Designing for Uncertain Times
Design Principles & Recommendations for Retail

April 2020

Why do this?

To be there for your users
This is an unprecedented situation for everyone and it is likely to be stressful too. Be there for them during these uncertain times by delivering the best user experience and boosting their trust in your brand

To meet user needs
Your online experience may now be your only source of conversions and is where users will come for updates and to deal with any concerns around existing transactions. Make sure it is the best it can be

Google

What this deck is and what it isn't

What it is

Guidance on UX best practices for uncertain times
- It proposes different ways to set customer expectations about upcoming journeys

Suggested design principles for uncertain times
- It suggests overarching principles to consider while designing for uncertain times (color, tone, messaging)

Recommendations illustrated by mock-ups
- It visualizes recommendations through mock-ups (for illustrative purposes only)

What it is not

Exact design templates or prototypes
- It includes mock-ups for illustrative purposes only. Designs and content for your site should be customised to suit your own customer needs

A set of must-dos
- It provides inspiration that might help address your own business need. Choose what seems most useful for you and test it if possible

An industry-specific guide
- It provides inspiration for all sites in the retail industry, including fast moving consumer goods, fashion, electronics, auto etc. It contains limited mockup examples for brevity

Google

Executive Summary

8 main recommendations for the full user journey

Click on blue link to jump to a section

Homepage
Information banner

Use info banners to communicate the key update that doesn't impact the user journey. Critical updates should be more integrated into the design (ex: changed CTAs, etc)

Homepage
Manage traffic & emerging needs

Think about creating an online queue, implementing a slot system, or highlighting products that can be useful for users during this time

Product Listing Page
Manage high demand items

Notify users when back in stock, deliver substitutes if users opt in, use in-stock filters, be transparent about potential delays, & communicate quantity limitations

Product Details Page
Offer alternative actions

Don't let users reach a dead-end, always provide them with alternative actions like pre-ordering, receiving notifications, connecting on social media, etc

Product Details Page
Rebuild the offline experience, online

When online is your only channel, think of ways to fill the need of an offline experience and help users visualize their products & get it right the first time

Checkout
Facilitate faster & secure checkout

Use techniques like Autofill and express checkout options (like Google Pay or Apple Pay) to speed up the checkout process

Situation-specific Info Page
Allow safe exploration

Build easy navigation to facilitate getting around with minimal physical and cognitive load

FAQs/Help Center
Include a section for situation-relevant FAQs

Cover all FAQs that are not frequent enough to be stand-alone categories in your main info page

Table of contents

We have provided design principles & recommendations across the full user journey, including:

Click on blue link to jump to a section

Google

Design Principles

Your Goal: Set customer expectations about upcoming journeys

Color

Calm
- Use calming color choices, like blue or green

Visible
- Ensure the content is visible to all users. Use colors that are different to others on your site

Coherent
- Use a coherent color palette. To attract attention you can use complimentary colors (colors directly opposite each other)

Tone

Caring
- Show that you care for the wellbeing of your users

Calm
- Use calm and neutral language

Authoritative
- Use credible sources; own the narrative

Message

Informative & helpful
- Focus on information first, be brief and to the point, show actions taken to ensure health and safety, be helpful not opportunistic

Positive
- Use simple language and focus on what users *can* do

Accessible
- Advisory information applies to everyone

Google

Homepage

Google

4 main recommendations for your **Homepage**

Your Goal: Validate user concerns + Show action + Set expectations + Facilitate navigation to needed info

Communicating updates

- **Use info banners to communicate the key update that doesn't impact the user journey**
- **Critical updates that impact the user journey should be more integrated into the design to set user expectations**

Manage traffic & emerging needs

- **Implement an online queue for checkout**
- **Implement a slot booking system**
- **Display inspirational categories of useful products** below your main product categories
- **Highlight products that can be useful for users during their current lifestyle**

Communicate business status

- This info is very critical, **add it somewhere more visible than the info banner**
- **You can add message in lieu of your hero campaign**
- If you no longer ship:
  - Allow users to pre-order
  - Allow browsing & saving to favorites to buy later
  - Redirect users to your social media channels

Easy access to relevant content

- **Add specific-info page in hamburger menu** and footer navigation
- Add specific-info to live support and **link to more info**
- **Add a new category for products that are relevant to the current situation** to the hamburger menu
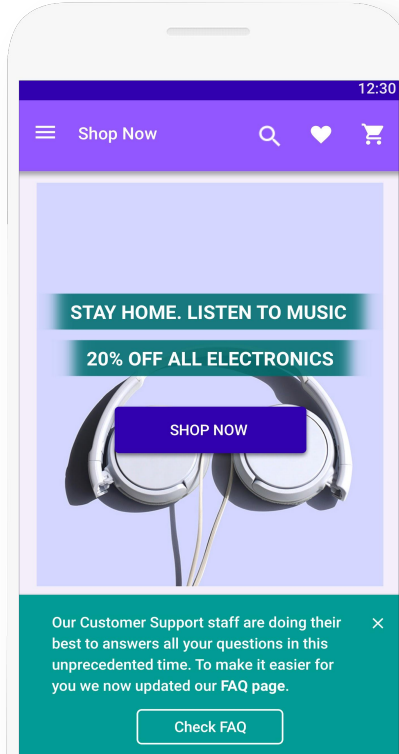
Google

Communicating Updates

Information Banner General guidelines

- **Use info banners to communicate the key update that doesn't impact the user journey** or the steps followed for a user to complete a purchase on your site. Depending on your business this could be:
  - Delivery times
  - Customer service
  - Returns policy
  - Social impact initiatives
  - Sales limit per household
  - Working hours
- **Critical updates that impact the user journey** (ex: site closure) **should be more integrated into the design to set user expectations** (ex: changing your CTAs, hero campaign, etc)
- **Link to more information;** like situation-specific page, FAQs, or any other relevant part of your site
- **Place key CTAs in a reachable touch zone**
- Make the banner **closable**
- **Keep your messages short, but empathetic**
- **Use icons/ illustrations** to visually support the message. Avoid using alarming icons like exclamation marks
- If you are using a pop-up, make sure it **doesn't exceed ⅓ of the screen and doesn't block key CTAs**
- You may include an important message as a part of your regular homepage layout as **an embedded banner**

Google

Communicating Updates

Information Banner Examples

Customer Service Banner

12:30

☰ Shop Now 🔍 ♡ 🛒

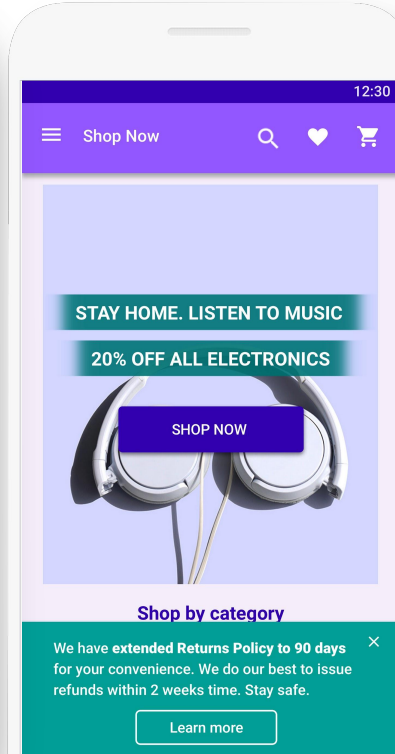STAY HOME. LISTEN TO MUSIC

20% OFF ALL ELECTRONICS

SHOP NOW

Our Customer Support staff are doing their best to answers all your questions in this unprecedented time. To make it easier for you we now updated our **FAQ page**. ✕

Check FAQ

Returns Policy Banner

12:30

☰ Shop Now 🔍 ♡ 🛒

STAY HOME. LISTEN TO MUSIC

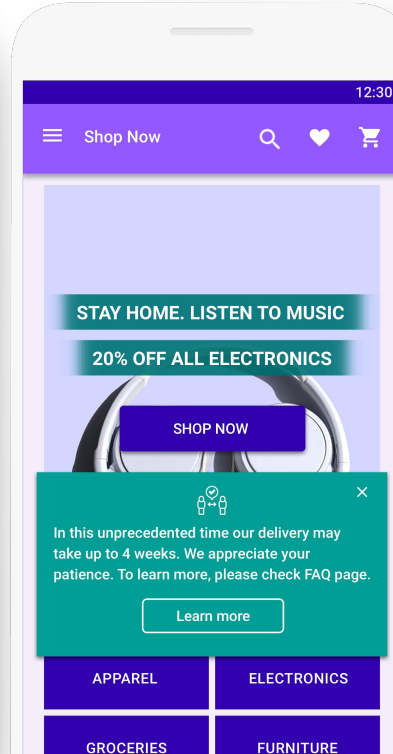20% OFF ALL ELECTRONICS

SHOP NOW

Shop by category

We have **extended Returns Policy to 90 days** for your convenience. We do our best to issue refunds within 2 weeks time. Stay safe. ✕

Learn more

Delivery Times Banner

12:30

☰ Shop Now 🔍 ♡ 🛒

STAY HOME. LISTEN TO MUSIC

20% OFF ALL ELECTRONICS

SHOP NOW

✕
In this unprecedented time our delivery may take up to 4 weeks. We appreciate your patience. To learn more, please check FAQ page.
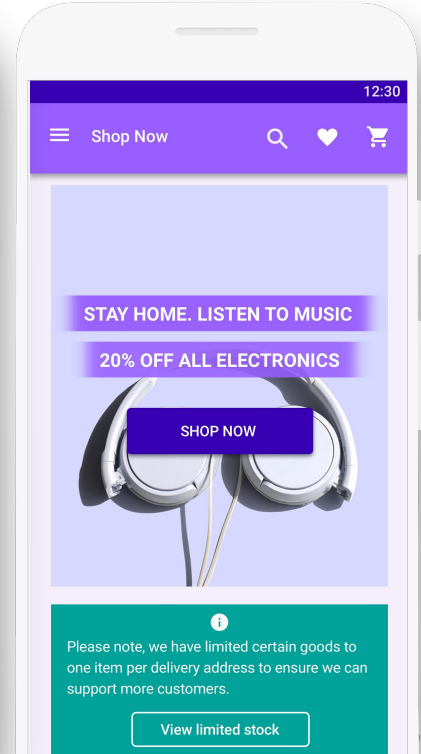
Learn more

APPAREL   ELECTRONICS

GROCERIES   FURNITURE

Sales Limit Banner

12:30

☰ Shop Now 🔍 ♡ 🛒

STAY HOME. LISTEN TO MUSIC

20% OFF ALL ELECTRONICS

SHOP NOW

ⓘ
Please note, we have limited certain goods to one item per delivery address to ensure we can support more customers.

View limited stock

Google

Communicating updates

When to use: if the cookie banner is in the upper/ lower part of the screen

- Make sure the **banner does not cover CTAs, value propositions, or any key information**
- Make sure you're **brief and concise** even if you have to communicate several critical messages
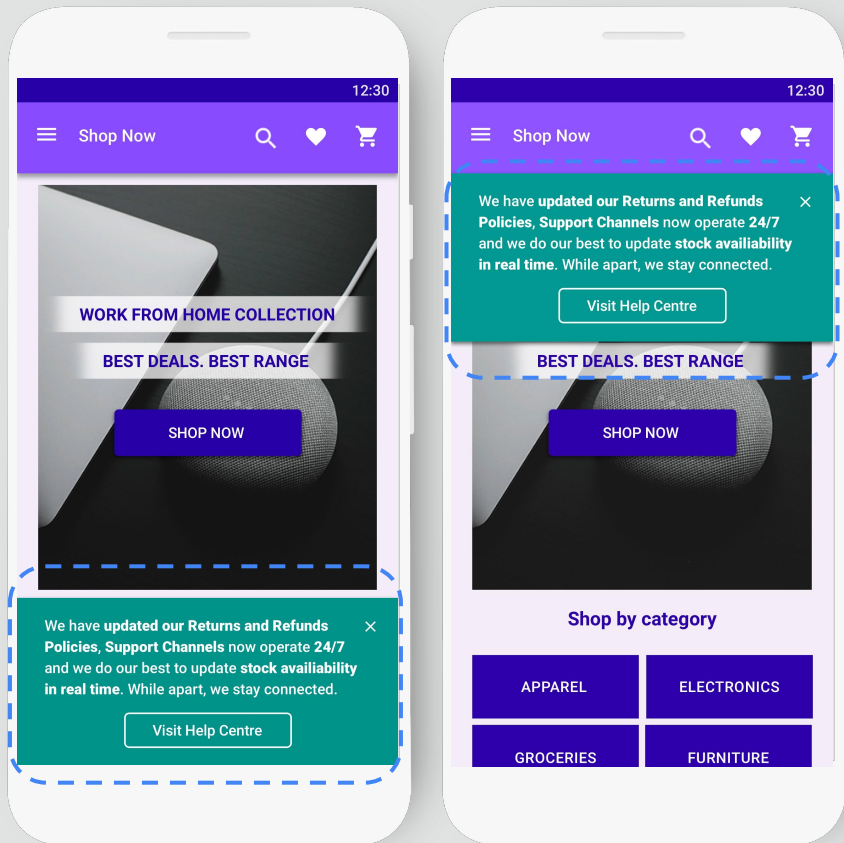
Communicating updates

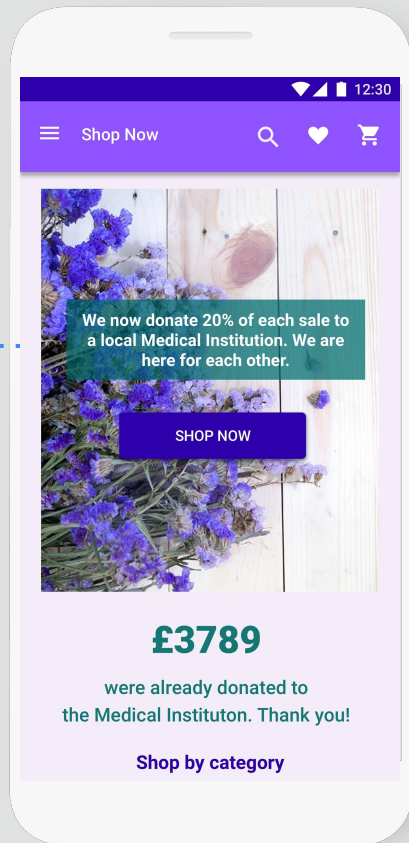**When to use:** if your key update is about your social impact

- **Use info banners to communicate this info** because it's key info but has minimal effect on the user journey (users will go through the purchase flow as expected)
- **If you support any organisation that was affected by the current situation, let your users know** that part of their spending will go to a good cause
- **Link your message to more information about your social initiative**
- **Be as transparent as possible**, name the organisations and explain how the donations will help. Also consider showing the donated amount
- If you believe it's a very key message, **consider adding it as your main value proposition**
- **Quantify your impact** wherever possible

Hero banner used for the donation message

We now donate 20% of each sale to a local Medical Institution. We are here for each other.

