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MARKETING

Black Friday Preparation Checklist

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CONTENTS

What's inside

01 Your Black Friday preparation checklist p.03

02 Do your math p.03

03 Decide your goal, KPI, and timeline p.05

04 Set your store up for your goal p.06

05 Fix your checkout's biggest leaks p.07

06 Recover the carts that get away p.08

Your Black Friday preparation checklist

Every store gets more traffic on Black Friday. Only some turn that traffic into sales. This checklist walks you through the 5 things to sort out before the weekend hits, so you're one of them.

Work through the 5 steps in order, ideally starting 8 to 12 weeks before Black Friday. Each step includes a quick explanation and a real example to show you what it looks like in practice. Keep this handy and check items off as you go.

Do your math

Secure your margin and your stock before you touch anything else.

Check your margin first. Take your promotional price, then subtract the cost of the product, payment fees, fulfillment, and any shipping you're covering. Whatever is left is your real profit.
Just because other stores offer huge discounts doesn't mean you have to. Don't go beyond what your store can actually afford.

EXAMPLE

Product sells for $100
Cost to make it $60
Price after 30% discount $70
What's left for you $10

Then check your stock. Take your total inventory, subtract anything already committed to pending orders, damaged or unavailable units, and the safety stock you don't want to touch. What's left is what you can actually afford to promote.

- [ ] **No sales history to work from?**
  Plan for around 30 to 50% more than your normal monthly volume, at least for your bestsellers. Leftover stock can carry over into December.

- [ ] **Just starting out?**
  Stock up only as much as you can comfortably afford. Print-on-demand or dropshipping are also options if you don't want to hold inventory at all.

- [ ] **Decide in advance what happens once the weekend ends.**
  Set a checkpoint on Saturday or Sunday to check sell-through, remaining stock, and fulfillment capacity, then decide next steps.

Decide your goal, KPI, and timeline

Know what success actually means for you before you plan anything.

Pick one primary goal: more revenue, higher average order value, new customers, or clearing inventory.

Then link that to one KPI that tells you if you hit it. Revenue can look great on the surface even when heavy discounts or fulfillment problems quietly erode it, so decide upfront what success means for you.

- [ ] **8 to 12 weeks out**
  Lock your goal and KPI
- [ ] **4 to 6 weeks out**
  Finalize offer rules, shipping, and return conditions
- [ ] **2 to 3 weeks out**
  Test everything end to end
- [ ] **Final week**
  Double check stock and freeze non-critical changes

Also think about your local market. Black Friday isn't necessarily the biggest shopping moment everywhere. Mexico has El Buen Fin, and in India, regional festivals can matter more.

Set your store up for your goal

Make sure everything in your store actually supports what you're going for.

Attracting new customers is very different from bringing existing ones back, so shape your store around your actual goal:

- [ ] **Targeting loyal customers?**
  Try a password protected VIP section with exclusive offers.
- [ ] **Targeting new customers?**
  Make your shipping and return policies easy to find.
- [ ] **Trying to increase cross-selling?**
  Put bundles or related products front and center.

A few other things that make a store more appealing to Black Friday shoppers:

- [ ] **Use your announcement bar for your single best offer**
- [ ] **Add trust signals below your hero banner, like press mentions, review counts, or star ratings**
- [ ] **Put your bestsellers with the biggest discounts front and center**
- [ ] **On product pages, make the discount visually obvious, write benefit-first descriptions, and place trust badges next to the buy button**
- [ ] **Show real customer reviews and photos, they convert better than polished product shots**
- [ ] **Check your speed and security ahead of time, including mobile load speed, checkout under traffic spikes, SSL, and bot protection**

Fix your checkout's biggest leaks

Make the path from "I want this" to "I bought this" as short as possible.

Shoppers abandon carts for predictable reasons: 40% because extra costs are too high, 18% because they're forced to create an account, and 17% because checkout takes too long.

Walk through the entire process yourself, from product page to completed payment, on both desktop and mobile. Ask yourself:

- [ ] **How many clicks does it take to check out?**
- [ ] **Am I asking for information I don't really need?**
- [ ] **Do shipping costs or delivery times show up too late in the process?**
- [ ] **Does every button, form, payment method, and discount code actually work?**

Recover the carts that get away

Even with a smooth checkout, some shoppers will still leave without buying.

On average, 70% of carts get abandoned. Recovery emails can bring back 10 to 20% of those, so they're worth setting up properly. In each email, show the actual cart contents, the current live price, and the real promotion deadline.

Email is also worth using beyond automated recovery flows. For Black Friday, start early with a teaser of what's coming, even before every deal is finalized. You don't need to reveal prices yet, a simple teaser builds anticipation and keeps your store top of mind.

As Black Friday gets closer, a simple three-email cadence works well:

- [ ] **One about a week before**
- [ ] **One during Black Friday week**
- [ ] **One on the day itself**

REFLECT

Jot down what you're taking with you.

Use this space for the ideas, questions, and next steps you want to remember.

Ready to get your store Black Friday ready?

Hostinger eCommerce is built with all of this in mind: fast, secure checkout that holds up under traffic spikes.

Get started →

https://hostingeracademy.com/45NblFy