

# CHECK OUT

**IN THIS SECTION**

**81 FLYING SQUAD**  
Your style ranking will take off in these bomber jackets

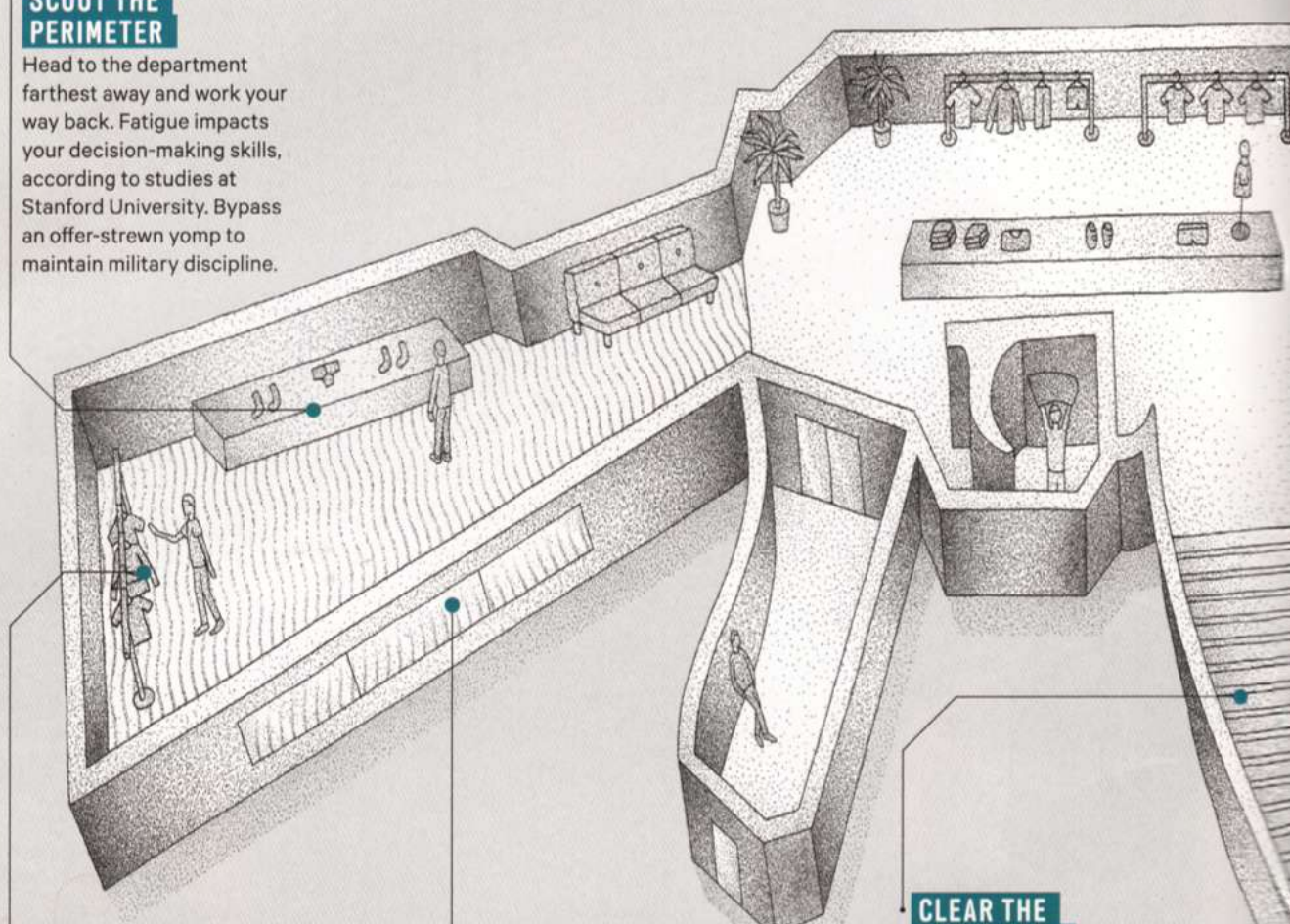
**83 WORN SLIPPY**  
If your trainers still have laces, you're trying far too hard

**85 BAGGING AREA**  
Give it some leather with a high-end cowhide holdall

**87 SWEAT EQUITY**  
Trade up: invest in a tracksuit top with added design value

**SCOUT THE PERIMETER**

Head to the department farthest away and work your way back. Fatigue impacts your decision-making skills, according to studies at Stanford University. Bypass an offer-strewn yomp to maintain military discipline.



