YouTube

Culture & Trends Report

YouTube Shopping

How Creative Formats Supercharge
Holiday Shopping on YouTube

Seasonal Formats Turn Holiday Viewing Into Holiday Shopping

Reliable content formats are the center of seasonal spectacles on YouTube, creating new holiday traditions for millions of shoppers and creators. These rituals provide a moment of authentic connection with creators that audiences look forward to all year long. Formats like Vlogmas, a digital Advent calendar where creators post daily vlogs from December 1 to 25, have become institutions that directly drive holiday spending and shopping trends across the platform. Advent calendar reviews and post-holiday hauls extend the shopping window on both ends of December. Finally, gamified shopping turns product discovery into fast-paced entertainment, transforming store walk-throughs and gift exchanges into high-energy spectacles.

67%

According to an NRG study conducted in the U.S., 67% of online 14- to 44-year-olds agree that they like to check YouTube videos about products before buying.

Source: Google/NRG, YouTube Trends Survey, U.S., Apr. 2026, n=939 online people age 14–44.

Personal wish lists serve as soft-launch recommendations grounded in creators' own sense of style. Videos with "Wishlist" and "Christmas", "Holiday", or "Santa" in the title uploaded between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31, 2025, amassed over **90M views** during the same period.

Source: YouTube Data, Global, Sept. 1 – Dec. 25, 2025.

This report is a retrospective analysis of proven holiday formats that creators have historically used to spotlight recommended products–and, with YouTube Shopping, now use to tag and sell those items directly within their videos. To isolate the highest-performing seasonal templates and inspire creators and brands ahead of the upcoming holiday season, the YouTube Culture & Trends team analyzed the most frequently used keywords across the top 2,000 most-transacted shopping videos of Q4 2025. Additionally, the team partnered with NRG to survey active online consumers ages 14–44 in the U.S. about their interests and attitudes towards the internet.

Vlogmas Is the Ultimate YouTube Tradition

One of YouTube's most cherished traditions, Vlogmas is a content format where creators share their unfiltered lives with their audience through 25 consecutive daily uploads in December. Invented by creator **Ingrid Nilsen** in 2011 — after asking her subscribers for a catchy name for a digital Advent calendar — the format has grown into a beloved comfort-watching ritual where internet culture and holiday spirit intersect.

Expanding organically from Nilsen's original series, Vlogmas has become an institution for creators and viewers alike. Next-generation creators like **Nicole Laeno** have embraced the tradition, a 25-day vlogging marathon that generated more than 5M views. The candid and intimate format lets viewers see the products embedded into everyday routines and hear recommendations that land like advice from a friend. Vlogmas also serves as an incubator for viral retail concepts, such as 2025's "burr baskets" — cozy, curated winter care packages — which became a breakout seasonal micro-trend for creators like **Badbishlily**.

250K

There were more than 250K videos with "vlogmas" in the title uploaded in Dec. 2025.

Source: YouTube Data, Global/U.S., Dec. 2025.

Zoe Sugg Case Study

Creator **Zoe Sugg** has kept up the Vlogmas tradition since 2013, delivering a 25-episode playlist full of cozy domestic scenes every December for devoted fans (over 13 million cumulative views on their Vlogmas videos from 2025). Sugg has mastered the art of varying each daily episode's focus while delivering the holiday merriment that fans look forward to all year: caroling, decorating, family visits, and shopping hauls. For viewers accustomed to weekly or monthly uploads, each daily Vlogmas episode feels like unwrapping a gift. Vlogmas often culminates in its own grand finale in the "What I Got For Christmas" video format, which YouTube Shopping Affiliate creators like **Alisha Marie** use as a capstone for their Vlogmas playlists and a bridge into the post-holiday season.

