

**For what it's worth
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When was the last time you walked into a shop and got out with what you wanted in less than five minutes?

If you're anything like me, the answer is sometime last century.

Why is that?

Because we are spoilt for choice and the choices just keep mounting, as we are bombarded by newer, and supposedly better, products.

It seems that we can't help ourselves. We simply have to look around and compare items of a similar nature to see what's best, what's cheapest and what has the most compelling ingredients.

All that takes time and effort ... too much time and too much effort, I say.

I don't remember that being the case when I walked into a store 10 years ago.

It was so much easier in the good old days, when the options were limited to a handful of jeans, headphones, toothpaste, beauty creams, detergents and, even, chocolate bars.

Now, it's nothing short of an endurance test.

Who ever called this retail therapy? If anything, you often leave the shop more stressed and harried than when you entered.

The word "therapy" is right, but not in a positive way. In fact, after a shopping expedition you could well and truly do with a trained therapist to help you handle your angst.

I put myself to the test the other day when I walked into a chain store.

I decided to count the number of different shampoos on the shelves.

The colours and designs were like something you would see when staring into a kaleidoscope.

That aside, I got to 21 without breaking a sweat ... and that was only on the top shelf.

They catered for so many different hair types – oily, dry, normal (whatever that is!), frizzy, coloured, dandruff-affected, damaged (again, what does that mean?) ... I could keep going.

The shampoos added volume and strength and nourishment and vibrancy. They clarified and fortified.

Really, I just wanted a clean scalp.

Instead, the whole exercise sent me into a spin. The array was dizzying rather than dazzling.

Remember, that was only from one retailer.

Now, for a moment, let's turn our attention to the same line – shampoo – on the internet.

If you thought you were spoilt for choice at a chain store, you enter another zone altogether on the World Wide Web.

A quick search revealed literally hundreds of hair cleansers, I kid you not.

Who could be bothered to go through all of those?

Certainly, not me!

I would much rather spend my time booking a relaxing holiday to the sandy beaches of Hawaii.

Now there's a great idea!

When did life get so complicated?