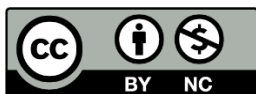


ANNEX

CLICK TO BUY (MORE)

How fast fashion giant SHEIN uses dark patterns to push **overconsumption**

Published in June 2025 by BEUC



The European Consumer Organisation
Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs
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Co-funded by
the European Union

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Scope of the document:

- The screenshots were taken between November 2024 and May 2025. The products seen in the screenshots have been randomly selected, with a variety of clothes and accessories, to show the widespread use of dark patterns - irrespective of product.
- The screenshots have been taken on SHEIN's websites and app (downloaded from the Swedish iPhone Appstore and Belgian Samsung Galaxy Store).
- The table below provides a summary of the dark patterns observed on the selected SHEIN websites and app.
- Webpage links SHEIN:
 - Europe: <https://euqs.shein.com/>
 - France: <https://fr.shein.com/>
 - Germany: <https://de.shein.com/>
 - Spain: <https://es.shein.com/>
 - Portugal: <https://pt.shein.com/>
 - Italy: <https://it.shein.com/>

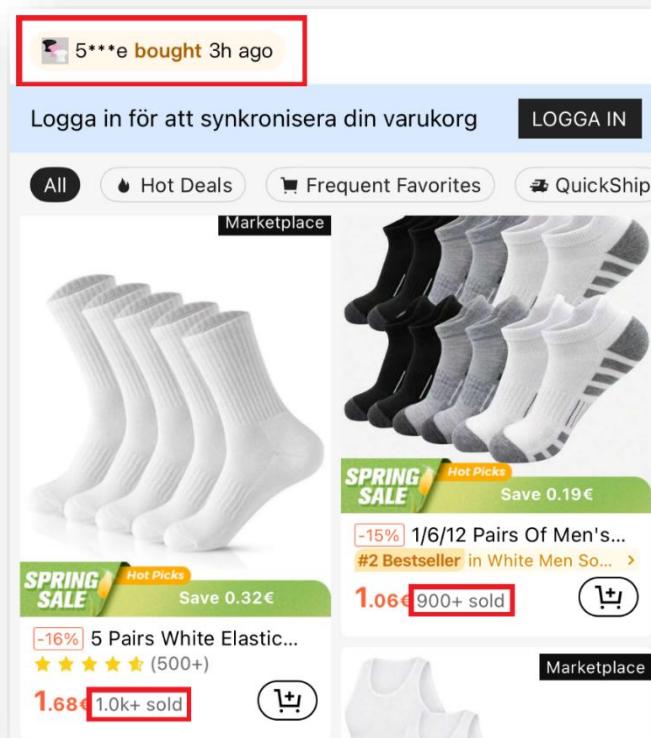
Type of practice	Traders
Activity messages	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN DE → SHEIN FR → SHEIN IT → SHEIN PT → SHEIN app
Low stock messages	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN DE → SHEIN FR → SHEIN IT → SHEIN ES → SHEIN app
Countdown timer/limited time message	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN DE → SHEIN FR → SHEIN IT → SHEIN ES → SHEIN PT → SHEIN app
Peer pressure through testimonials	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN DE → SHEIN FR → SHEIN IT → SHEIN ES → SHEIN PT → SHEIN app
Confirmshaming	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN PT → SHEIN app
Forced registration	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN DE → SHEIN FR → SHEIN IT → SHEIN ES → SHEIN PT → SHEIN app
Toying with emotion	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN FR → SHEIN IT → SHEIN ES → SHEIN PT
Infinite scroll	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN DE → SHEIN IT → SHEIN PT → SHEIN app
Nagging	→ SHEIN EU → SHEIN FR → SHEIN DE → SHEIN ES → SHEIN PT → SHEIN IT → SHEIN app

ACTIVITY MESSAGES



Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 29 November 2024.

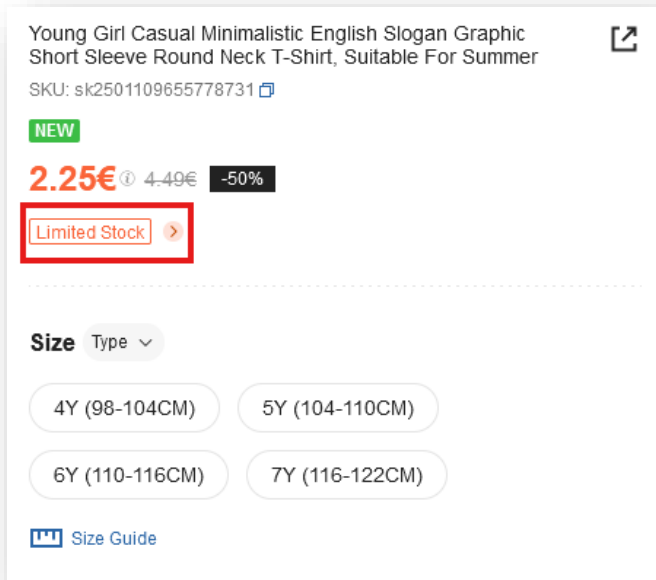
- “a***3 bought 6h ago”
- “2k+ sold”



Example from SHEIN app – 6 March 2025.