**WATCH FOR DECOYS**

Inexpensive items like socks and underwear are mixed in with luxury booby traps like Italian cashmere sweaters to ensnare you while you're stocking up on staples. Sidestep pitfalls by shopping online for basics that you don't need to try on.

**NEGOTIATE MINEFIELDS**

Carpets slow you down and create a sense of luxury to encourage generous spending, says Karl McKeever, founder of retail consultancy Visual Thinking. When your combat boots stop clicking on lino, be on the alert for exploding prices.

**CLEAR THE STAIRWELLS**

Occupy the high ground the hard way. Stores mobilise most of their advertising on escalators, which are positioned so that you can be ambushed by more high-value items. Man up and take the stairs – you're in the army now, soldier.



### STAY ON RED ALERT

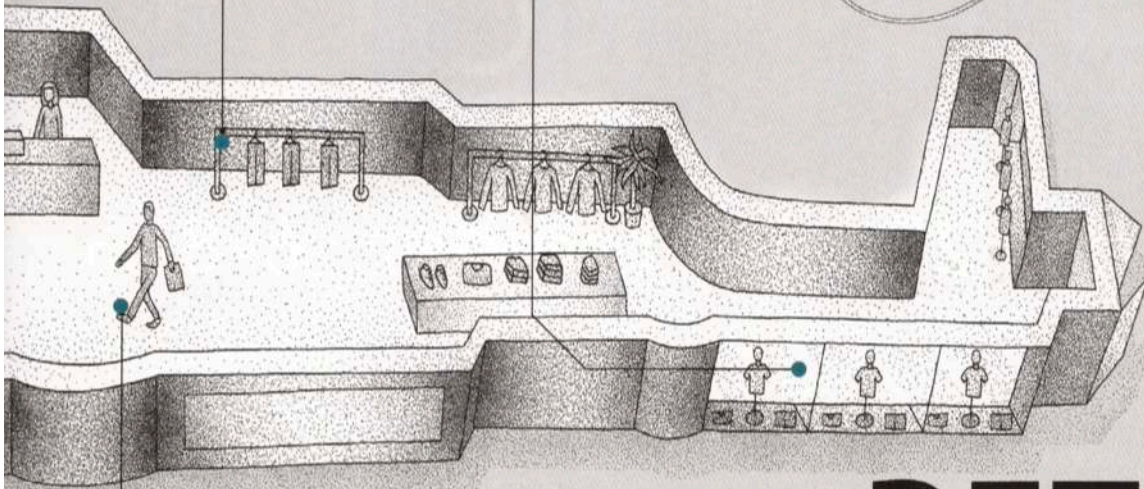
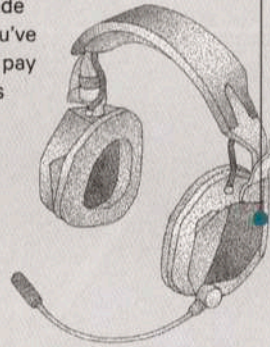
Low-value items are stationed near counters to strike while your guard is down. Red price tags in particular are a weapon of psychological warfare: Philadelphia Uni found men tend to think they're a better deal than black.

### INFILTRATE THE FLOOR

High-profit items in window displays are repeated in the entrance for a desire-pincer move, says McKeever. Evade the fragrance booths if you've no clear objective: brands pay for them and their femmes fatales are commission-earning counter agents.

### PHONE FOR EXTRACTION

Stores manipulate music to make you buy, says McKeever. Drown it out with headphones – and maybe fire up some Justin Bieber. Aalto University found that music you dislike reduces financial risk-taking. Hey, war is hell.



### HIT YOUR TARGET

Big prices blitz you at the entrance to each department, making everything after seem cheaper. Outflank them by heading straight to the back and retracing your steps. Suddenly, everything will appear about as appealing as a boil-in-the-bag meal.

# RETAIL BLACK OPS

Don't go rogue – or over budget – when on a big seasonal restock mission. Use this classified information to stick to your strategy and avoid collateral damage to your wallet

### DON'T SKIP THE RECONNAISSANCE

Scout the stock online first: you're more susceptible to impulse buys if you don't have a clear mission, says McKeever. Printing a map will also help you to follow orders. All targets met? Over, and out of there.