SHOP NOW

£3789

were already donated to the Medical Instituton. Thank you!
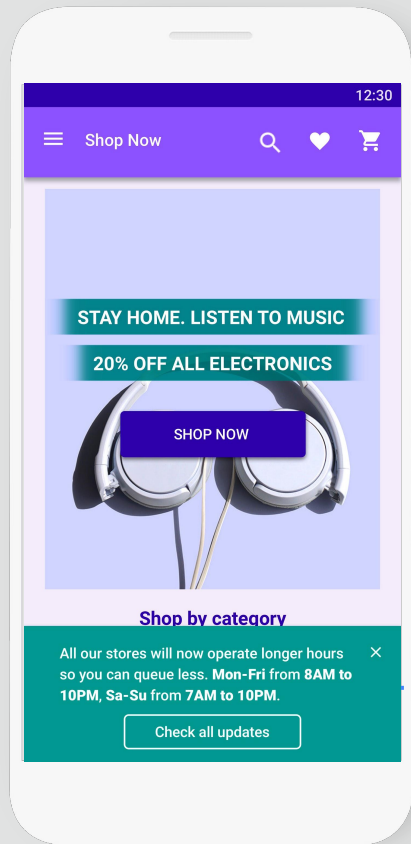
Shop by category

Communicating updates

When to use: if your key update is about your changed working hours

- **Use info banners to communicate this info** because it's key info but has minimal effect on the user journey (users will go through the purchase flow as expected)
- **Highlight the new working hours for readability**
- Always **link to more details**
- **Update your Business Profile on Google**. Edit hours or mark your business as "temporarily closed" if needed

12:30

Shop Now

STAY HOME. LISTEN TO MUSIC

20% OFF ALL ELECTRONICS

SHOP NOW

Shop by category

All our stores will now operate longer hours so you can queue less. **Mon-Fri** from **8AM to 10PM**, **Sa-Su** from **7AM to 10PM**.
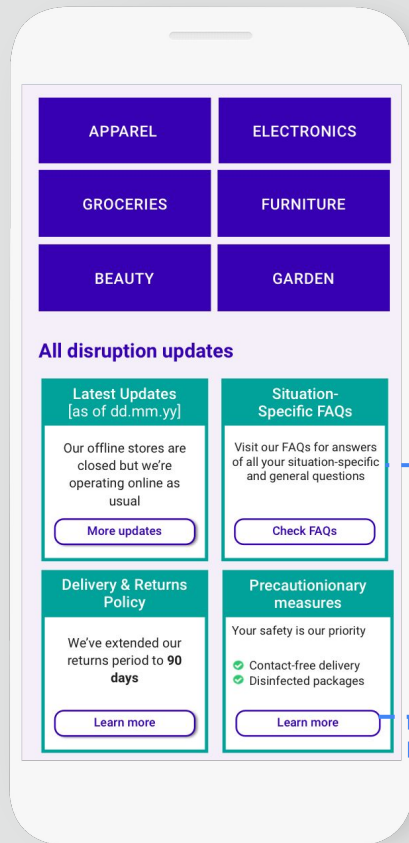
Check all updates

Key info in bold

Google

Communicating updates

General guidance on communicating more than one key update on your homepage

- **Use info banners to communicate the key update that doesn't impact the user journey** through the purchase flow
- If you have **more than 1 key update, you can add a section in your second fold** with the top updates
  - **Very briefly highlight the key info**
  - **Link to more info** on the situation-specific info page or your FAQ page
  - **Break the fold** (ie: make the first part of the content visible on the first fold so users will scroll down to read more)
- **Critical updates that impact the user journey** (eg site closure) **should be more integrated in the design to set user expectations** (eg change your CTAs, hero campaign, etc rather than adding an info banner)

APPAREL	ELECTRONICS
GROCERIES	FURNITURE
BEAUTY	GARDEN

All disruption updates

Latest Updates
[as of dd.mm.yy]

Our offline stores are closed but we're operating online as usual

More updates

Situation-Specific FAQs

Visit our FAQs for answers of all your situation-specific and general questions

Check FAQs

Delivery & Returns Policy

We've extended our returns period to **90 days**

Learn more

Precautionionary measures

Your safety is our priority

✔ Contact-free delivery
✔ Disinfected packages

Learn more

Highlight key info under each section

Link to more info

Google

Manage traffic & emerging needs

When to use: if you need to prioritize customers by first-come-first-served basis

- **Create an online queue for checkout**
- **Explain how it works.** Make it clear and visual
- **Provide browsing content to keep users engaged** while they wait
- **Bold/highlight key information** to allow faster scanning
- Apply Gestalt psychology Law of Closures. Keep users informed via **allowing them to see their progress** to increase their likelihood to wait and finish their tasks
- **Notify users when it's their turn**. Allow them to proceed further using key CTAs
- To minimize wait times, **allow users to add to cart while browsing**, but alert them that some items might not be available by the time they checkout

Google
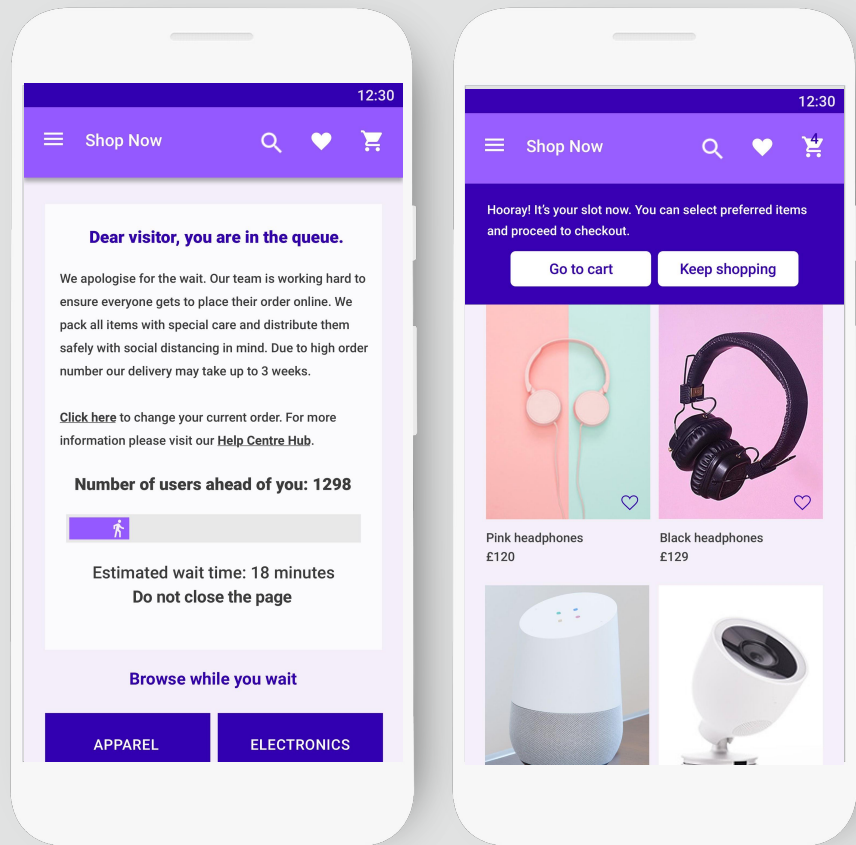
Manage traffic & emerging needs

When to use: if experiencing high demand for in-store, delivery, or pick-up orders

- **Implement a slot booking system**
- **Communicate the slots options above the fold.** This way users will know they can book & secure their slot before starting to shop online
- **Use tabs to minimise scrolling** so users can quickly compare the options
- **Highlight available and booked slots**
- **Highlight slots for seniors and at-risk customers**
- **Reserve senior/at-risk customer slots during different days and times** to accommodate for different schedules
- **Ensure user friendly touch targets.** Average finger tip is around 9mm, which is 48x48px
- **Cluster deliveries within the same residential zone** via rewarding proximate deliveries
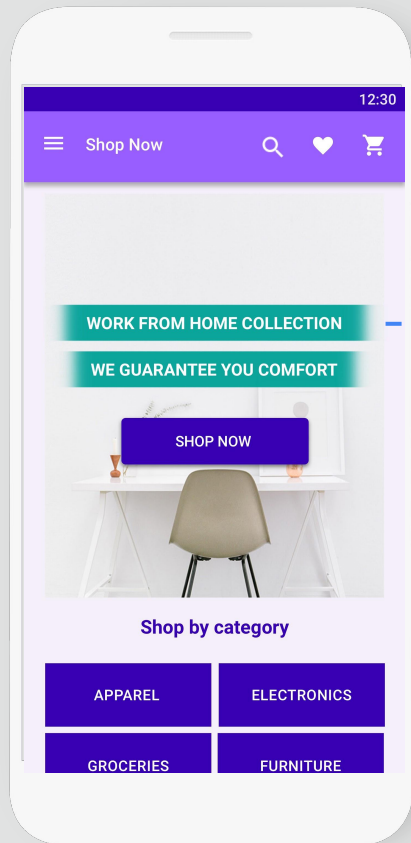

Google
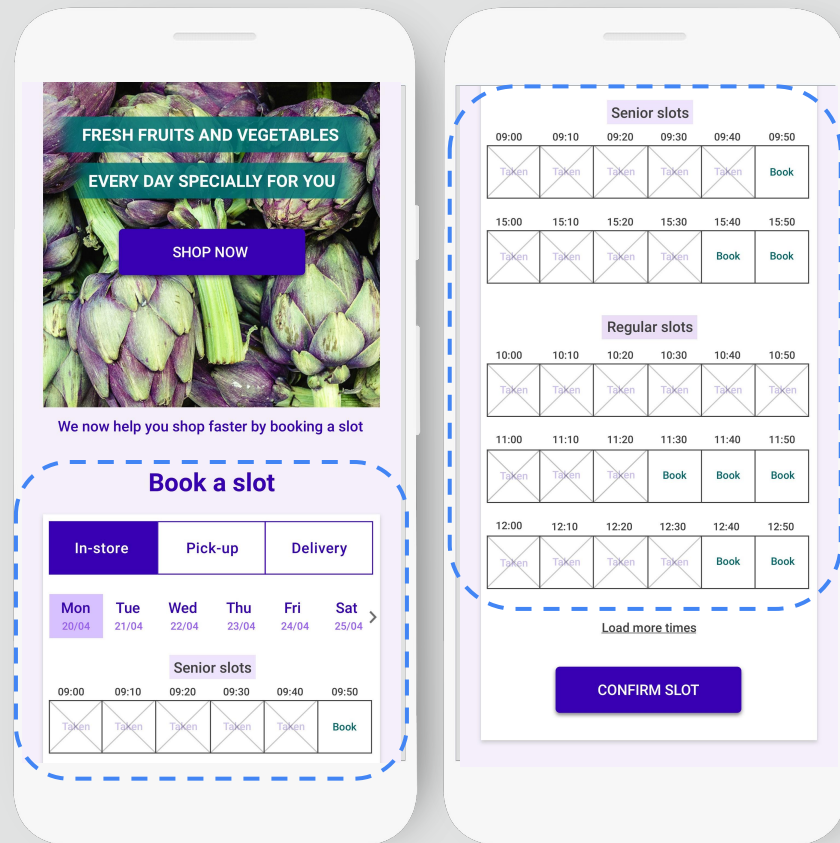
Manage traffic & emerging needs

When to use: if you offer items with surging demand

- **Highlight products that can be useful to users** in their current lifestyle
- **Be creative but avoid being pushy** in your marketing campaigns at this time
- **Use a visual to display the relevant offer**
- **Use value proposition** to tell users how they can benefit from your product
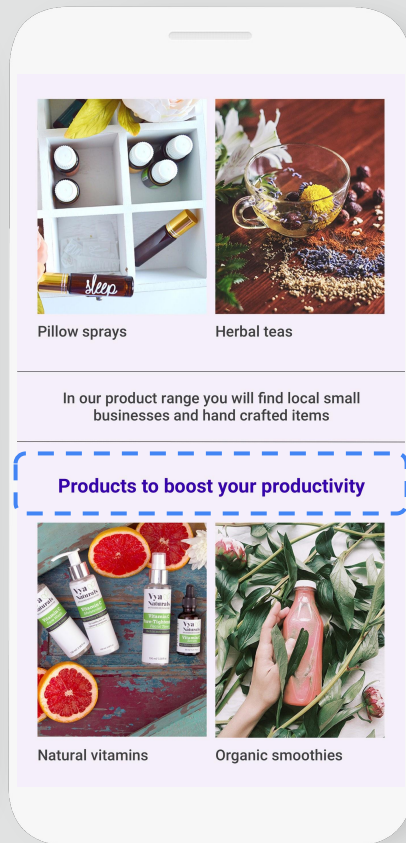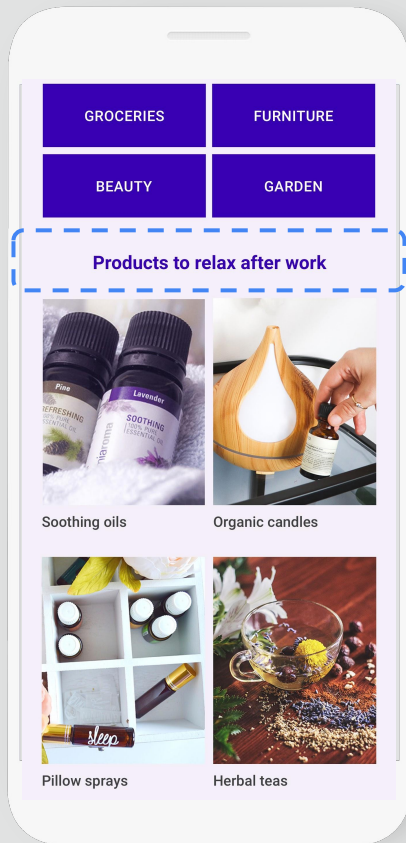