- 5***e bought 3h ago”
- “1.0k+ sold” and “900+ sold”

LOW STOCK MESSAGES



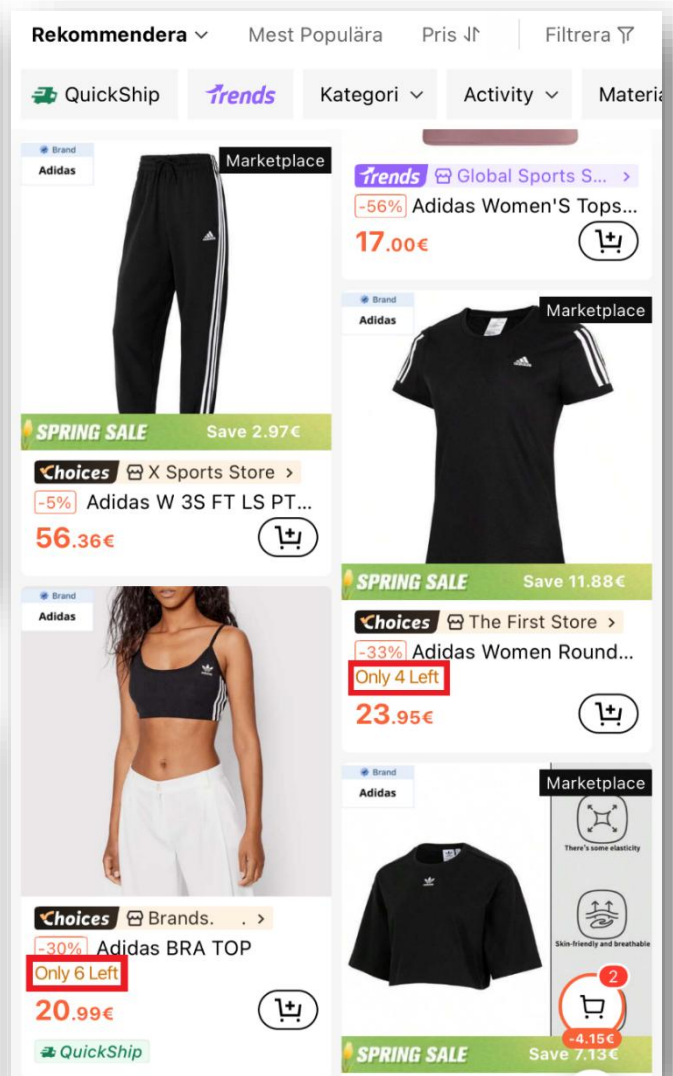
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 17 January 2025.

- “Limited stock”



Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 17 January 2025.

- “Only 4 left” and “Only 8 left”



Example from SHEIN app – 6 March 2025.

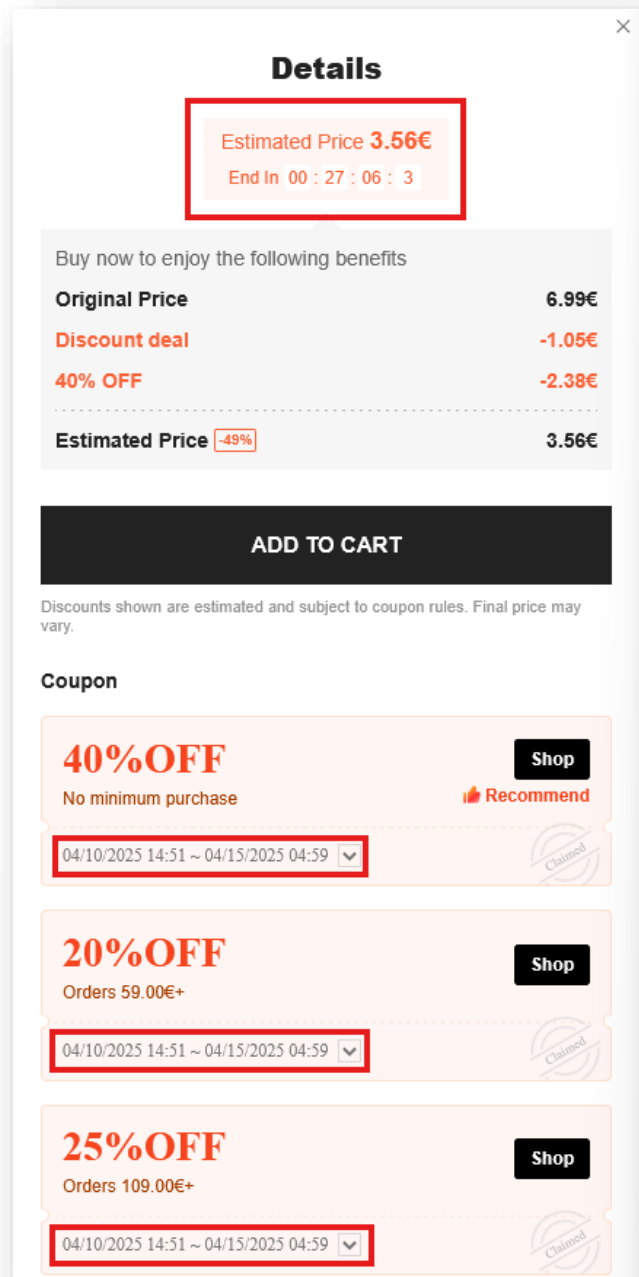
- “Only 4 left” and “Only 6 left”