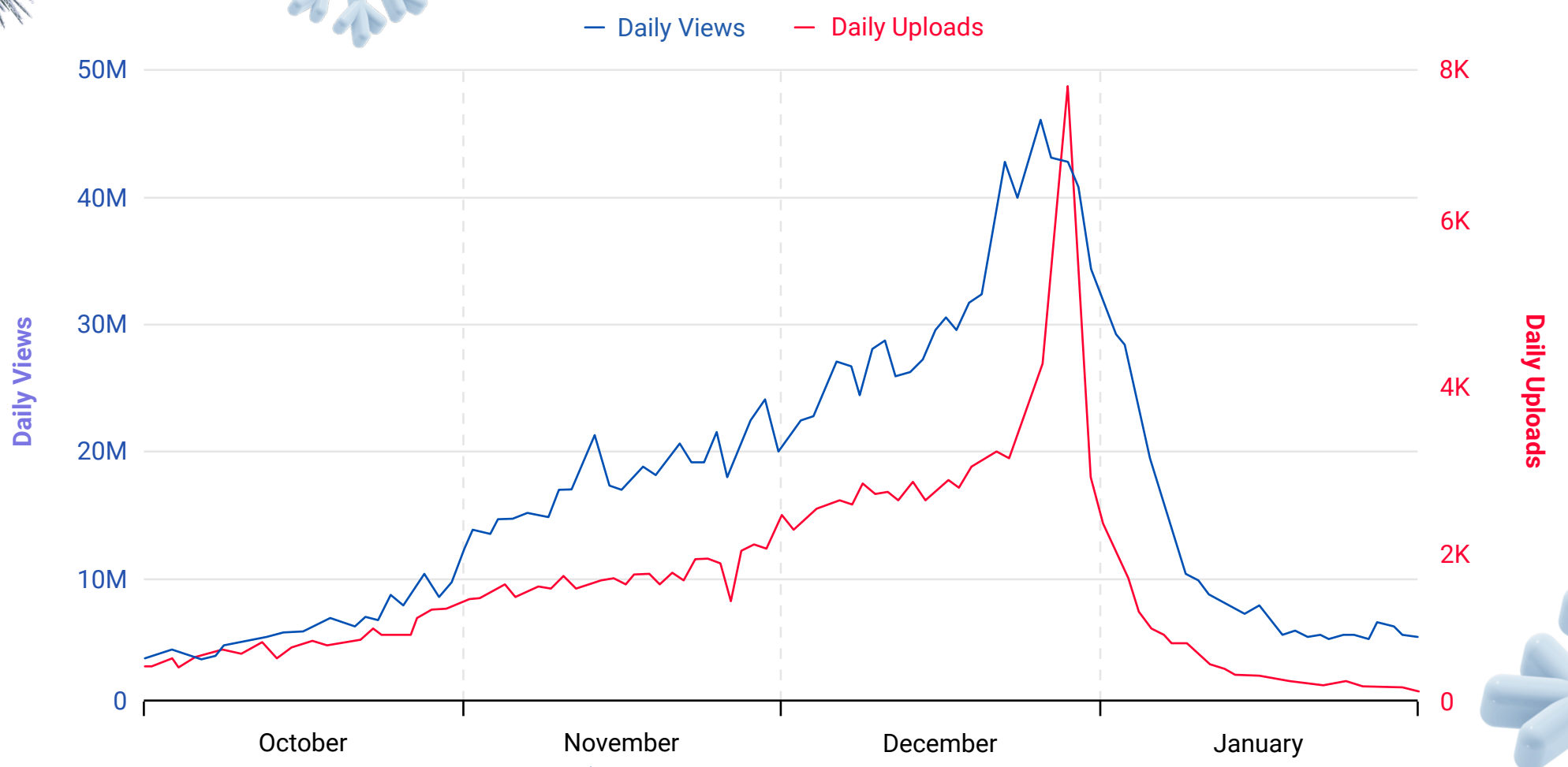


Vlogmas Culminates With Christmas Day

The “What I Got for Christmas” video format surges in views between December 25–28. These unboxings appeal to a wide variety of viewers thanks to genuine, unscripted endorsements and the effect of seeing products in real use. The excitement generated by these unboxings becomes a powerful driver of self-directed spending.

Holiday Shopping Videos Peak at Christmas

Daily Views and Uploads of Videos Related to Shopping with “Holiday” or “Christmas” in the Title



Source: YouTube Data, Global, Oct. 1, 2025–Jan. 31, 2026.

Our research found that "What I Got for Christmas" videos were effective: Videos with "What I Got" and "Christmas" in the title uploaded between December 1, 2025, and January 31, 2026, amassed over 30M views during the same period.[1] Furthermore, according to an NRG study conducted in the U.S., 71% of online 14- to 44-year-olds agree that YouTube has helped them discover new brands and products.[2]

[1] Source: YouTube Data, Global, Dec. 1, 2025–Jan. 31, 2026.
[2] Source: Google/NRG, YouTube Trends Survey, US, Apr. 2026, n=939 online people age 14–44.

Advent Calendars & Post-Holiday Resets Bookend the Season

Case Study

Shopping Affiliate creator **Lauren Mae Beauty** exemplifies this value-driven approach, tallying up all the mini- and full-sized products within each year's release to help viewers find the holiday kits with the best value. Even **Theresa Krug**, who covers a range of off-the-wall releases like a Netflix calendar, retains the same value-focused framing in her frank assessments of each product. Honesty pays dividends for creators, building deep audience trust in reviews of luxury and mass-market products alike.

