

NB: For an interview with TRA chairman Gary Grant, please call Victoria on 0207 255 5418

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WISH-LIST TOYS RUNNING OUT

Christmas bargain hunters risk missing out on some must-haves warn toy retailers

The Toy Retailers Association (TRA) has today warned last-minute Christmas shoppers that popular Christmas toys are entering short supply. Toys including Fur Real Biscuit (Hasbro) and Kidizoom Camera (VTech) are running out in toy shops across the country, says the association, which represents 60 per cent of UK toy retailers.

The TRA, which released its list of predicted best selling Christmas toys in October, says that despite low consumer confidence and a slow start to Christmas trading, its members are experiencing the usual rush on the most popular toys - and it is now too late for retailers to increase their orders for more stock in time for Christmas.

TRA chairman Gary Grant said: "Every year we see the most popular toys run out as Christmas approaches. This year, although parents may be spending less, we are finding they still want to get that wish-list item for their children. As a result, our most popular lines are selling as fast as in previous years." While retailers are being more cautious about their stock levels, they are still actually chasing the must have toys.

Mr Grant adds: "While people may be waiting later to do their Christmas shopping, they still buy presents in the end. Parents who are holding out for the pre-Christmas sales are running the risk of missing out on the must-have items. We know from previous years that many parents who leave their shopping late end up paying higher prices for wish-list toys on auction websites, so when buying toys, patience doesn't always pay off. Many bargains are already in store with retailers offering discounts even though the window may not say 'Sale'."

There is still hope for parents wanting to avoid a frantic last-minute search for their child's most wanted Christmas present. The TRA advises shoppers to talk to retailers if a toy isn't on the

shelf. "While it is too late to order more stock in, in some cases deliveries are pending," adds Mr Grant.

While the TRA advocates shopping around for must-have toys, Mr Grant warns against relying on online retailers. "If a toy isn't available online, there is nobody to ask for advice on an alternative. Toy retailers know better than most what children will enjoy - parents who are struggling to get hold of that must-have item should use retailers' expertise to find an alternative that will bring just as much fun and joy on Christmas Day."

ENDS

For more information, or to interview Gary Grant, contact Grayling on 020 7255 1100.

Notes to editors:

- Toy lines in low supply include:
 - Playdoh Ice Cream Set
 - Cup Cake Maker
 - High School Musical 3 Dance Mat
- The TRA's predicted 'Dream Dozen' of best sellers for Christmas is as follows (in alphabetical order):
 - BABY born® with Magic Potty, Zapf Creation® (RRP £34.99)
 - BakuganT Starter Pack, Spinmaster (RRP £12.99)
 - Ben 10 Deluxe Omnitrix, Bandai (RRP £15.99)
 - Catcha Beast, Bandai (RRP £19.99)
 - Cupcake Maker, Character Options (RRP £29.99)
 - Elmo Live, Mattel (RRP £59.99)
 - FurReal Biscuit, My Lovin' Pup, Hasbro (RRP £149.99)
 - High School Musical 3 Musical Dance Mat, Vivid Imaginations (RRP £22.99)
 - In The Night Garden Upsy Daisy and Her Chase and Play Bed, Hasbro (RRP £34.99)
 - My Life, Flair Leisure Products (RRP £49.99)
 - Rescue Pals Swim To Me Puppy, MGA Entertainment Ltd (RRP £29.99)
 - Star Wars Clone Trooper Voice Changer, Hasbro (RRP £29.99)
- The independent predictions are based on the Toy Retailers Association's 50 years experience as the voice of retailers and take into account what consumers are requesting, what excites children and the latest trends in new products.
- The TRA has around 250 members accounting for 60% of toy retailers.

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