COUNTDOWN TIMER/LIMITED TIME MESSAGES



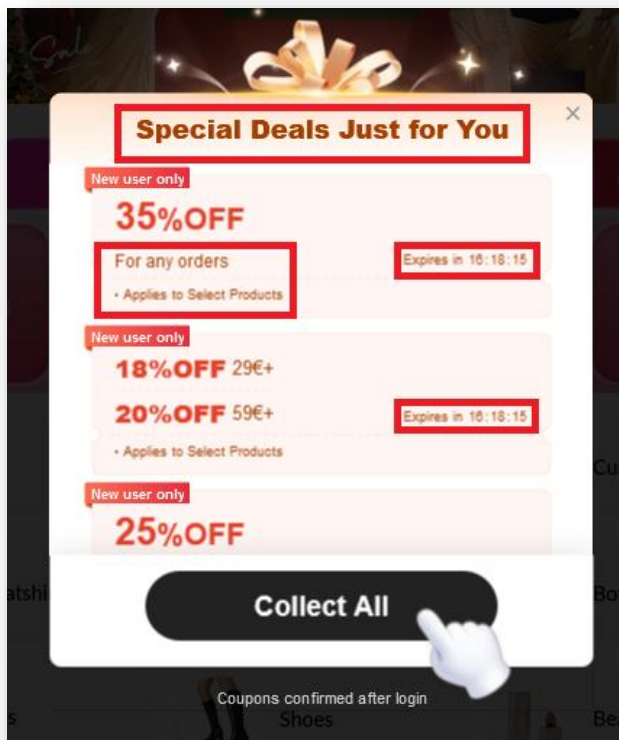
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 6 May 2025.

- “Flash Sale: Ends in 18:02:07”



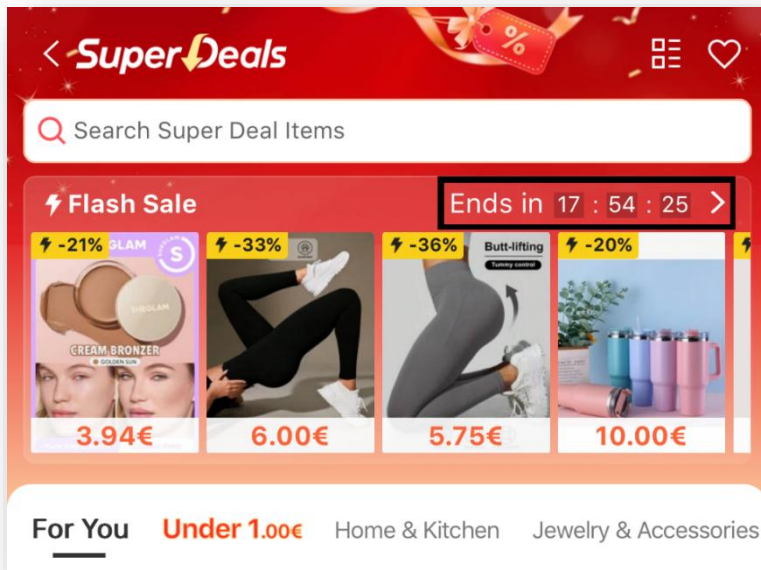
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 10 April 2025.

- In April, we saw that SHEIN offered consumers the ability to use certain coupons. The coupons are time limited, for example “04/10/2025 14:51 – 04/15/2025 04:59”.
- Notice the countdown timer at the top of the picture: “ends in 00:27:06:3”.



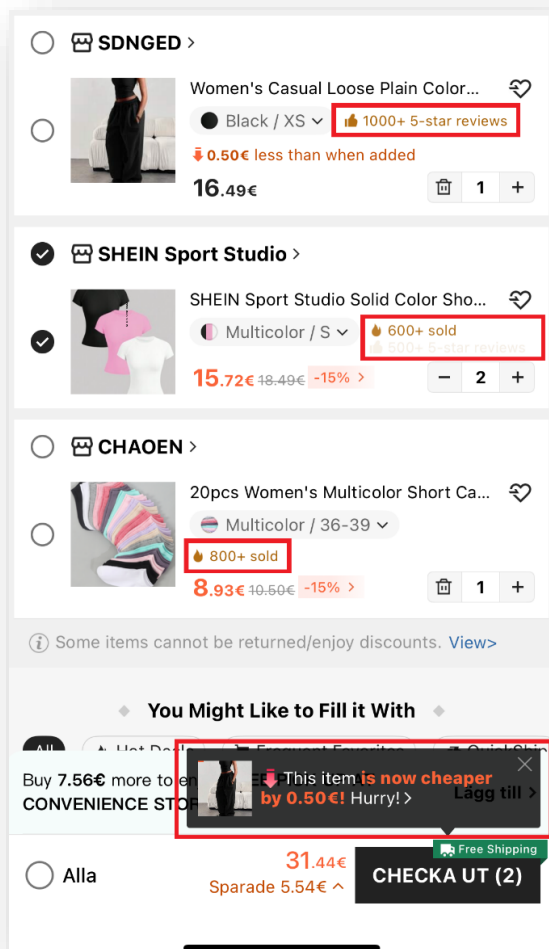
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 29 November 2024.

- “Expires in 16:18:15”



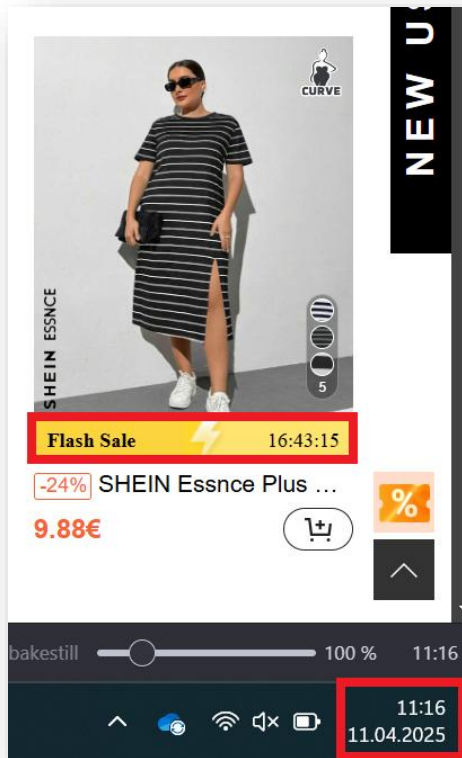
Example from SHEIN app – 6 March 2025.