Use value prop to direct users to the relevant category

Google

Manage traffic & emerging needs

**When to use:** if you offer items that could be useful to your users during the current situation

- Be there for your users by **facilitating their experience to find products that could be currently useful to them**
- You can **display inspirational categories of useful products** below your main product categories
- Help users imagine how your products can help them by:
  - **Mentioning the products' value proposition**
  - **Naming your "new" categories by their value/benefit**
- Help small businesses through empowering users to buy their products. **Let users know where they can find small-business products**

Products to relax after work

Soothing oils   Organic candles

Pillow sprays   Herbal teas

Pillow sprays   Herbal teas

In our product range you will find local small businesses and hand crafted items

Products to boost your productivity

Natural vitamins   Organic smoothies

Google

Easy access to relevant content

When to use: if you have a page with info specific to the current situation

- **Add FAQ/specific-situation info page to hamburger menu and footer-navigation** to facilitate findability

Google
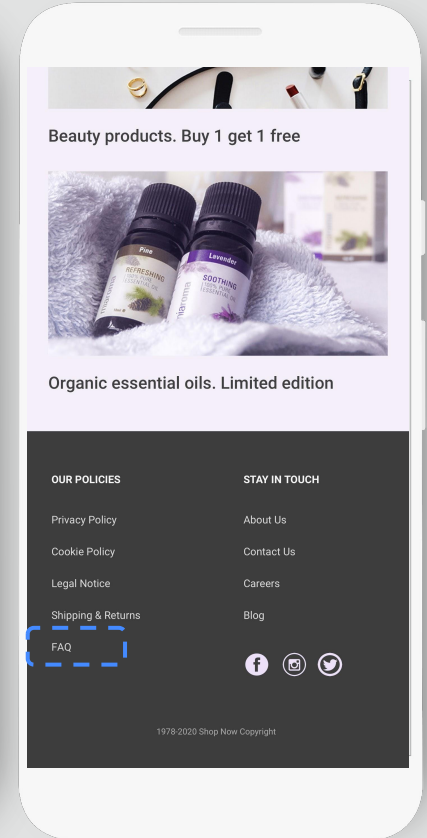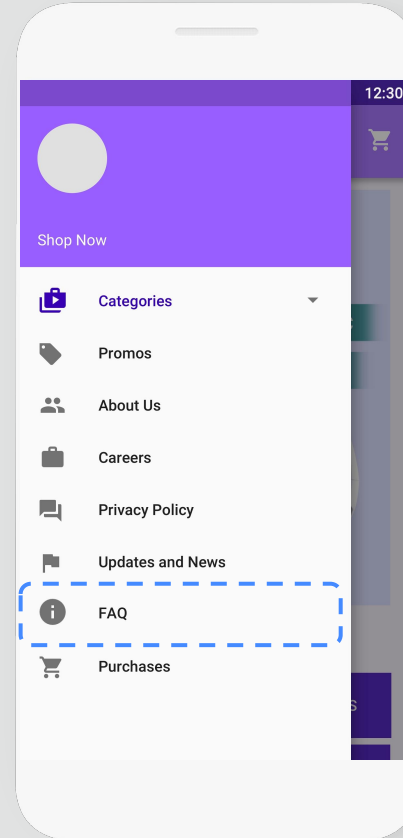
Easy access to relevant content

When to use: if you support your users via live chat

- **Add relevant information before the conversation starts**
- Provide **info in the live chat header** in order minimise live chat conversations
- **Make sure this info is not too intrusive or overwhelming** for users who don't need it
- **Provide link to your FAQ page**
- **If you're using bots, incorporate situation-specific information in your bot communication**
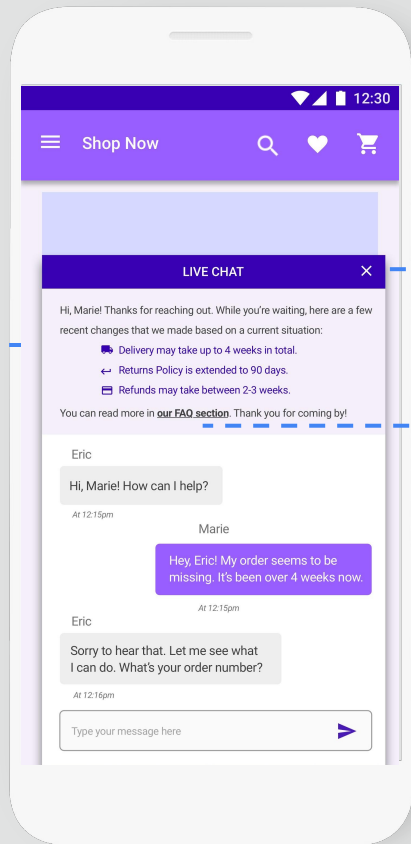

Closable

Link to FAQ page

Bullet points with labelled icons used for the key updates

Easy access to relevant content

When to use: if you have a category for products relevant to the current situation

- **Add a new category for products that are relevant to the current situation to the hamburger menu**
- This allows **easy access to your new content**
- This **is especially important for instances when the user journey does not begin from the homepage**
- It ensures that users who use the hamburger menu as a part of their navigation can see your new offering
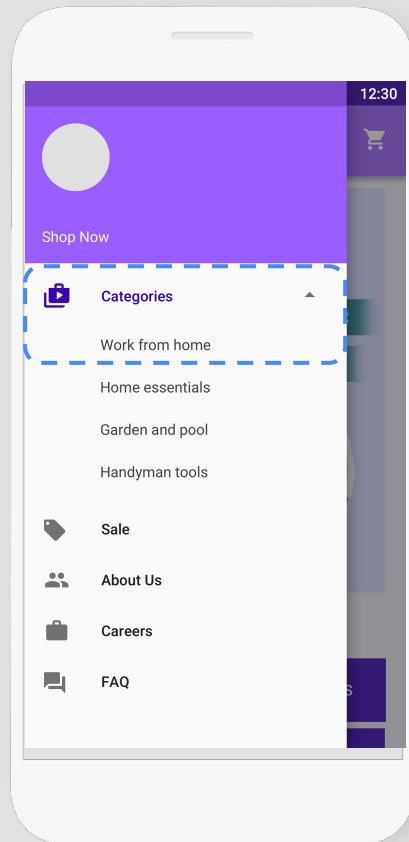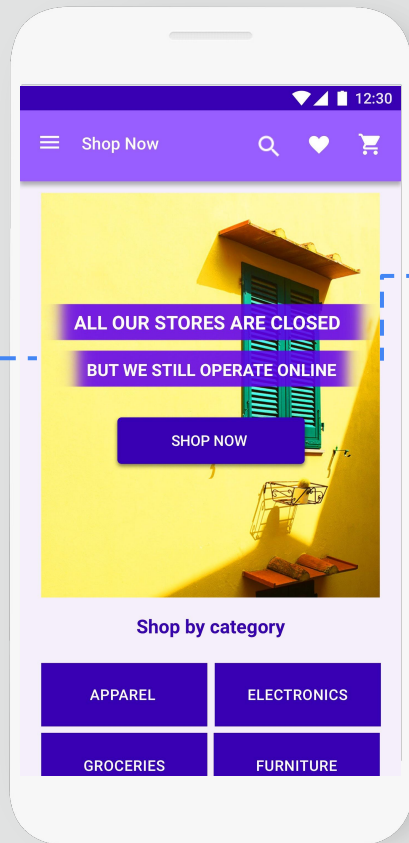
Communicate business status

When to use: if your offline stores are closed but you are still shipping online

- **Use your hero banner campaign** to deliver your message

12:30

☰ Shop Now 🔍 ♥ 🛒

ALL OUR STORES ARE CLOSED

BUT WE STILL OPERATE ONLINE

SHOP NOW

Shop by category

| APPAREL | ELECTRONICS |
| GROCERIES | FURNITURE |

Be creative, use an image of a house, cosy sofa or similar in your hero campaign to create visual empathy
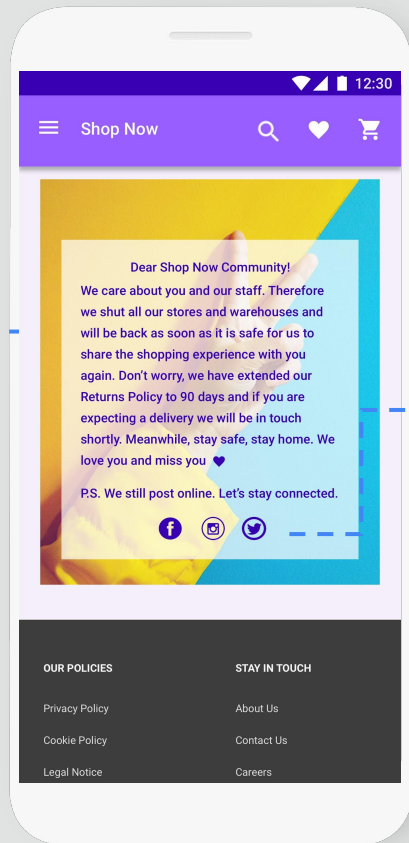
Use value proposition to update users about shop closures

Communicate business status

When to use: if your offline store is closed and you no longer ship and can't allow pre-orders

- **Change your homepage to let users know you are temporarily closed**
- Ensure your message is **empathetic**
- **Use social media to allow users to stay engaged and connected.** Maintain your social presence and keep your users posted when your operations resume

Dear Shop Now Community!
We care about you and our staff. Therefore we shut all our stores and warehouses and will be back as soon as it is safe for us to share the shopping experience with you again. Don't worry, we have extended our Returns Policy to 90 days and if you are expecting a delivery we will be in touch shortly. Meanwhile, stay safe, stay home. We love you and miss you ♥

P.S. We still post online. Let's stay connected.

Use empathetic & informative language

Exposed social media icons to allow users to stay connected. Helps to build stronger community

Google

Communicate business status

When to use: if your offline store is closed and you no longer ship and can allow pre-orders

- **Allow users to pre-order**
- Have a **clear message setting expectations**
- Mention the **value proposition of pre-ordering** in your message
- Provide an **option to notify them when your operations resume**
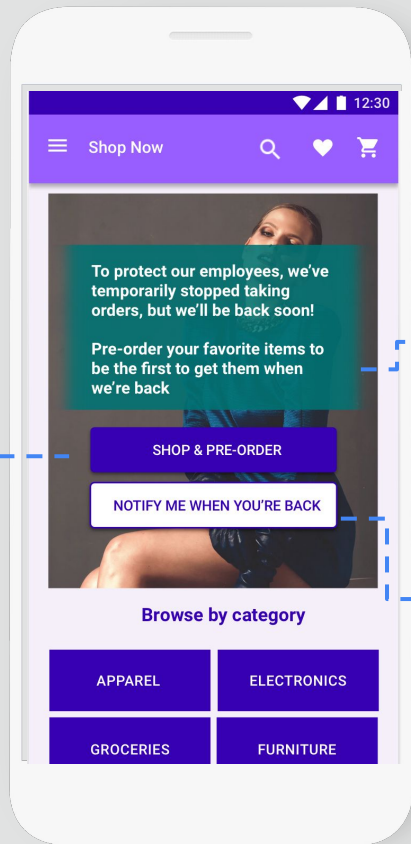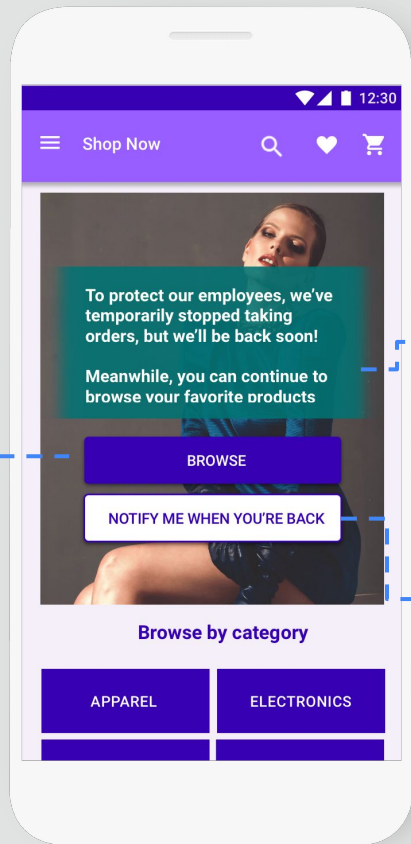

Clear message setting expectations

Allow pre-ordering

Alternative action to get notified when operations resume

Google

Communicate business status

When to use: if your offline store is closed and you no longer ship and can't allow pre-orders

- **You can allow users to continue to browse through your products for inspiration**
- If your items are still in-stock, users might want to add them to their wishlist and purchase them when they can
- **Clarify that they can only browse and not buy** to avoid disappointments down the funnel
- Provide **option to notify them when your operations resume**

Shop Now

To protect our employees, we've temporarily stopped taking orders, but we'll be back soon!