Recent video formats have extended both ends of the traditional holiday shopping window. **Advent calendar reviews** of beauty, skin care, and pop-culture collections began taking off earlier than expected in 2025. Videos with Advent Calendar in the title uploaded between Septemeber 1, and December 31, 2025 gained 14M views in September, topped to 75M in October, and tripled to 280M in November as hyper-prepared shoppers tuned in to the topic early. Creators who provided early reviews of these releases capitalized on consumer interest in prestige kits that sell out far in advance, while helping viewers find the holiday sets and value-priced alternatives that deliver the strongest return. Over the holiday period, videos with Advent calendar in the title received over 850M views.

850M

Videos with "Advent calendar" in the title uploaded between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31, 2025 amassed over 850M views during the same period.

Source: YouTube data, Global, Sept. 1–Dec. 31, 2025.





Late-Season Momentum: Clearance Hauls & New Year Resets Extend the Holidays

Two other content formats drive post-holiday sales: **clearance hauls** and **New Year resets**. Clearance hauls appeal to the same value-driven shoppers who seek out honest breakdowns. Channels like **The Deal Guy** drive Q1 shopping momentum with savvy roundups like “10 Things You Should ALWAYS Buy RIGHT AFTER Christmas.” These highlight both practical seasonal markdowns (extension cords, winter clothing) and bargains on leftover gifts (TVs, gift baskets).





New year resets are a related format focused on home organization and establishing fresh routines. YouTube Shopping Affiliate creator **Til Vaccum Do Us Part** demonstrates the direct conversion power of this format in **their video** "NEW YEAR PANTRY ORGANIZATION REFRESH," using the format to capture their own post-holiday cleanup and decluttering efforts, recommending storage solutions and household essentials along the way.

Emerging Formats Reinvent the Season

Top Gamification Content Formats

Shopping Spree → Big-box retailers + checkout suspense

Time Limit → High-speed in-store product

Secret Santa → Family dynamics + creative competition

Budget Challenge → Inventive DIY with everyday goods

Another standout trend in 2025 was the rise of gamification content formats that turn shopping into a game, sibling rivalry, or timed store challenge. These videos transform static roundups into high-energy product discovery, letting viewers share in the vicarious thrill of a shopping spree or the triumph of finding the most ridiculous gift for a sibling. These uploads sharply gain viewership just before Black Friday and Cyber Monday, maintaining high momentum through mid-December as inspiration for shoppers.

Time-limit formats turn physical store walk-throughs into engaging challenges. Exemplified by videos like “10 Minutes at 5 Below” by **Kamdenboy & Kyraboo**, these foreground authentic reactions and ticking-clock tension while showcasing brand partners’ affordable inventory.

Secret Santa challenges highlight group and family dynamics by adding reality-TV-style stakes to a traditional gift exchange. Uploads like the **Ha Sisters**’ “We Did Secret Santa Challenge…” (1M views) add zany humor while providing inspiration for low-cost novelty gifts.

Similarly, shopping spree formats turn checkout aisles into stages for larger-than-life holiday celebrations. The concept is exemplified by top-performing videos like **Jake Webber’s** “Christmas Shopping Spree!” (3.6M views), which documents a Target trip full of banter, rapid-fire product highlights, and some final intrigue around the total checkout cost.

Finally, budget challenges, in which creators work with familiar materials from mass-market retailers, and showcase resourcefulness. **Ashley Kiely Living** provides a great example with the Short “How To DECORATE A Christmas Hallway For UNDER $100!,” which shows off DIY ingenuity after a trip to Hobby Lobby.

What This Means for You

Keen understanding of **holiday formats** is key to seasonal commercial success. The expansion of the holiday shopping calendar through new formats creates more opportunities for creators and brands to guide shoppers through authentic storytelling.

01 **Publish Early and Often:** The holiday curve begins in September with Advent calendars. Start publishing early to capture the viewership surge and the **67%** of shoppers who check YouTube before buying.

02 **Leverage Episodic Rituals:** Use the daily cadence of Vlogmas to build trust. Unscripted integration of tagged products into daily December vlogs drives sales authentically.

03 **Gamify the Experience:** Don't just list products; create a challenge. Use time limits, budget caps, or Secret Santa rules to make product discovery more engaging.

04 **Capture the Post-Christmas Momentum:** Plan for the December 26 shift. Transition from gift-giving content to “What I Got” unboxings, clearance hauls and organization-focused "New Year Resets" to capture self-directed spending.

The beauty of many of these formats — from Vlogmas episodes to Secret Santa challenges — is their adaptability. As new products emerge throughout the 2026 holiday season, creators can tap into authentic, time-tested formats to produce high-converting shoppable content.