- “Ends in 17:54:25”



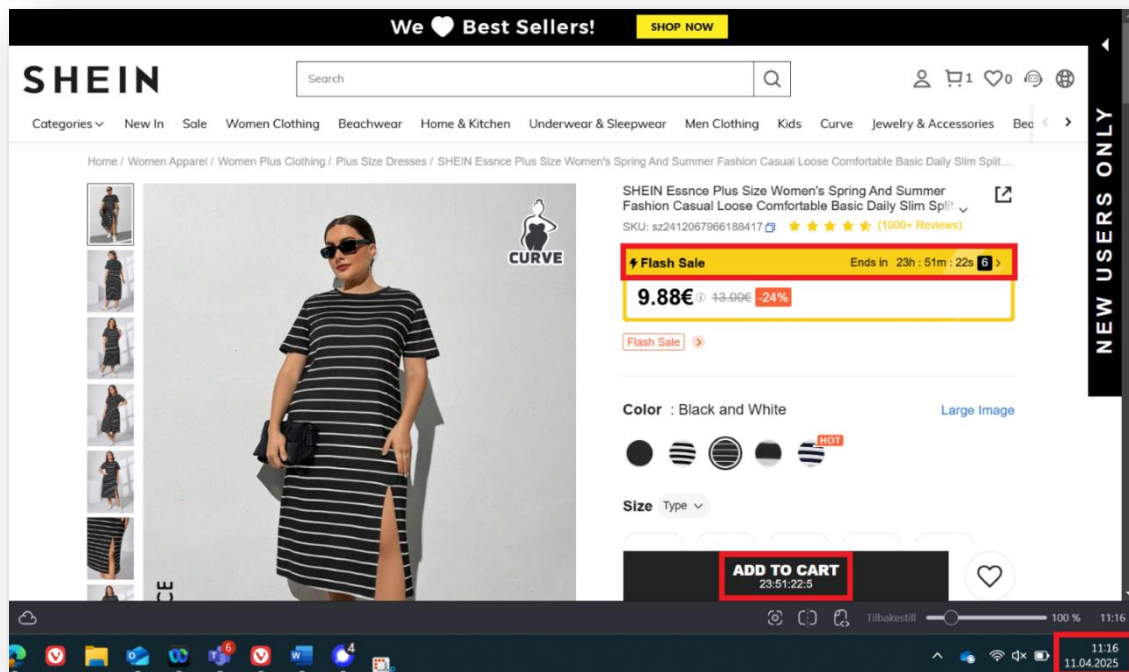
Example from SHEIN app – 21 March 2025.

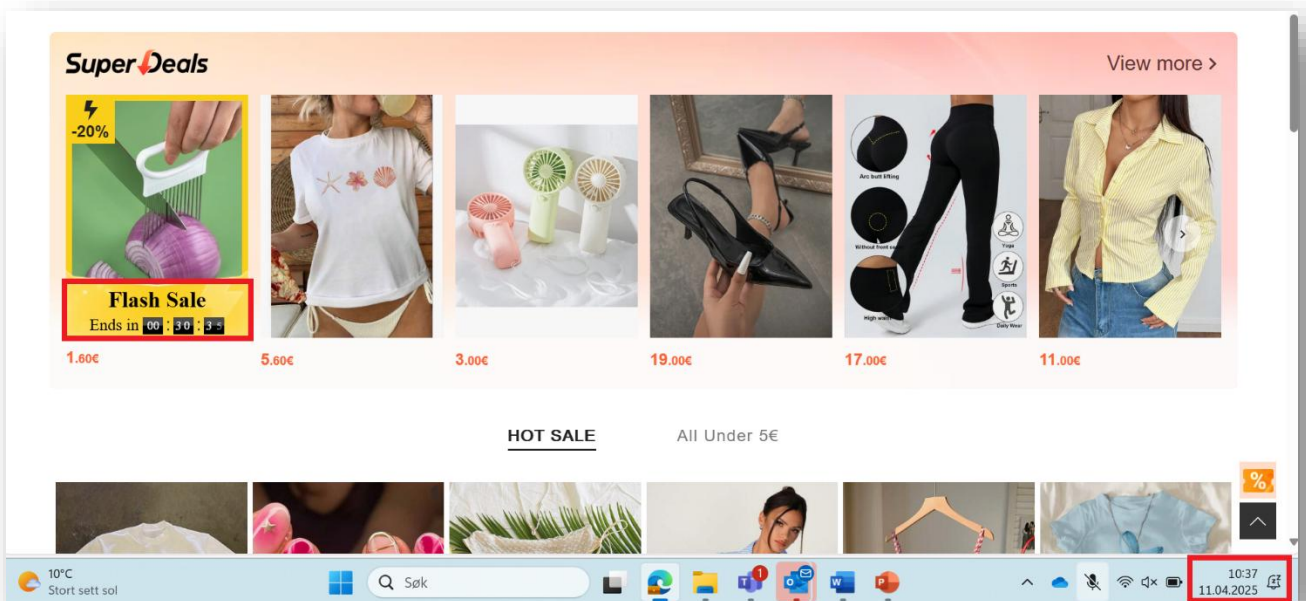
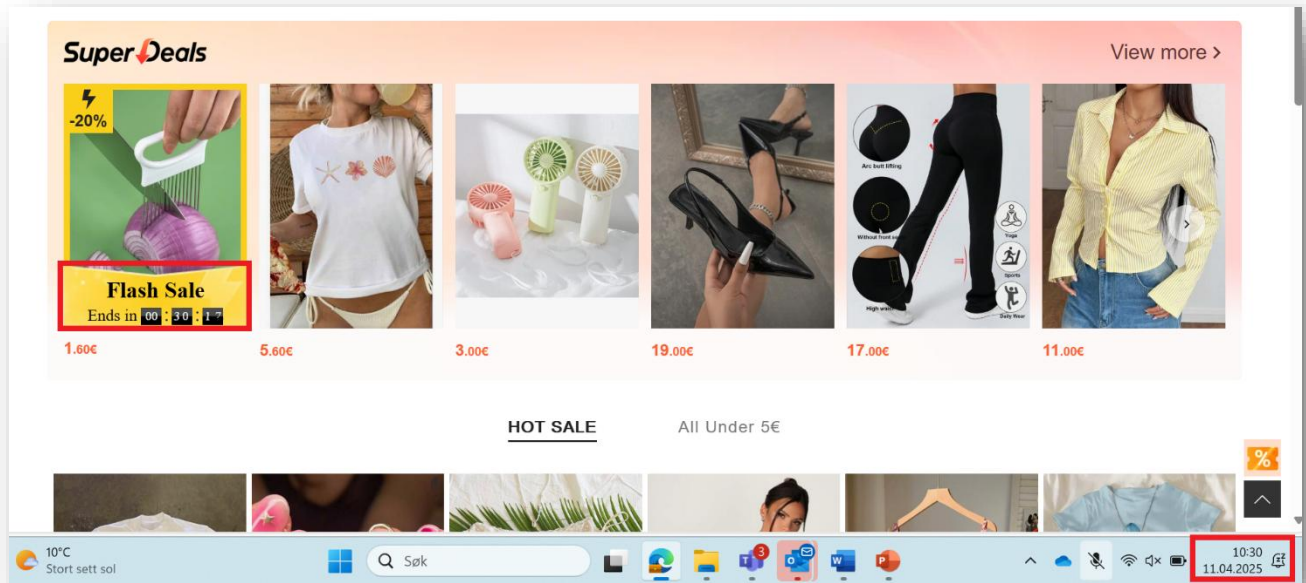
- “This item is now cheaper by 0.5 €! Hurry!”.
- Notice the combination of two dark patterns: activity messages such as “1000+ 5-star reviews”, 600+ sold” and “800+ sold” as well as the toying with emotion, because “[...] is now cheaper [...]” is written in a high contrast colour.