Meanwhile, you can continue to browse your favorite products

BROWSE

NOTIFY ME WHEN YOU'RE BACK

Browse by category

APPAREL   ELECTRONICS

Clear message setting expectations

Allow browsing through products

Alternative action to get notified when operations resume

Google

Product Listing Page (PLP)

Google

2 main recommendations for your **PLP**

Your Goal: Give users control + Set expectations + Facilitate decision making

Manage high demand items

- **Highlight limited/out of stock items** earlier on the user journey on your PLP
- **Provide alternative actions for out-of-stock items like notifying when items are back in stock**
- **Filter for in-stock items** to provide a more efficient experience
- **Be transparent about potential delays in re-stocking & delivery**
- **Offer users the option to get substitutes** if the product they selected ran out
- **Use pop-up messages triggered by the user action** to highlight quantity limitations (if you have any)

## Highlight products relevant to the current situation

- **If you sell products from local or small businesses, highlight them on your PLP** to allow your users to support these businesses
- If you've bucketed products related to the current situation together under a new category, **create filter for your new category**

Google

Manage high demand items

When to use: if you're still shipping but have limited stock & are selling out fast

- **Highlight limited stock** on your PLP to encourage action when users are considering limited-stock products
- Use **contrasting colours** for visibility and ensure these colours are contrasted with all products on the listing page

Highlighted & contrasted banner

Google
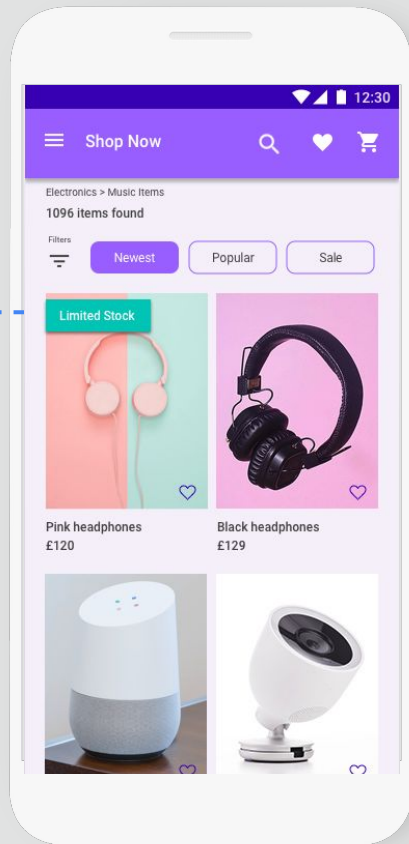
Manage high demand items

When to use: if you are still shipping but have out-of-stock items on your listing page

- **Highlight out-of-stock items** on your PLP to avoid disappointment when users find out items are out-of-stock on your PDP
- If **unlikely to be restocked, remove items from the PLP**
- If **likely to be restocked soon, clearly label** them
- **Deprioritise out of stock items** by **displaying them at the bottom of the page** rather than the top and clearly distinguishing them via **visual & written cues**
- **Use both visual and written cues for accessibility**

Clearly distinguishing out-of-stock via visual and written cues
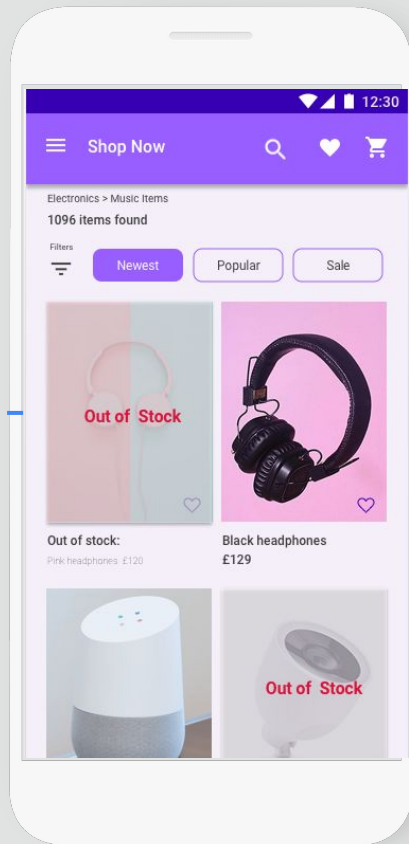
Google

Manage high demand items

When to use: if you're still shipping and some items are out-of-stock but likely to be restocked

- **Offer alternative actions to satisfy your user needs like notifying them when item is back in stock**
- Allowing users to **sign up to be notified when items are back** in stock is a great way of **forecasting demand for a product**
- **Avoid large CTAs** as these could be confused as Add to Cart CTA's
- Use **a different format** such as a tick box
- Still **display the product image** so that users can make sure that this is the product they need
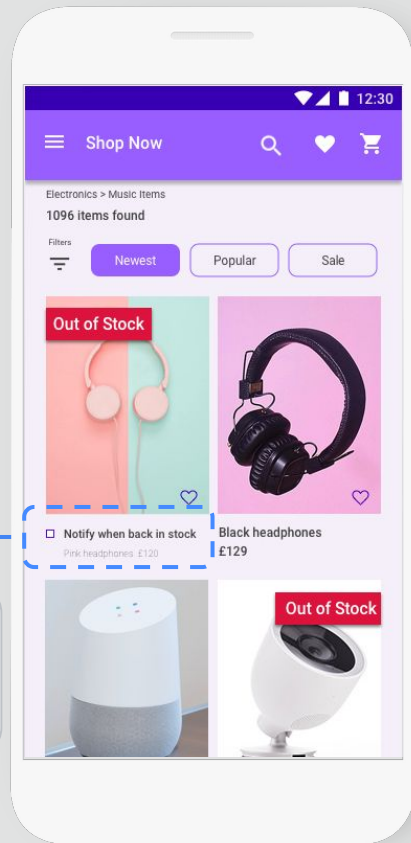

Option to get notified when item is back in stock

Google

Manage high demand items

When to use: if a large section of your products is in high demand and is frequently out of stock

- Include a **filter for in-stock items to provide a more efficient experience**
- This way customers **don't have to scroll through long PLPs with lots of out-of-stock items** displayed and no secondary action (eg: to be notified when back in stock)
- Provide filters which are **easily clickable with appropriate contrast**
- Use filters that are **clear and descriptive**
- When a user selects a filter, clicking on the filter a second time should remove the filter

Pre-exposed filter for in stock items

Google
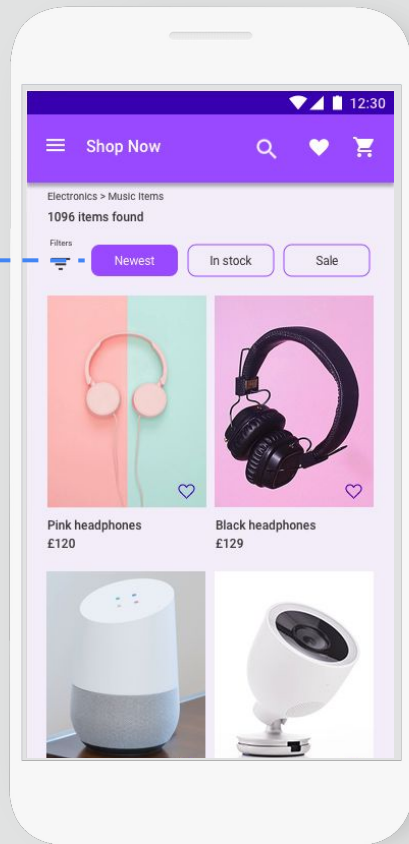
Manage high demand items

When to use: if you are experiencing delays receiving products or have limited stock

- **Be transparent about potential delays in re-stocking & delivery**
- In this case, be transparent & provide further context (eg FAQs)
- Ensure banners have **high contrast**. Users often have **banner blindness** so ensure banners are only used when necessary and not throughout the whole experience
- You can **embed banners within the listing page** itself (in lieu of one of the products) to increase discoverability
- **Provide an option to close the banner**
- Use banner as a way to **guide users towards further information** (ie always link to more info)

Google
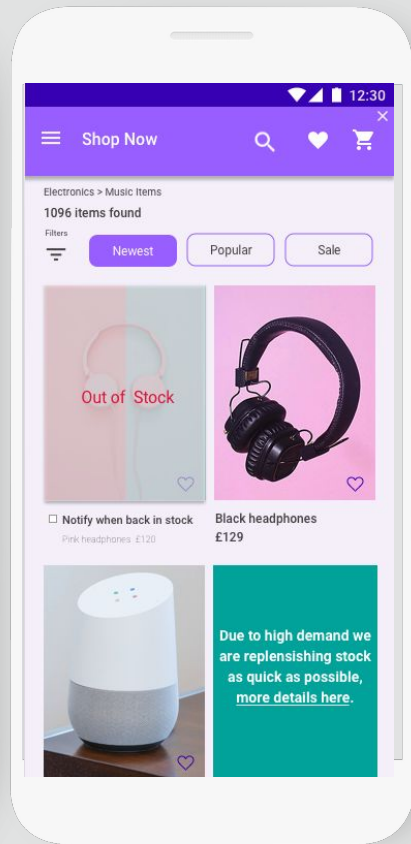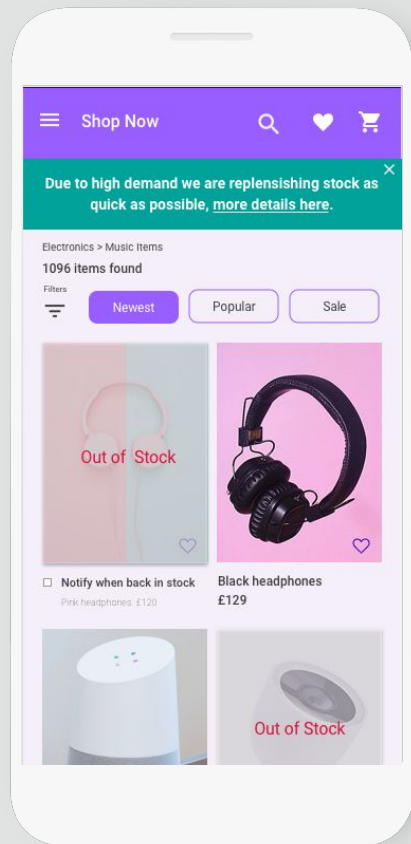
Manage high demand items

When to use: for fast-moving goods, if similar products are available

- **Offer users the option to get substitutes if the product they selected ran out** to fulfill user needs to your utmost capacity
- If user opted for substitutes, you can send another brand than the one they've selected (eg: homebrand or other-brand products)
- Make sure this is **easy to opt in and out of**
- **Allow users to set their default preference** for receiving substitutes while **being able to change their choice by product to accommodate for different tastes** and levels of brand loyalty
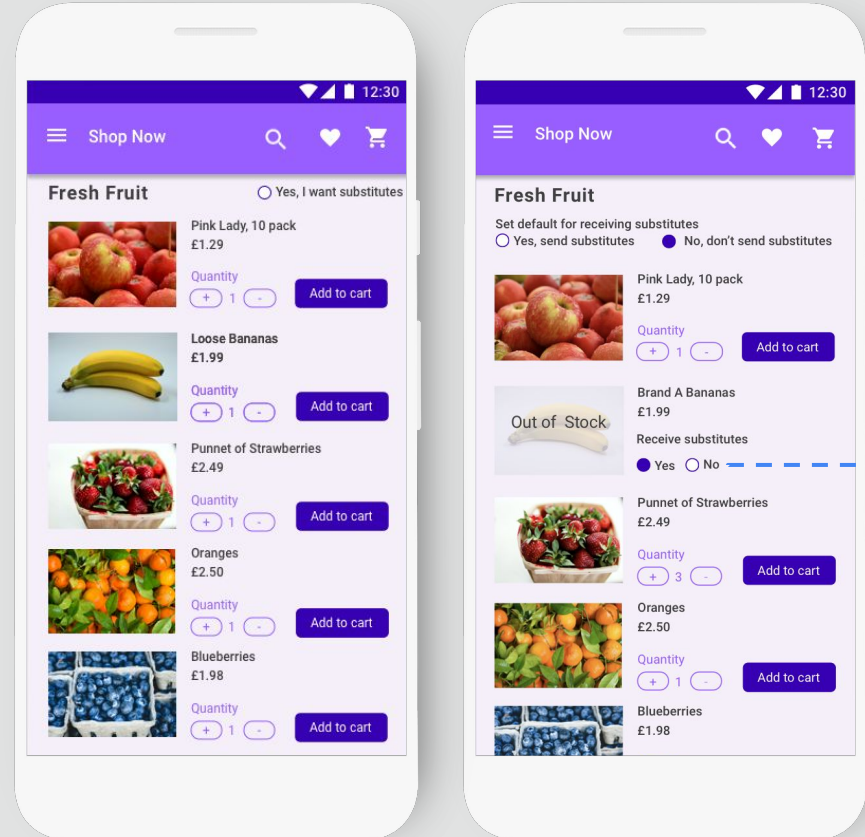

Deliver brand B bananas instead if you ran out of Brand A because the customer is happy with receiving substitutes

