corned beef - 90%
9. Long-life milk - 81%
10. Smash - 59%

# Cooking up a storm\*\*\*

As at-home evening dining occasions have increased 60 per cent throughout lockdown, households are spending more time scratch cooking, which has seen consumers purchasing six times as much fresh meat, with pork (690 per cent sales increase) and beef (519 per cent sales increase) being the favourites. In terms of food waste, 51 per cent reported that they wasted less food under lockdown and 45 per cent think this behaviour will continue post-lockdown.\*\*

### Top cuisines cooked:

- 1. British
- 2. Italian
- 3. Indian
- 4. Chinese
- 5. Mexican
- 6. Thai
- 7. Spanish
- 8. Greek
- 9. Japanese

In the first two months of lockdown we saw an extra 441m at home meals being eaten each week^^ a growth of 33 per cent as the dynamics behind meals eaten in the home are significantly impacted, we see people spending more time preparing and eating. Lunches provide the biggest opportunity as which were up 91 per cent, followed by 42 per cent more snacking occasions as people look for a pick me up or to keep the kids entertained.

Data shows that 42 per are cooking from scratch more and 32 per cent think this will continue post-lockdown.\*\* Statistics have also revealed home cooks have added on average two more dishes to their repertoire and 38 per cent will continue to build their cooking skills once lockdown is eased. This rises to nearly half (48 per cent) for those aged 25-35>.



**British cuisines**  
are the most popular dishes cooked during lockdown

The research unveils that households have reignited their love for cooking, as **a third of the nation are now enjoying cooking** more since being in lockdown and 39 per cent say their cooking skills have improved and have mastered on average, two new dishes to cook from scratch. Sales of herbs and spices have also increased by over 100 per cent shoppers are spending more time cooking with the guide of recipes, trying to recreate their favourite dishes and flavours at home.

People are making the most of what they have in their cupboards and are reducing their food waste



**51%**  
are wasting less food, and 45 per cent think this will continue

**42%**  
cooking from scratch more and 32 per cent think this will continue

**36%**  
keeping freezer well stocked and 23 per cent think this will continue



### Top traditional meals cooked from scratch:

1. Sausage and mash
2. Chicken curry
3. Cottage pie
4. Beef lasagne
5. Cod, chips and peas
6. Macaroni Cheese
7. Beef Stew and dumplings
8. Toad in the hole
9. Braised steak and mash



76 per cent of us have cooked a traditional-style dish during lockdown with British being the most popular cuisine to cook across the country (31 per cent) with sausage and mash coming in the favourite at 36 per cent. 37 per cent of the nation have revisited dishes from their childhood.

Lasagne and Pasta Bolognese have been two firm favourite dishes as the sale of these pasta sauces are not only increasing, but more people are purchasing them.

- Lasagne sauce - 352 per cent item uplift and 342 per cent basket uplift - 4 times as many people are buying ready-made lasagne sauce
- Bolognese sauce - 260 per cent item uplift and 244 per cent basket uplift - 3 times as many people are buying ready-made bolognese

### Spice cupboard - volume uplift:

1. BBQ seasoning (104%)
2. Garlic granules (98%)
3. Oregano (92%)
4. Ground cinnamon (90%)
5. Celery salt (89%)
6. Paprika (88%)
7. Cajun (86%)

3 times as many people are buying ready-made bolognese





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## Covid and Convenience Shopping

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\* HIM and MCA Insight's new UK Convenience Market Report 2020

\*\* Join the Dots

\*\*\*Co-op sales data

^Kokoro, Corona Watch survey w/c 23rd March n=2,500, and w/c 22nd June, n=1,891 Survey, n=296, 24th-27th April 2020

~Kantar

# Kantar period of comparison is 4 weeks to 14th June

^^Kantar "How will COVID-19 impact our eating habits?" 26th March 2020.

>Survey of 2,000 people conducted for Co-op in July 2020

Kantar market share 12 weeks to 14 June 2020