Example from <https://roe.shein.com/> - 11 April 2025.

- In a test conducted by BEUC's Norwegian member Forbrukerrådet, the use of a false countdown timer was identified. Before clicking on the product, a dress in this case, it said "Flash Sale 16:43:15". After clicking on the product, it said "Flash sale 23h:51m:22s".





Example from <https://roe.shein.com/> - 11 April 2025.

- In another test conducted by BEUC's Norwegian member Forbrukerrådet, at 10:30 the countdown timer under Flash Sale says "30:17". At 10:37, the countdown timer under Flash Sale says "30:35".

PEER PRESSURE THROUGH TESTIMONIALS

Customer Reviews

4.90 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Overall Fit:

Small 4% True to Size 94%
Large 2%

View Local Reviews **4.89** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ☐

Customer Reviews

4.86 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Comfort **5.00**
Cleaning & Maintenance **5.00**
Water Absorption **3.82**

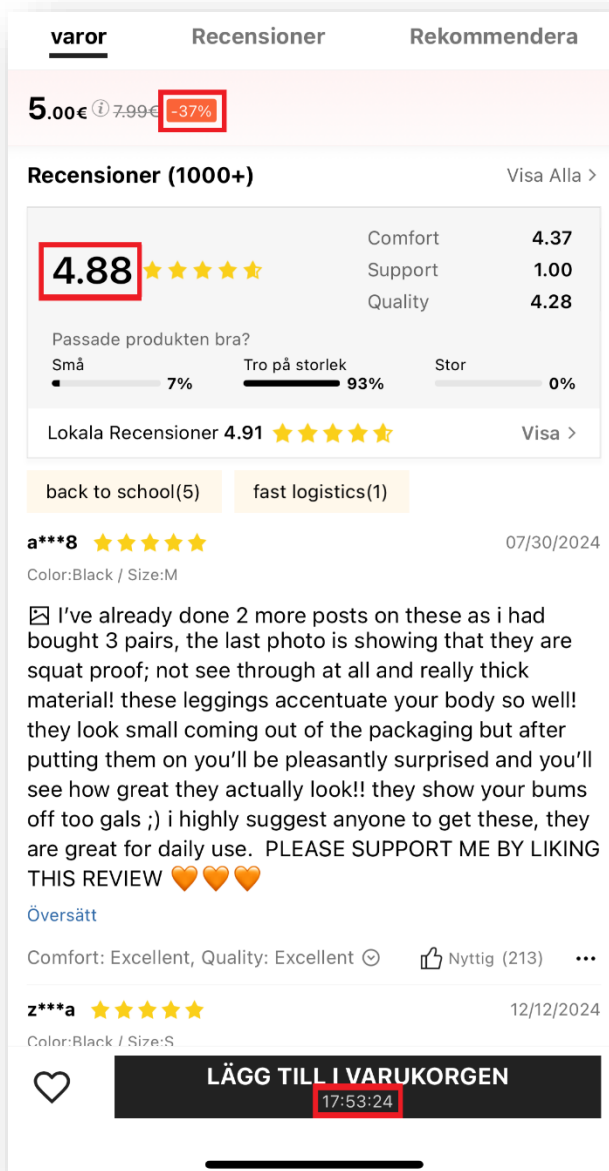
Overall Fit:

Small 4% True to Size 94%
Large 2%

View Local Reviews **4.86** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ☐

Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 28 January 2025.