Manage high demand items

When to use: if there is a maximum quantity for a product

- If you're enforcing quantity limitations, highlight that **clearly & at a relevant time. Use pop-up messages triggered by the user action**
- When the **user reaches the limit, show the pop-up message**
- When user **reaches limit +1, disable the add to cart CTA**
- **Don't disable the quantity add button without showing the message**, this might mislead users to believe the button is broken
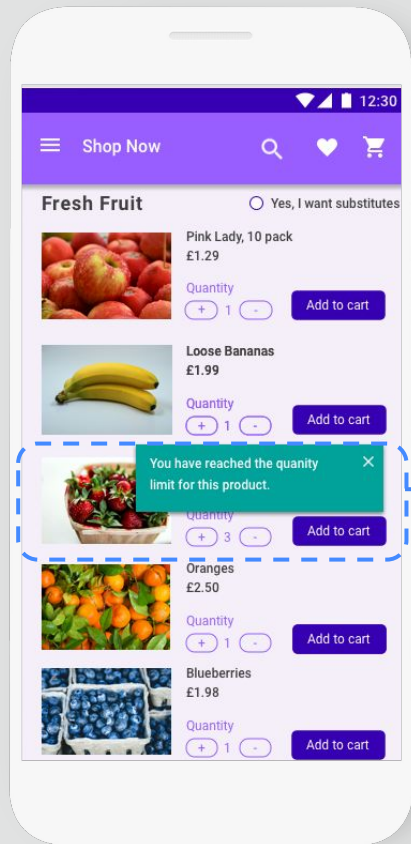

Popup appears after the user attempts to increase the quantity over the limit

Highlight products relevant to the current situation

When to use: if you sell products from small or local businesses

- **Highlight small business products on your PLP** to allow your users to support smaller businesses or boutiques
- Use a **banner** or **clear bolded text** to highlight these products on your listing page
- You could **allow users to filter** the listing view to **only show small businesses**

Google
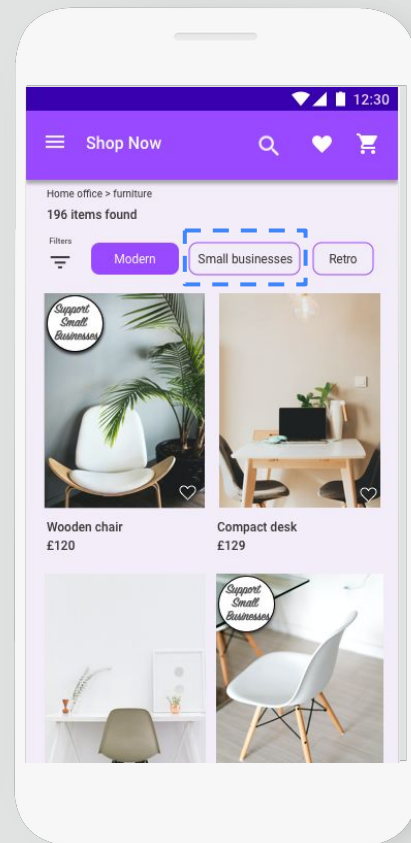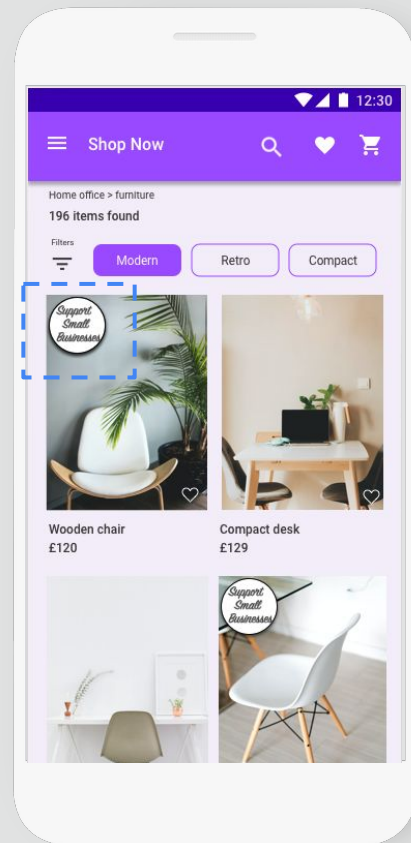
Highlight products relevant to the current situation

When to use: if you offer items that are relevant to the current situation and you've bucketed them together under a new category

- **Allow filters for your newly created category** of products
- This is especially relevant if you send users to a PLP from a homepage hero banner for your "new product category". **Allow users to filter for sub-categories within your new category**
- Clearly list all product options within your new category. If possible, **pre-expose all products**
- Filters should have be **easy to exit** (eg the 'X' icon)
- When a user selects a filter option, **highlight the number of options selected** in the CTA (eg Apply (2))
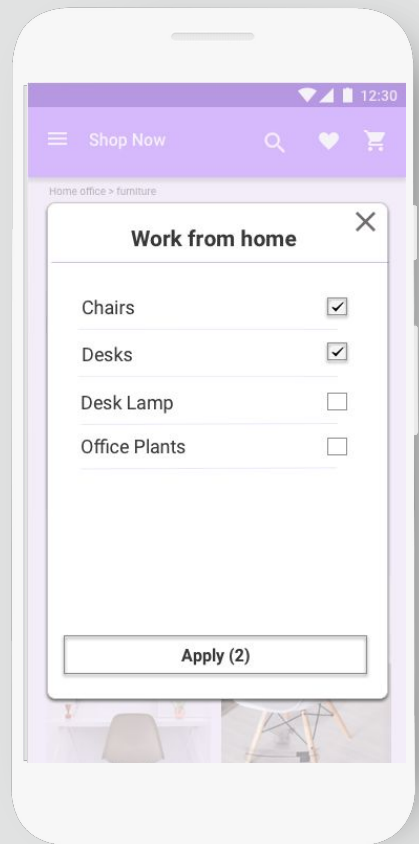
Product Details Page (PDP)

Google

4 main recommendations for your **PDP**

Your Goal: Clarify delivery & return policies + Convey value proposition + Facilitate decision making

Offer alternative actions

- **Don't let your users face a dead-end,** always provide alternative actions
- Provide **notifications when items are back in stock**
- Provide **substitutes/similar items**
- Allow **pre-orders**
- **Redirect users to social media or notify them when they can order**

Rebuild the offline experience, online

- Think of ways to **fill the need of an offline experience**
- **Visualize different product variations** (colors, textures, different settings, etc)
- Provide **elaborate description**

Communicate updated policies

- **Communicate clear expectations about delivery & return conditions, times, and costs**

Be empathetic & inspirational

- Include **empathetic messaging to encourage thoughtful buying behaviors** like supporting local businesses & not hoarding necessity products
- Include **inspirational content to cater for emerging needs** like items that go well together or could be useful for the current situation

Google

Offer alternative actions

When to use: if you're still **shipping** and some items are out-of-stock but likely to be restocked

- **Offer alternative actions to keep customers engaged.** Depending on your business types, you can allow users to:
    - **Get notifications when item is back in stock**
    - **Save it for later/to their wishlist**
    - **Explore similar items/substitutes** (for fast moving goods)
    - **Add item to their favorites/shopping list** to order it later or to be notified when it's back in stock

Notify users when item is back in stock
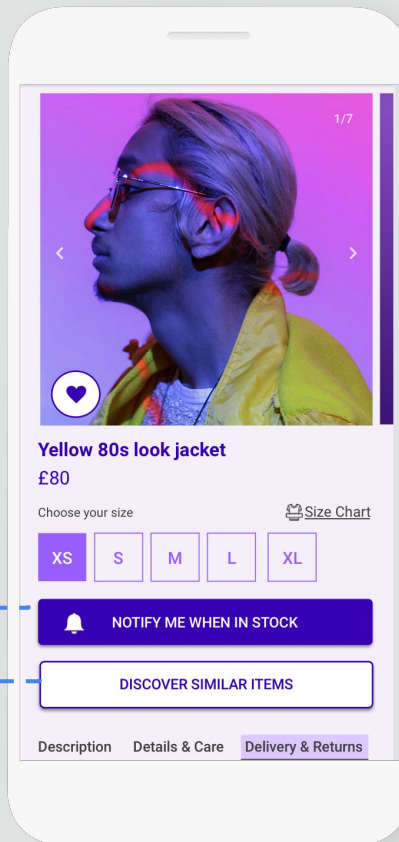
Add to favorites & buying when back in stock

CTA to discover similar items
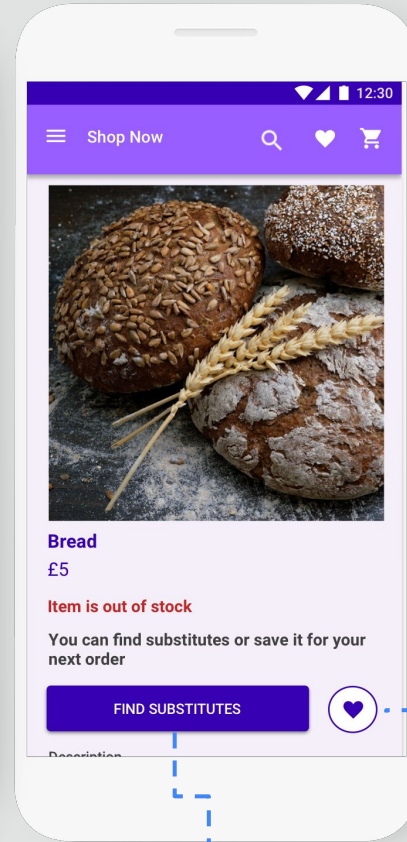
CTA to discover similar items

Offer alternative actions

When to use: if you're still shipping but some items are out-of-stock

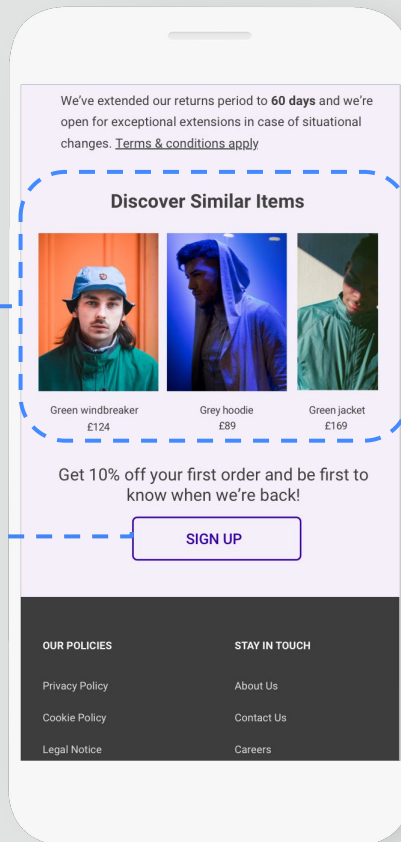- If item is out of stock, try to **fulfill the user need by offering similar items** (or substitutes for fast-moving-goods)
- **Pre-exposing similar items/substitutes** can facilitate finding substitutes/similar items
- Promote **sign up to keep your users updated** with offers and changes in your operations

Pre-expose similar items

Pre-expose substitutes

We've extended our returns period to **60 days** and we're open for exceptional extensions in case of situational changes. Terms & conditions apply

Discover Similar Items

Green windbreaker
£124

Grey hoodie
£89

Green jacket
£169

Get 10% off your first order and be first to know when we're back!

SIGN UP

OUR POLICIES

Privacy Policy

Cookie Policy

Legal Notice

STAY IN TOUCH

About Us

Contact Us

Careers

Bread
£5

Item is out of stock

Find Substitutes

Wheat bread
£14

Brown bread
£89

White bread
£169

Promote sign up to keep users updated

Google

Offer alternative actions

When to use: if you're not shipping and items are in-stock or likely to be restocked

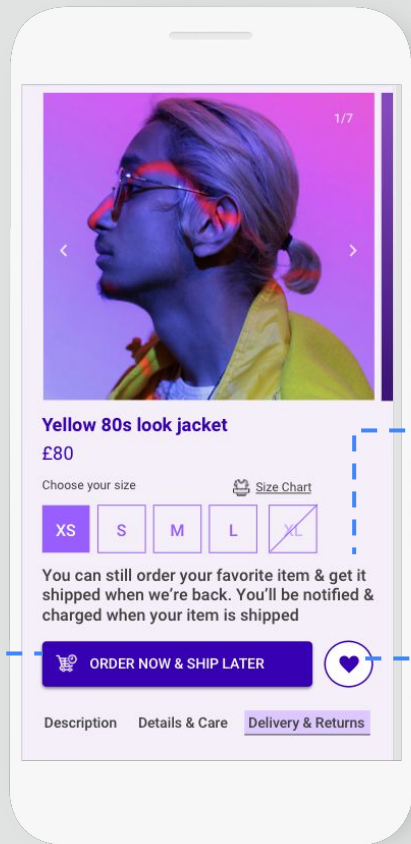- You can still **proceed with selling your stock or allowing pre-orders** as long as you **set expectations about delivery & payment**
- You can allow users to pre-order items & receive notifications when you're back in business & ready to deliver. If you'll do so, allow users to:
  - **Cancel their orders before shipment** in case they no longer need them
  - **Pay upon shipment,** especially if you're unable to provide a solid shipping date

Yellow 80s look jacket
£80

Choose your size   Size Chart

XS   S   M   L   XL

You can still order your favorite item & get it shipped when we're back. You'll be notified & charged when your item is shipped

ORDER NOW & SHIP LATER

Description   Details & Care   Delivery & Returns

Add message explaining alternative actions

Allow adding to favorites to purchase later

Allow pre-orders

Google

Offer alternative actions

When to use: if you're not shipping and items are in-stock but you can't take pre-orders

