

The pandemic has caused an unprecedented surge in online food shopping. Our research found that a quarter of us bought food online for the first time this year, with the highest uptake being among people under 35. The unexpected googly that 2020 has bowled at the nation will hopefully be a oneoff. But it has permanently changed the way we consume: six in ten of us say that changes we've made to our overall shopping habits this year will stick over the long term.

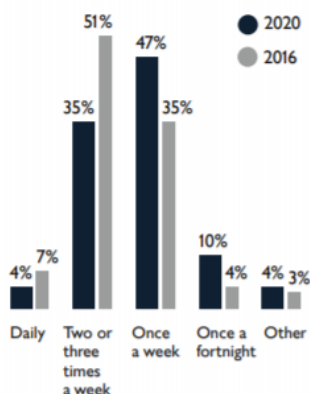
SHOPPING

A huge 69% of people who shopped for food online during the pandemic plan to continue doing so. Over three-quarters of us now do at least some of our grocery shopping online, compared to 61% a year ago. We have seen first-hand this online surge. Waitrose.com has more than trebled its size and is on track to become a £1 billion business in its own right by the end of the year. Before Covid struck, our online food operations accounted for 5% of our total business. This figure will soon be 20%. To cater for this we are growing our delivery capacity to over 250,000 delivery slots a week, up from 55,000 pre-Covid. Over recent months Waitrose.com has increased its online sales faster than any other grocer, according to independent figures from Kantar. Our research exposed some unexpected trends. It's often assumed that young people are society's digital natives. However while one in four people across all age groups bought food online for the first time this year, the figure rises to a third for people under the age of 35. Conversely, just one in five people over 55 made their online food shopping debut in 2020. It seems that when it comes to buying groceries online, the older generations have been leading the way. Four in ten of us embraced al-

AN ONLINE SURGE



2020 VS 2016 HOW OFTEN DO YOU SHOP FOR FOOD?



ternative delivery methods over the pandemic, for example by ordering restaurant delivery boxes or speedy shopping services. Waitrose on-demand grocery trial with Deliveroo now reaches over three million households. Nearly two-thirds of those who used such services plan to continue. People aged between 18 and 24 are the most likely to carry on. But physical stores remain vitally important. And almost 70% of people who used local convenience stores to 'top up' shop over the Covid crisis will continue to do so