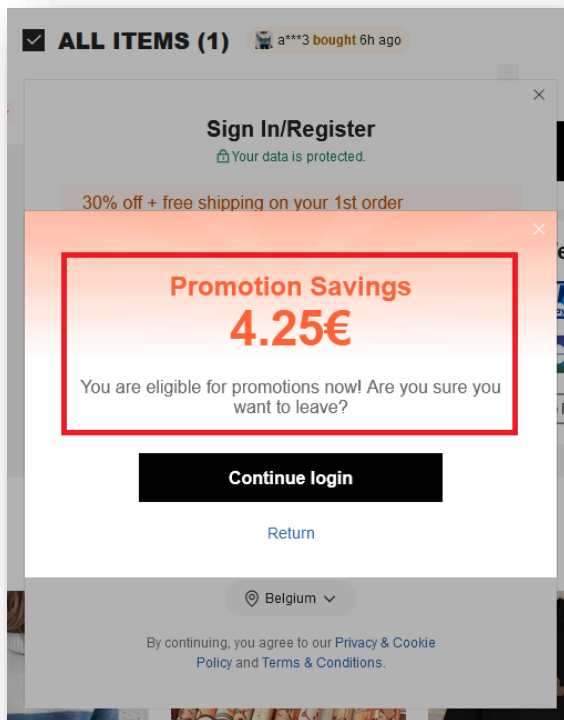
- None of the average customer reviews observed on either of SHEIN's websites are rated below four stars out of five. This refers to the overall rating displayed on the product page and does not reflect individual customer reviews.



Example from SHEIN app – 6 March 2025.

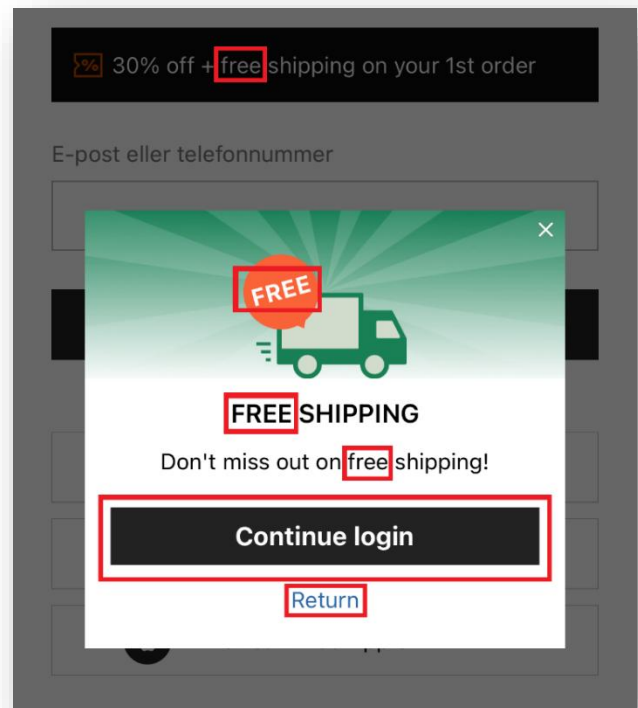
- None of the reviews observed on SHEIN’s app are rated below four stars out of five.
- Notice the combination of two dark patterns: a countdown timer on the (in Swedish) “lägg till i varukorgen” (add to cart) button.

CONFIRMSHAMING



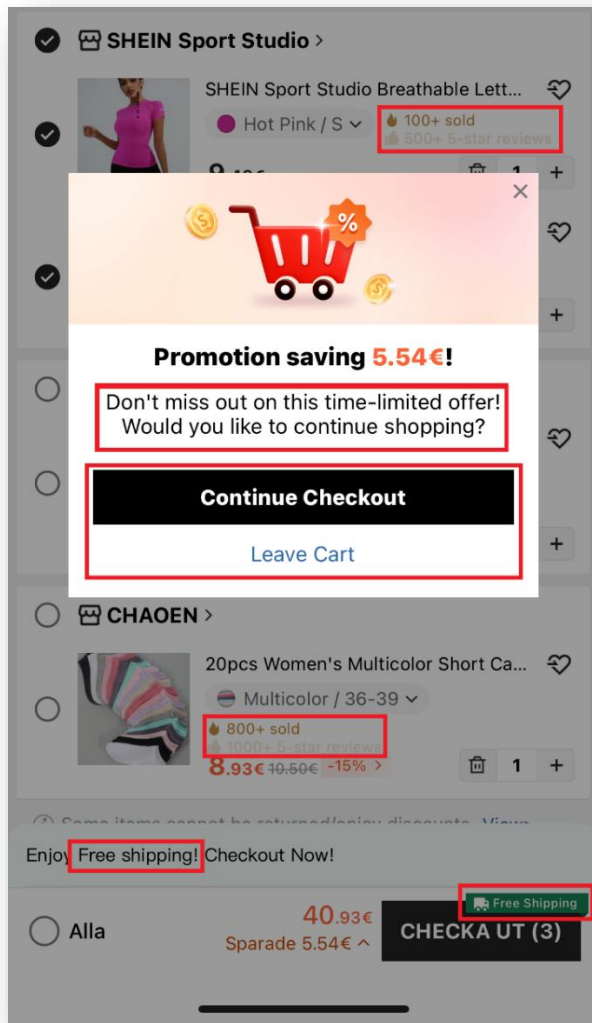
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 29 November 2024.