- **You can allow users to continue browsing your products** for inspiration or to save them to their wishlist and buy them when you resume operations
- **Provide users alternative ways to stay connected and inspired:**
  - Via **social media** channels
  - **Receiving notifications** when they can order their preferred items
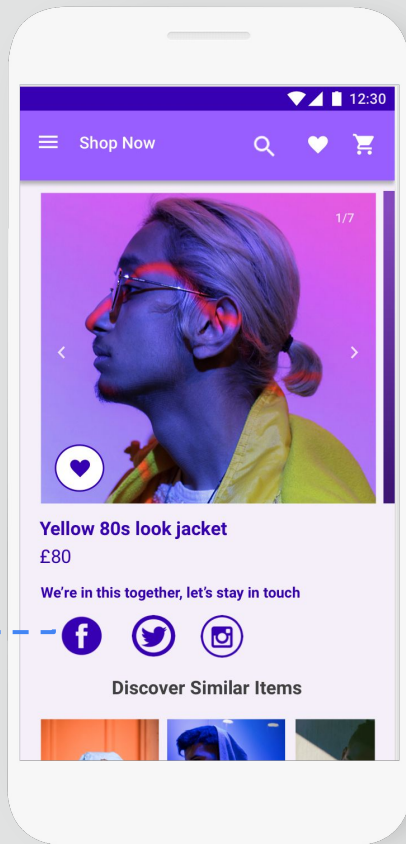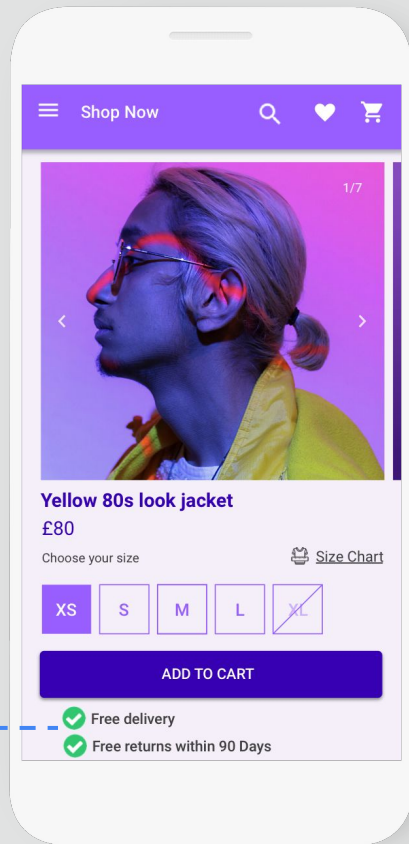

Engage via social media
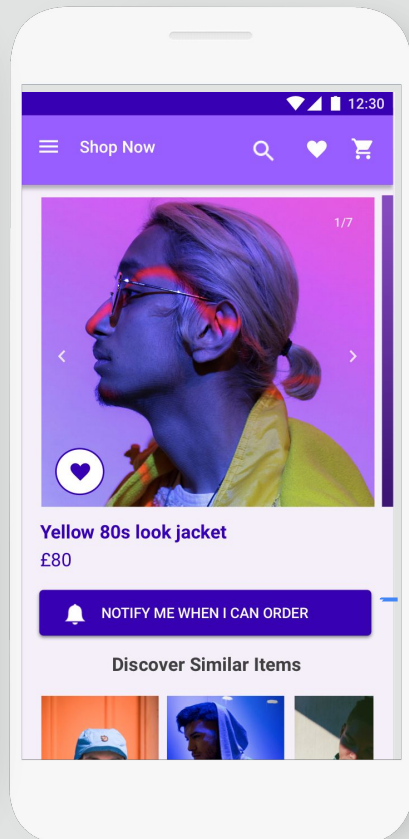
Send notification when users can buy item

Rebuild the offline experience, online

When to use: if you're still shipping and items are in-stock

- **Include a size chart** to help customers get it right the first time & minimize the need for returns
- Include as **many images** as you can to help customers imagine their items. Use a half-image slider for image discoverability
- Ensure your images are **high quality** and are **zoomable**

Highlight extended returns as value proposition

Shop Now

1/7

Yellow 80s look jacket
£80
Choose your size   Size Chart

XS   S   M   L   XL

ADD TO CART

✓ Free delivery
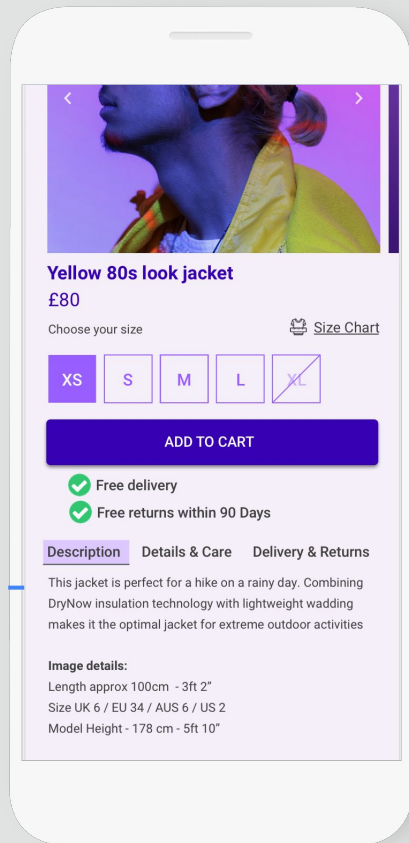✓ Free returns within 90 Days

Google

Rebuild the offline experience, online

When to use: if you're still shipping and items are in-stock

- **Add elaborate and situational descriptions of your item** including material and when it could be needed to help users decide if your product suits their needs
- **Include details about the model size** to help users imagine whether the item would suit them

Elaborate description

Yellow 80s look jacket
£80

Choose your size

Size Chart

XS S M L XL

ADD TO CART

✓ Free delivery
✓ Free returns within 90 Days

Description   Details & Care   Delivery & Returns

This jacket is perfect for a hike on a rainy day. Combining DryNow insulation technology with lightweight wadding makes it the optimal jacket for extreme outdoor activities

Image details:
Length approx 100cm - 3ft 2"
Size UK 6 / EU 34 / AUS 6 / US 2
Model Height - 178 cm - 5ft 10"
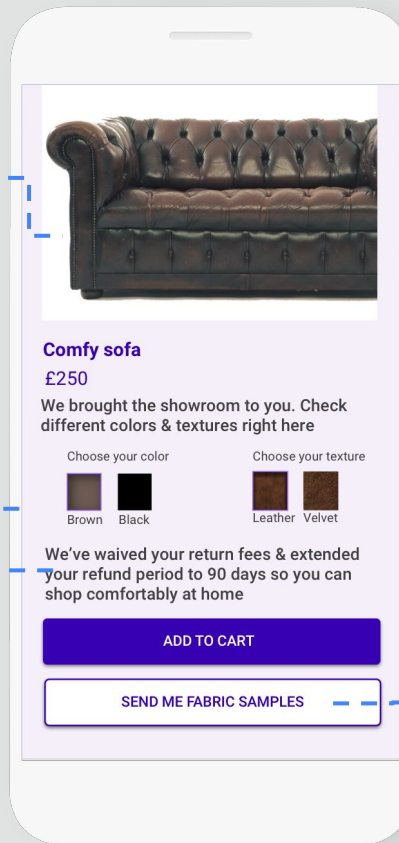
Google

Rebuild the offline experience, online

When to use: if you're still shipping and items are in-stock

- When online is your only channel, **think of ways to fill the need of an offline experience.** Depending on you business type, you can:
    - **Highlight your refund policy** to encourage your customers to try their purchase out at home
    - Allow **users to visualize their items as much as possible** via real/synthetic images, more elaborate descriptions, or sending samples

Changing colors & textures according to user choice

To visualize different colors & textures

Highlight your extended return policy as a value proposition

Alternative ways to compensate for the absence of the offline experience

Comfy sofa
£250
We brought the showroom to you. Check different colors & textures right here

Choose your color
Brown   Black

Choose your texture
Leather   Velvet

We've waived your return fees & extended your refund period to 90 days so you can shop comfortably at home

ADD TO CART

SEND ME FABRIC SAMPLES

Google

Rebuild the offline experience, online

When to use: if you're still shipping and items are in-stock

- **Use creative solutions to help customers visualize their items** in real-life and get it right the first time

Example: comparing items to the most common UK door dimensions

Google
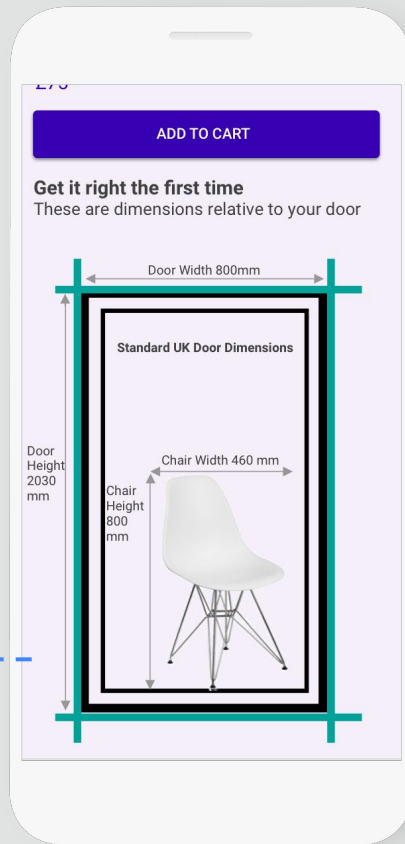
Communicate updated policies

When to use: if you're still shipping and items are in-stock

- Communicate **clear expectations about delivery & return conditions, times, and costs**
- **Benchmark to the original delivery times if it's a small difference** so users feel that the marginal time difference is not too big
- **Emphasize positive changes as well. Highlight your flexible return policy as a value proposition,** if you have one. Offering cheaper returns with extended durations is key to fulfill the need of an offline experience

Use visual cues to convey positivity

Highlight your flexible return policy as a value proposition
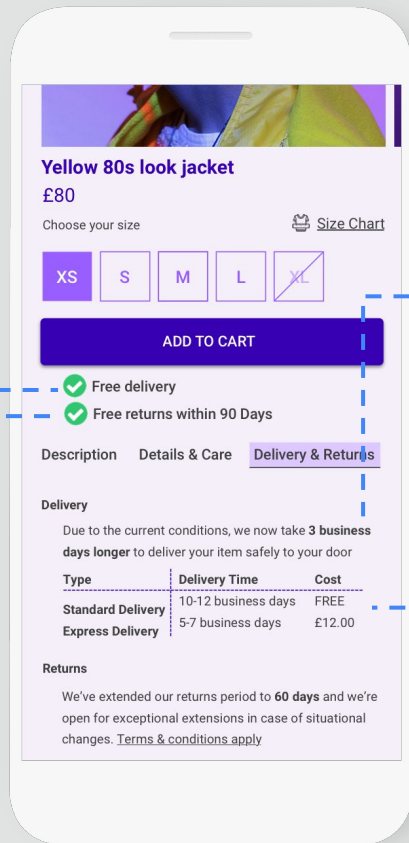
Benchmark to the original delivery times if it's a small difference

Highlight all delivery options and prices
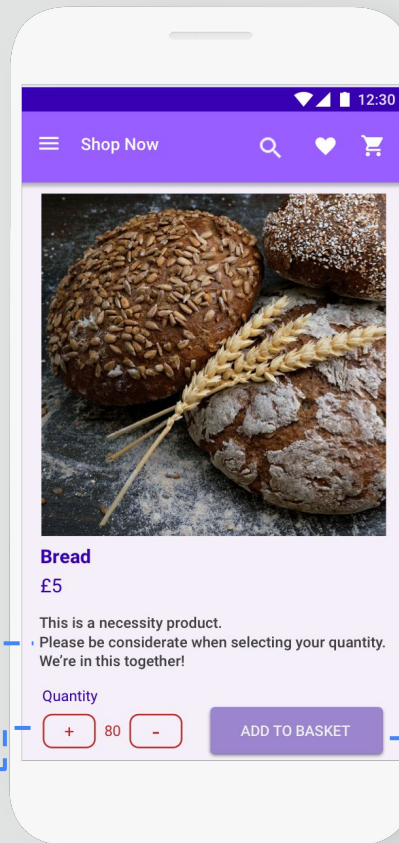
Google

Be empathetic & inspirational

When to use: if you're still shipping and sell necessity items that are in shortage

- Include **empathetic messaging to encourage thoughtful buying behaviors** to avoid hoarding necessity products that might be in shortage
- If you're including a limit per order on necessity products to limit hoarding behaviors. **Make sure to make your limit sensible and not too strict**. Rigorous data analysis of your sales data is needed to decide on a reasonable threshold and avoid user harm or disappointment

Encourage users to be considerate when buying big quantities of necessity products

Give visual cue to discourage this behavior

Think twice before blocking the CTA. Make sure this limit won't have a serious effect on any of your users

Google

Be empathetic & inspirational

When to use: if you're selling items by local businesses

- Include **empathetic messaging to encourage thoughtful buying behaviors** like buying from local businesses to support them during this time

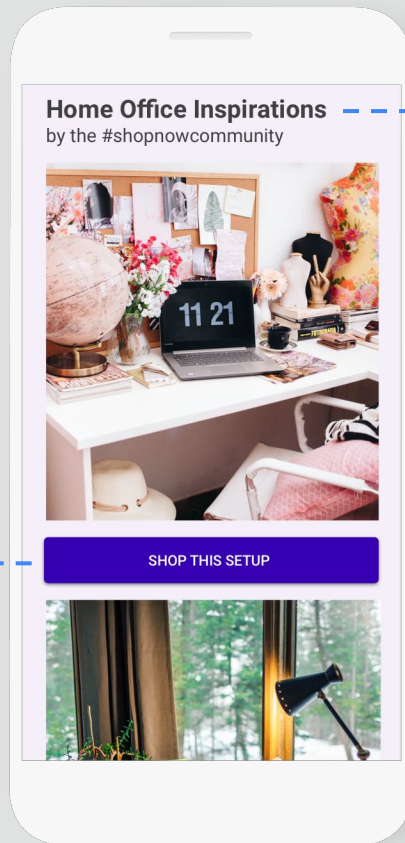Thank you note & more info about the local business
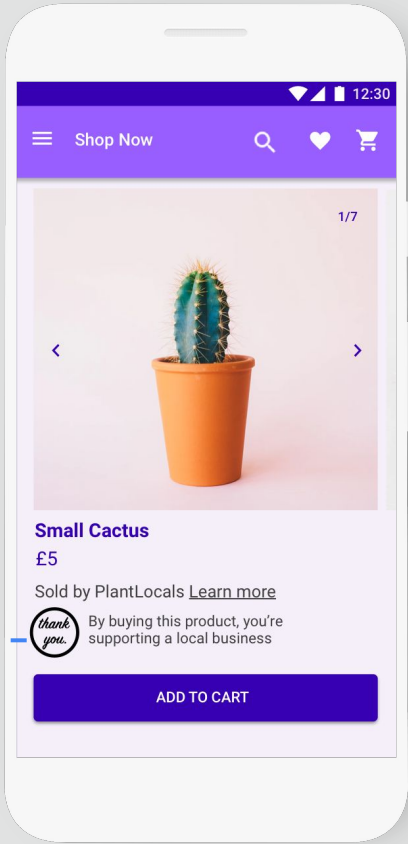
Google

