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Amazon UK launches 'try before you buy' fashion service

Prime Wardrobe delivers three to eight clothing items with no upfront charge.

Amazon is launching its “try before you buy” fashion service in the UK, marking the online retailer’s latest push into the clothing market.

5 Wardrobe shoppers who signed up to Amazon’s subscription service are offered discounts relating to the number of items they choose to keep – beginning with £5 off when they choose items worth £100 or more and £20 discounts if they keep items worth £200 or more. Shoppers can return any unwanted items free of charge within seven days.

10 “Fit is an important factor when it comes to buying clothes and shoes, and with Prime Wardrobe, Amazon Prime members can try their purchases in the comfort of their own home at no extra cost,” said Xavier Garambois, vice-president of Amazon Europe’s retail division.

15 Amazon does not give separate figures for fashion but its clothing sales are thought to be rising by more than 7% at a time when traditional high street rivals are closing stores.

20 The company began selling clothing in the UK only a decade ago and has built a market share of 4.6%, not far behind Marks & Spencer’s online clothing market share. Next remains by far the biggest online seller of clothes, with 12.5% of the market, followed by John Lewis, Asos and eBay, according to analysts at stockbroker Société Générale.

However, the vast majority of clothes are still bought on the high street, making Amazon a minor company in the overall market with just 1% of sales, according to the bank.

25 The fashion service also plays to Amazon’s aim of locking shoppers into its Prime service, which charges £79 a year for unlimited free deliveries as well as film, TV and music streaming services.

By Sarah Butler, adapted from *theguardian.com*, October 20th, 2018