- “You are eligible for promotions now! Are you sure you want to leave?”
- Notice the combination of two dark patterns: confirm-shaming and toying with emotion, because the “continue login”-button is highlighted with black colour, while the “return”-button isn’t.



Example from SHEIN app – 6 April 2025.

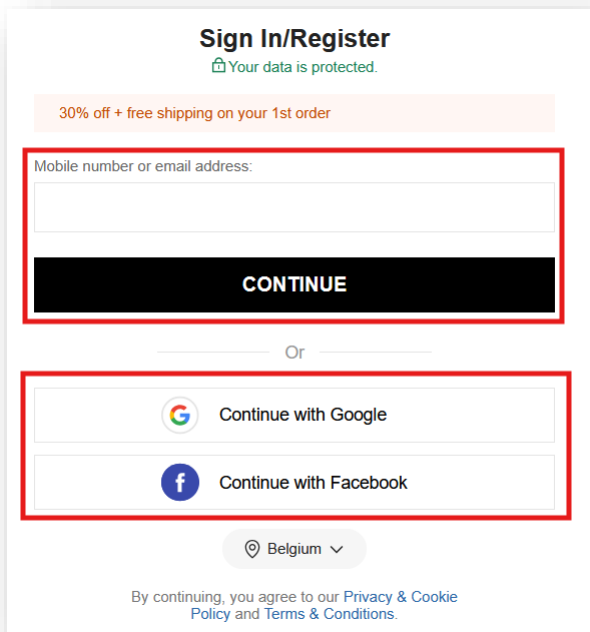
- “FREE SHIPPING: Don’t miss out on free shipping!”
- The word free is mentioned three times in the same pop-up. Free is also mentioned in the background of the pop-up.
- Notice the combination of two dark patterns: confirm-shaming and toying with emotion, because the “continue login”-button is highlighted with black colour, while the “return”-button isn’t.



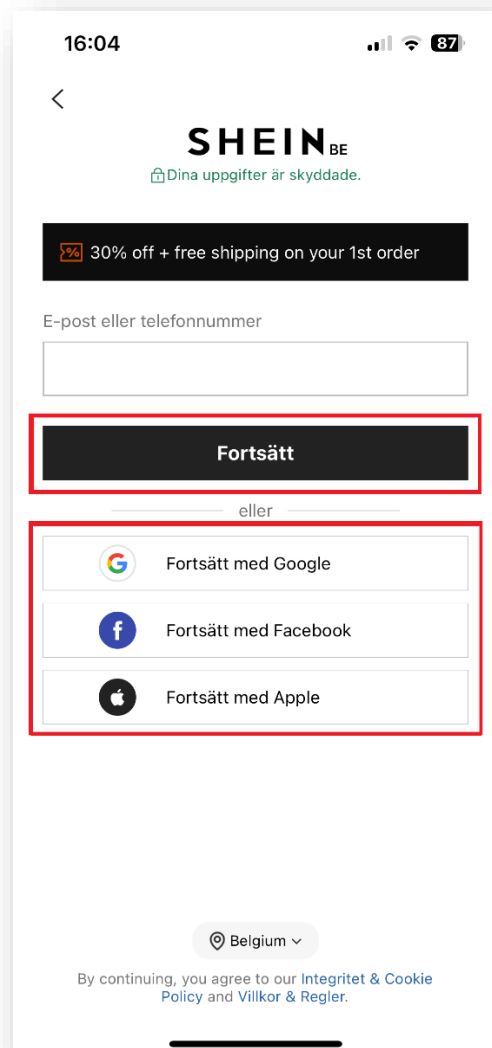
Example from SHEIN app – 21 March 2025.

- “Don't miss out on this time-limited offer! Would you like to continue shopping?”
- Notice the combination of several dark patterns: confirm-shaming and toying with emotion, because the “continue login”-button is highlighted with black colour, while the “return”-button isn't. There are also activity messages visible in the background, such as “800+ sold” and “500+ 5-star reviews”.
- Notice that “free shipping” is mentioned two times in the background.

FORCED REGISTRATION



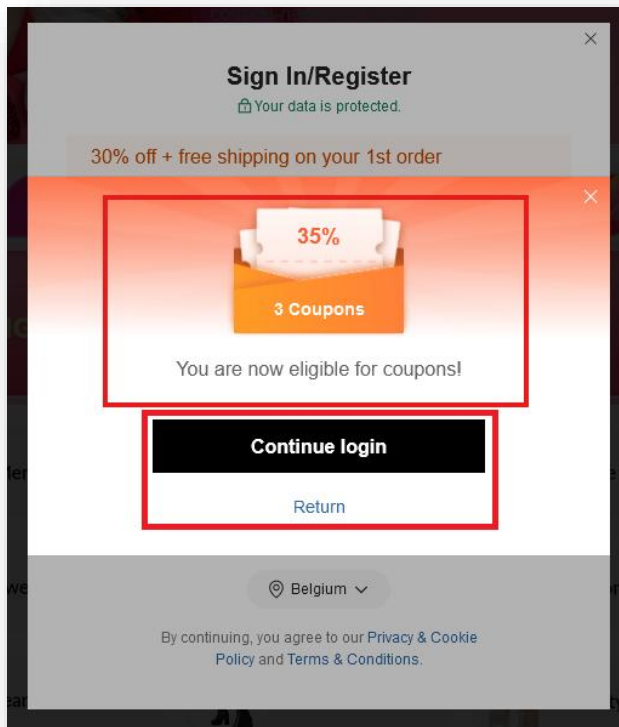
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 7 March 2025.