Be empathetic & inspirational

When to use: if you're selling items relevant to the current situation

- **Share inspirational photos by your customers** of how your products can come together
- **Inspire users' new needs** by making your community stay together & inspire one another
- It's an effective **way of grouping your products**

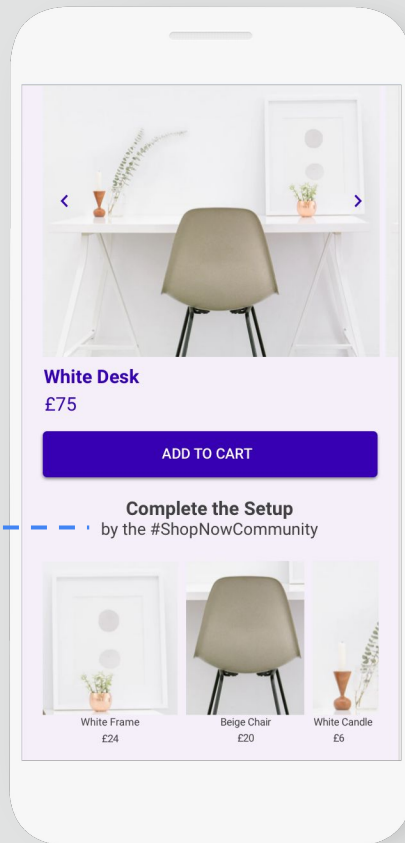CTA to shop for items available in this look

Inspirational page to get ideas for newly-forming needs (could be community based)

Google

Be empathetic & inspirational

When to use: if you're selling items relevant to the current situation

- Facilitate the journey for users who're interested in certain setups/looks by **suggesting items that go well together**

Suggesting items that go well together/ to complete the look

White Desk
£75

ADD TO CART

Complete the Setup
by the #ShopNowCommunity

White Frame
£24

Beige Chair
£20

White Candle
£6

Checkout Page

Google

3 main recommendations for your **checkout page**

Your Goal: Facilitate a fast & smooth experience

Emphasize your delivery precautions & social impact

- Boost your customers' morale via **emphasizing their contribution to your social cause**
- **Remind users of your safety precautions**
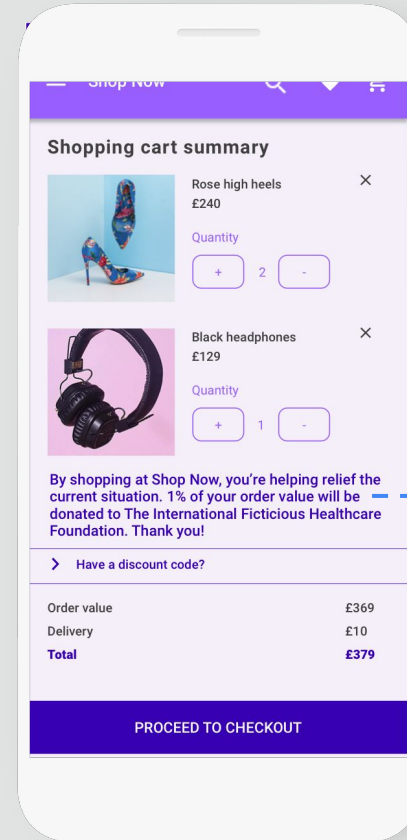
Support emerging needs

- Remind logged in users to **check their default address** in case it changed
- **Facilitate remote gift-giving**

Facilitate faster & secure checkout

- Implement **Autofill**
- Implement **express checkout**

Google
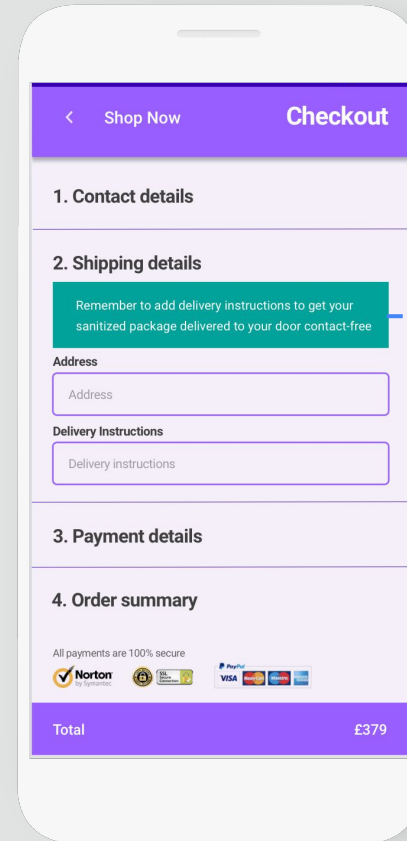
Emphasize your delivery precautions & social impact

● Boost your customers' morale via **emphasizing their contribution to your social cause**

End the user journey on a positive note emphasizing their contribution to your social cause

# Emphasize your delivery precautions & social impact

- **Remind users of your safety precautions on checkout**

Reminder about your delivery safety precautions & prompt to add details needed to facilitate a contact-free delivery

Support emerging needs

- **Remind logged in users to check their default address in case it changed** (eg users having their office address as the default)
- **Facilitate remote gift-giving**
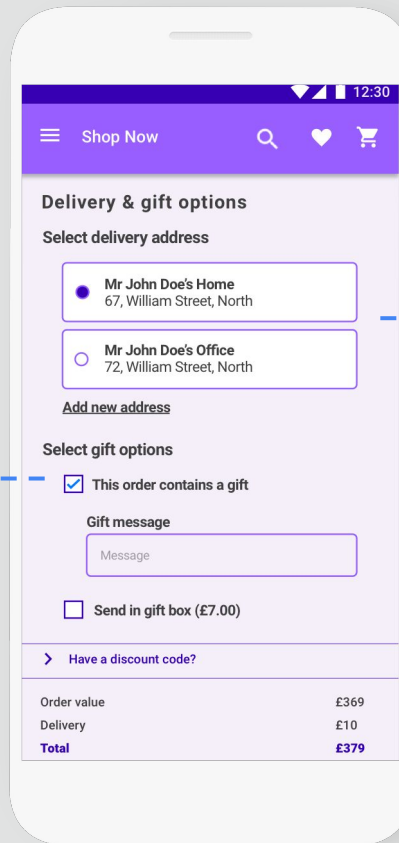
Facilitating remote gift giving

Reminder for logged in users to confirm their delivery address

Google

Facilitate faster & secure checkout

When to use: if experiencing high demand

- Use techniques like **Autofill** and **express checkout options** (like **Google Pay**, Apple Pay, or PayPal) to **speed up the checkout process**
- Google Pay and Apple Pay also support strong customer authentication with 2 factors, which will be mandatory for merchants by the end of 2020
- Integrating express checkout **can be done at the product or cart pages** (like shown in the mock-ups on the right side). This pre-selects all your default addresses and payment methods, so you can check out with two steps (both illustrated with the screenshots) without any forms
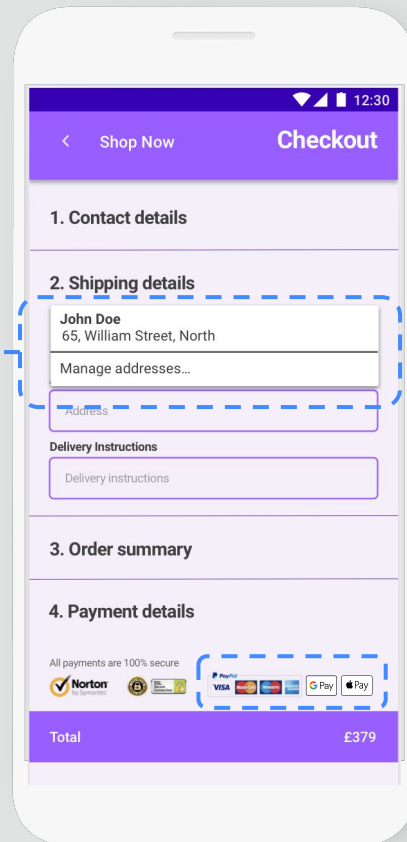
Autofill facilitates form filling
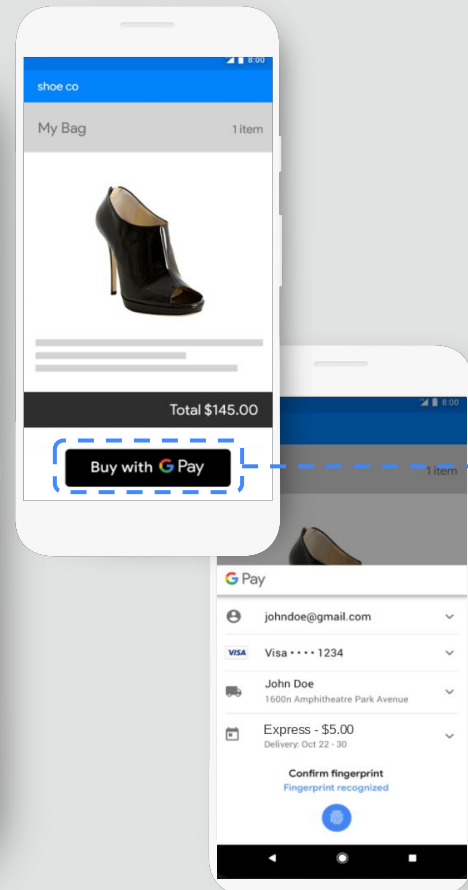
Express checkout makes forms redundant

Situation-specific Info Page

Google

3 main recommendations for your **situation-specific info page**

Your Goal: A one stop shop for all info that users need

Communicate priority info

- **Communicate & pre-expose main info and common FAQs first**
- **Main sections that need elaborate info:**
  - Updates & business status
  - Delivery & returns policy
  - Precautionary measures
- **Add a regular FAQ section** for all other situation-related info
- **Communicate secondary info lower** down on the page
- **Consider creating a summary video** to reduce cognitive load

FAQs & Contact Us

- **Add FAQs & Contact Us sections at the end**
- These sections should be included as **fallback options if users don't find what they're looking** for or need more personalized consultations
- Place a Contact Us section **below all other sections to allow users to read first** and reduce your customer support load
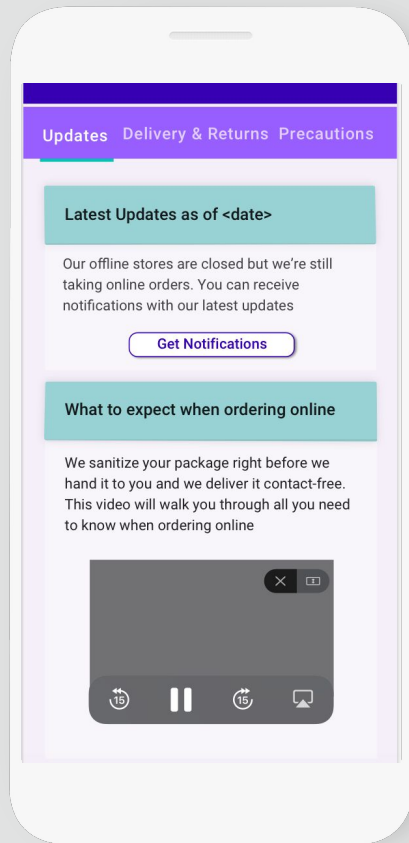
Allow safe exploration

- **Build easy navigation to allow safe exploration** (ie: getting around with minimal physical and cognitive load) to facilitate discoverability
- **Add main categories in page navigation** so users can navigate easily and freely

Communicate priority info

Latest Updates

- **Briefly & clearly communicate latest update headlines** detailing how your services are being affected (including main info about your offline stores, opening hours, delivery & return policies, payment changes, social impact initiatives, etc)
- Clearly **state & update the date** so users can rest assured that these are the latest updates & **refresh your updates daily (including weekends)**. You can add a CTA for users to **get notification updates**
- Consider **creating a video to reduce cognitive load**. The video could walk users through what to expect when placing an order or visiting your store & your key precautions (don't add details that are likely to change fast so the video won't become outdated)

Updates   Delivery & Returns   Precautions

Latest Updates as of <date>

Our offline stores are closed but we're still taking online orders. You can receive notifications with our latest updates

Get Notifications

What to expect when ordering online

We sanitize your package right before we hand it to you and we deliver it contact-free. This video will walk you through all you need to know when ordering online

Google

Communicate priority info
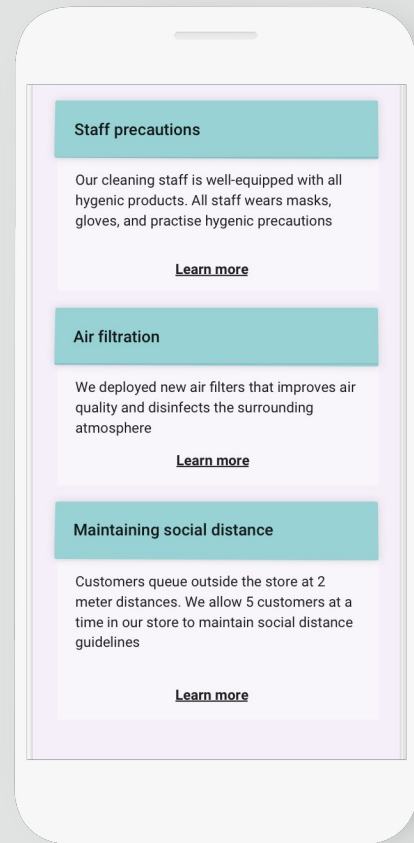
Delivery & returns policy

