

## Buyer Tips

Trade shows and exhibitions offer a great opportunity for buyers to meet global exhibitors related to their niche. No matter how small your retail business may be, the benefits of attending a trade show /exhibition far outweigh any reason not to attend. These conferences have been developed to give retail owners, buyers and managers the opportunity to meet existing suppliers, conduct business meetings, network with others in retail and investigate new products. They also offer a chance to attend live demonstrations and compare products. Interested buyers can sign on-site contracts with several exhibitors as per their requirements and preferences.

Once you've decided to attend a trade show/exposition, you'll need to plan. To get the most from attending the expo you should have a strategy. Knowing what you would like to accomplish before, during, and after the show will help maximize your time. Here are some tips for buyers to help make the most of trade shows.

### Pre-Show Planning

- Avoid the confusion at the show by pre-registering [www.123kidsexpo.com/buyer/registration](http://www.123kidsexpo.com/buyer/registration)
- Have a goal of what you want to accomplish, such as which vendors to visit, what items you need to purchase, what seminars/workshops to attend and which new product lines you'd like to see.
- Know your inventory needs before the show. More efficient purchasing will save you money by grouping your orders to take advantage of discounts and special offers, as well as keeping you within budget.
- Set appointments with any vendor you'd like to meet with during the show.
- Plan to bring any employees who would greatly benefit from attending the trade show.
- Pack comfortable shoes, wear business casual clothing and remember you are representing your business.
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### Where to Stay

- Check the trade show organizers website for hotels.
- Make reservations for transportation and lodging early.
- Try to book a hotel very close to the trade show.

### At the Expo

- An updated show guide will probably be provided when you arrive. Take some time to revise your plan if necessary.
- Make sure your badge is in plain sight while browsing the exposition hall.
- Have a pen and notebook ready for notes and use business cards to jot down information on the back.
- Ask appropriate questions about any products or services you're not familiar with.
- Take advantage of show specials, discounts, and sales bargains. Check freight costs and delivery dates.
- Keep track of orders placed so you'll stay within your budget.
- If you are planning to purchase any custom merchandise, bring your artwork and other files on a flash drive.
- Make use of the show amenities, mother's nursing station, refresh station, on site cafeteria and kids zone.
- Help yourself to freebies, product samples and literature
- Take a break after a few hours to refresh, have a snack and get some fresh air.

Network. Most importantly, exhibitions and trade shows offer wide networking opportunities for exhibitors and buyers alike.

- Bring plenty of your business cards.
- Don't be afraid to introduce yourself to others.
- Attend seminars and workshops.

### After the Expo

- Identify if your objectives were met.
- Follow-up with vendors on purchases
- Follow-up throughout the year for promotions and purchasing opportunities.
- Participate in surveys to help us improve your experience at the 123 Kids Expo.