



Stores reopening: how to shop safely

Here's what shopping in store will look like from May 18th. Decisions and rules to protect consumer and seller.

Two meters of spacing, quarantined products and a series of security and sanitation measures: this is how shopping changes with the reopening of the shops on May 18th

Rainbow Challenge by Louis Vuitton, to celebrate the reopening of the stores. The windows of Galleria Vittorio Emanuele in Milan and Rome Etoile will exhibit the two winning designs of the Italian competition (elected by an internal commission), while in Montenapoleone, a video installation will create a kaleidoscopic overview of all the designs made by Italian employees who have participated.



Having made some considerations on the impact that Covid-19 has and will have on the fashion industry, on May 18th the shutters will be raised only if the shops follow some rules aimed at protecting the consumer and those who work behind the counter. Buying and selling revolve around two absolute concepts: distancing and hygiene / sanitation.

Limited admissions and shopping by appointment

Let's start with some numbers: only one customer will enter the stores with sizes of less than 40 square meters, while **the distance between people increases to two meters**. Therefore, each store, based on the size of the premises, will have to calculate a maximum number of customers to guarantee the internal safety distance. In order to spread out the accesses, it will be possible to extend the opening hours of the shops.

To do this, the Inditex Group (which includes Bershka, Massimo Dutti, Pull & Bear, Oysho and Zara) has not only increased the number of security personnel to control the flow of people, but has created **ground distance indicators** in the places where are usually created gatherings, such as crate area and rehearsal lounges. As for the **changing rooms**, the use will be alternated to ensure the minimum distance between people and the presence of the companion is prohibited (you will have to do without the precious advice of mom, friend or boyfriend). In anticipation of the reopening, the Capri Group, at the head of Alcott and Gutteridge, also provided to operators the **Termoscan** technology for further control of the temperature at the entrance.

Rinascente has instead drawn up a proactive protocol in collaboration with the Politecnico di Torini **to protect workers and customers** *"The document incorporates all the indications of government and administrative measures. In addition, signs and banners of reminds are arranged in the store, to observe the rules. A three-way path has been studied: entry for employees, entry for customers and exit, to facilitate and control the flow"* - said Pierluigi Cocchini, CEO of Rinascente in Turin, and adds - *"The lockdown brought attention on digital, after the sale on demand, in June we are ready to launch e-commerce"*.

Rinascente, Turin



Small and medium-sized shops that have more limited spaces available, have arranged **shopping by appointment** *"For our customers, the real factor is very important: jewelry must be seen, touched, worn."* - commented Giorgio Bisi, Marketing Manager of Nove25 - *"For those who want to skip the line, we have a dedicated agenda divided into 30-minute slots"*.

Not only that, there are those who look at **technology as one of the fundamental means to facilitate customers and respond to the crisis.** *"For the reopening we are scrupulously adhering to the protocols and regulations of the Government and of the Lombardy Region (editor's note: each region has some nuances based on the situation recorded) to protect our collaborators and our customers. We are also developing a dedicated app to make appointments in boutiques, in order to facilitate the shopping experience as much as possible"* - said Carla Creda Biffi, Head of Buying at the Biffi Boutiques Group (Biffi Boutiques Milano, Banner Milano and Biffi Boutiques Bergamo) and she talked with sweet amazement about the desire for rebirth and beauty of some customers, who have also been shopping during the quarantine period, using the digital platform - *"Online sales on our e-commerce biffi.com are going well, we noticed an initial increase in luxury leisurewear and we are registering a good movement of very beautiful and special RTW garments and spring and summer accessories, so we think there is still a desire for novelty and freshness"*.

Biffi Boutique, Milan



"We have developed a Conciergerie service with specialized personnel through a dedicated system by appointment" - said Francesco Galli, CEO of Folli Follie - "Our purchasing processes will be increasingly digital, with e-commerce now integrated and full offline support. Our goal is to offer customers a unique and tailored shopping experience, obviously in total safety."

Armani, on the other hand, presents the **Book an Appointment** service, which involves all the Group's points of sale: in order to guarantee maximum customer attention and greater ease of access to the points of sale, the service offers the possibility to book directly online (armani.com) your personal appointment in the store. By connecting to the website, active worldwide from May, Friday 15th for the Giorgio Armani and Emporio Armani stores, and from June 3rd for the A | X Armani Exchange stores.

Obligatory face masks and free sanitizing

All those who work in the shop, beyond the role they have, must wear masks, while disposable gloves are recommended but not mandatory. In many stores, alcohol-based disinfectants can be used free of charge, placed here and there in the shops to ensure maximum hygiene. All the keyboards (PC, speaker or POS) and all the touch screens must also be cleaned with detergents or special foam.

Prodotti in quarantena e sanificazione

The Protocol on the contrast to Covid-19 with reference to the rules on hygiene and safety of the environments, provides that the shop ensures **daily cleaning and periodic sanitization of the premises**, environments, workplaces. The law does not provide for the sanitization of products,

but the most prudent and attentive retailers will implement a studied plan that provides for a **quarantine of at least 24 hours and / or steam sanitization at high temperatures in dedicated areas**: once a garment or accessory is worn, this will not be directly exposed. *"The product will be placed on the counter, allowing to respect the distance and the limited contact. As far as footwear is concerned, we will supply disposable socks"* - said Domenico Romano, Head of Marketing AW Lab - *"Once the product has been tried, if it is not purchased, it will be quarantined for three days. In the case of immediate availability, we provide specific sanitisation with an alcoholic product and cloth and with a hot steam emission machine, a system that is available in every store"*.

Garments realized with **the Albini Group's ViroFormula fabrics**, will certainly be exempt from these sanitization processes. These fabrics are creating using **HeiQ Viroblock technology, which protects against viruses and bacteria, with proven efficacy against Coronaviruses**. *"In the critical and uncertain period in which we find ourselves today, we decided not to stop: on the contrary, we continued to work on new solutions and products, always ready to face new challenges"* - explains Stefano Albini, President of Albini. *"In this context, we developed the ViroFormula fabrics, which provide active protection from viruses and bacteria."*

More aware consumer

Between information shared with the brands and the rules that will come into force next Monday, **frantic and crowded shopping is now an old story**. The traditional pre-Coronavirus retail was already changing its appearance, overwhelmed by the Copernican digital revolution, with an interest in the fluid, effective and cross-channel customer experience. Selling a product was an integral part of an on / offline experience. **Today, the perspective is very different**, especially if you think of the physical store and its more social aspect.

Shopping will require more awareness, not only as regards the choice of the product purchased, but also in acting: respecting the distance, times and queues or order in the store, will be a precious gesture of respect and care for others and also ourselves.