- Communicate **clear expectations about delivery & return conditions, times, and costs**
- **Benchmark to the original delivery times if it's a small difference** so users feel that the marginal time difference is not too big
- **Emphasize positive changes. Highlight your flexible return policy as a value proposition,** if you have one. Offering cheaper returns with extended durations is key to fulfill the need of an offline experience


Google
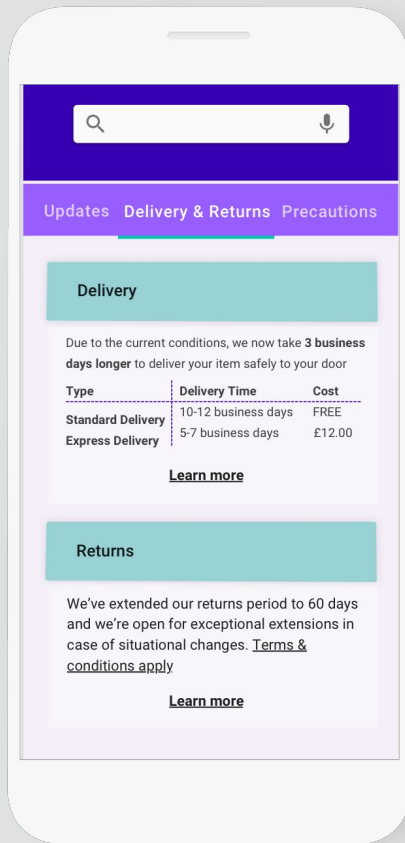
Communicate priority info

Precautionary Measures

- **Communicate & update all precautionary measures** that you have taken to ensure user trust
- **Communicate all your efforts** including sanitization, air filtration, maintaining social distance, special assistance to vulnerable groups, staff safety attire, measuring temperature before check-in, etc
- **Include personal hygiene tips from official guidelines** to ensure the safety of all customers

Disruption Updates

Updates   Delivery & Returns   Precautions

In store precautions

We run daily sanitization and deep cleaning of our stores daily

Learn more

Delivery precautions

We sanitize your package right before we hand it to you and we deliver it contact-free. This means that we drop your sanitized package on your doorstep & stand 2 meters away to make sure you picked it up

Learn more

Staff precautions

Our cleaning staff is well-equipped with all hygenic products. All staff wears masks, gloves, and practise hygenic precautions

Learn more

Air filtration

We deployed new air filters that improves air quality and disinfects the surrounding atmosphere

Learn more

Maintaining social distance

Customers queue outside the store at 2 meter distances. We allow 5 customers at a time in our store to maintain social distance guidelines

Learn more

Google

FAQs & Contact Us

- These are the 2 sections that should **cover all the non-critical pieces of info you didn't cover in the main info page**
- **Place the Contact Us option at the end of the page** to allow users to read through written info first and reduce your customer support load while having it in an accessible place
- **Set user expectations** if there will be long call or chat waiting times
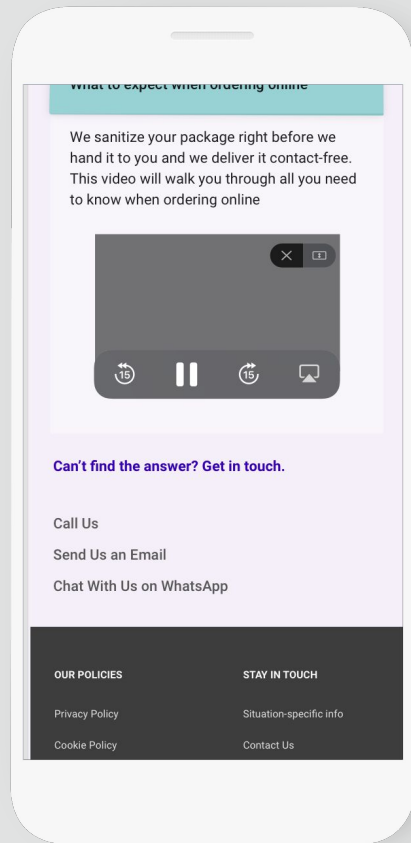
Allow safe exploration

- **Safe exploration** is when you allow user to explore safely & freely without suffering any consequences (eg many clicks, lost time, errors, etc)
- **Pre-expose all your main categories** to allow users to easily navigate and safely explore this section with minimal physical & cognitive load (minimum clicks and thinking)

FAQs / Help Center

Google
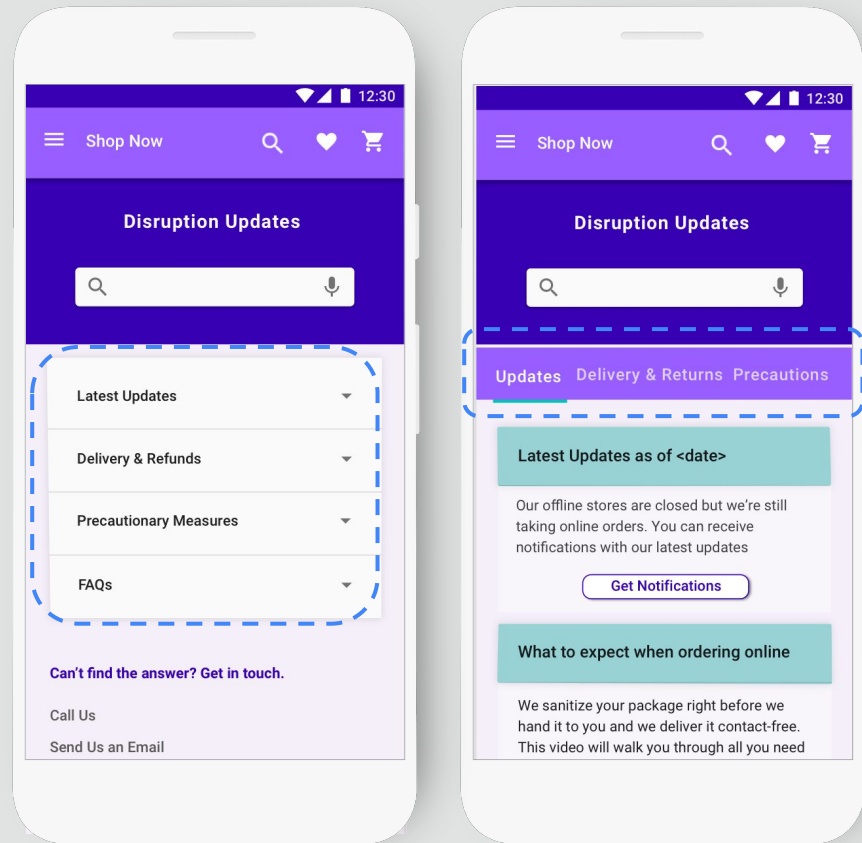
4 main recommendations for your **FAQs/help center**

Your Goal: Facilitate access to all situation-specific FAQs

General FAQ page

- Ensure **this page is differentiated** from the disruption FAQ page - do this with a **clear page title**
- **Link to the disruption FAQ page** incase users accidentally landed on the wrong page

Allow searching for relevant FAQs

- Having a functional search which returns accurate results and provides relevant context is always recommended
- But if your FAQ page is **less than a page** and your search function **doesn't return accurate results, don't add it** to your FAQ page as it could do more harm than good for the user experience
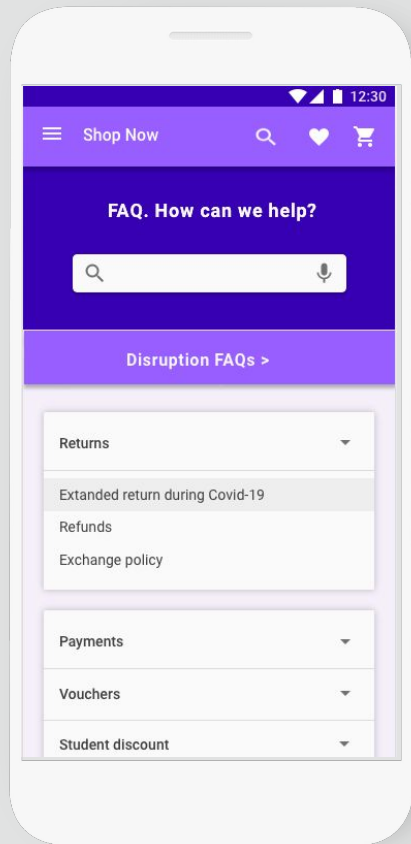
Include a section for situation-related FAQs

- Be **as exhaustive as possible** in covering all FAQs that are not big enough to be stand-alone categories on your dedicated info page
- Highlight **the most popular questions first**
- **Don't hesitate to cover FAQs when the answers are already covered in the dedicated info page** and link to it whenever relevant

Keep improving your content

- **Collect feedback about the usefulness of your FAQs**
- Keep updating and **improving your content** based on feedback
- Use official and credible source

Google

General FAQ page

- It's always useful to maintain a general FAQ page that answers product or site specific information not necessarily related to ongoing disruption
- Ensure **this page is differentiated** from the disruption FAQ page - do this with a **clear page title**
- **Link to the disruption FAQ** page incase users accidentally landed on the wrong page

Allow searching for relevant FAQs

**When to use:** if your FAQ page is more than one page

- Having a **functional search** which returns accurate results and provides relevant context is always recommended
- **If you have a single FAQ page, you don't need a search bar.** It might introduce complexity that doesn't enhance the experience
- But if your FAQ page is **less than a page** and your search function **doesn't return accurate results, don't add it** to your FAQ page as it could do more harm than good for the user experience
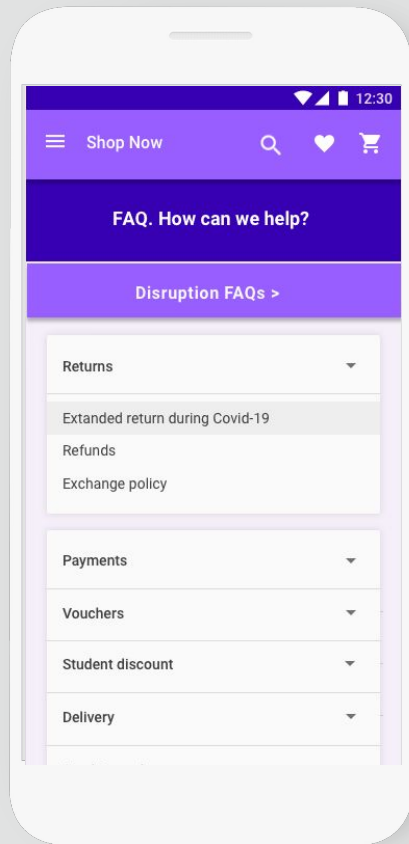
Include a section for situation-related FAQs

- **Be as exhaustive as possible** in covering all FAQs that are not big enough to be stand-alone categories on your dedicated info page
- **Highlight the most popular questions first**
- **Don't be afraid to cover FAQs when the answers are already covered in the dedicated info page** and link to it whenever relevant

Google
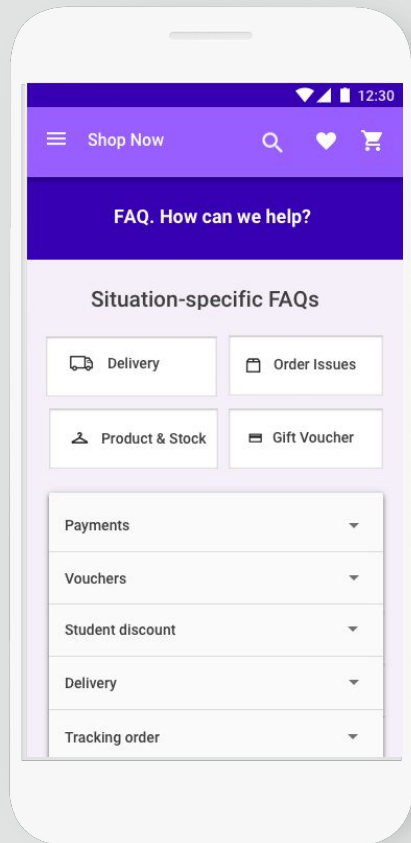
Keep updating and improving your content

- You want to ensure you are providing users with **relevant information**
- **Use official and credible source**
- **Asking users to provide feedback** is a great way to gauge whether you are answering their questions
- Keep this question **simple and to the point** - avoid over complicating it as you are more likely to get less responses
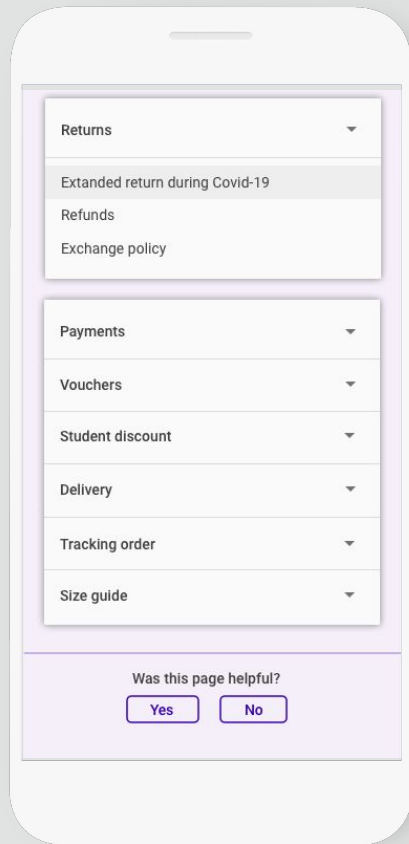
Thank You

We'd love to hear your feedback, please submit your feedback here

Google