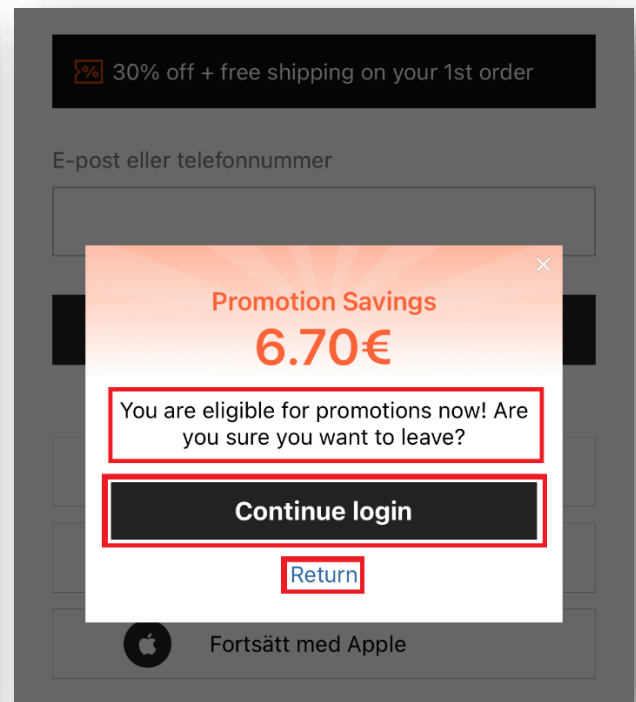
Example from SHEIN app – 6 March 2025.

- There's no possibility to continue as a guest on either website. To complete a purchase, the consumer must create an account or log-in through Google or Facebook.

TOYING WITH EMOTION



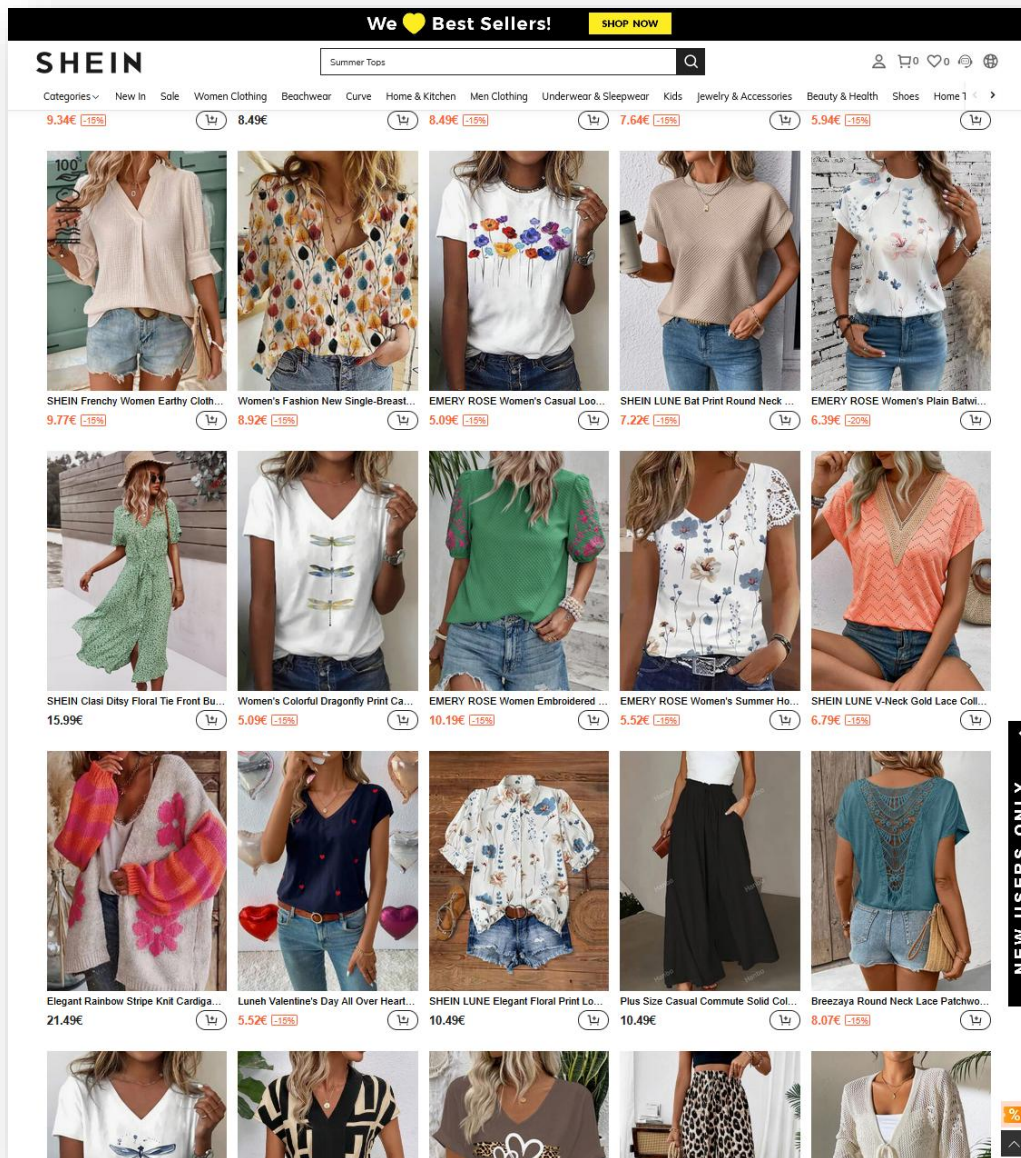
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 21 January 2025.



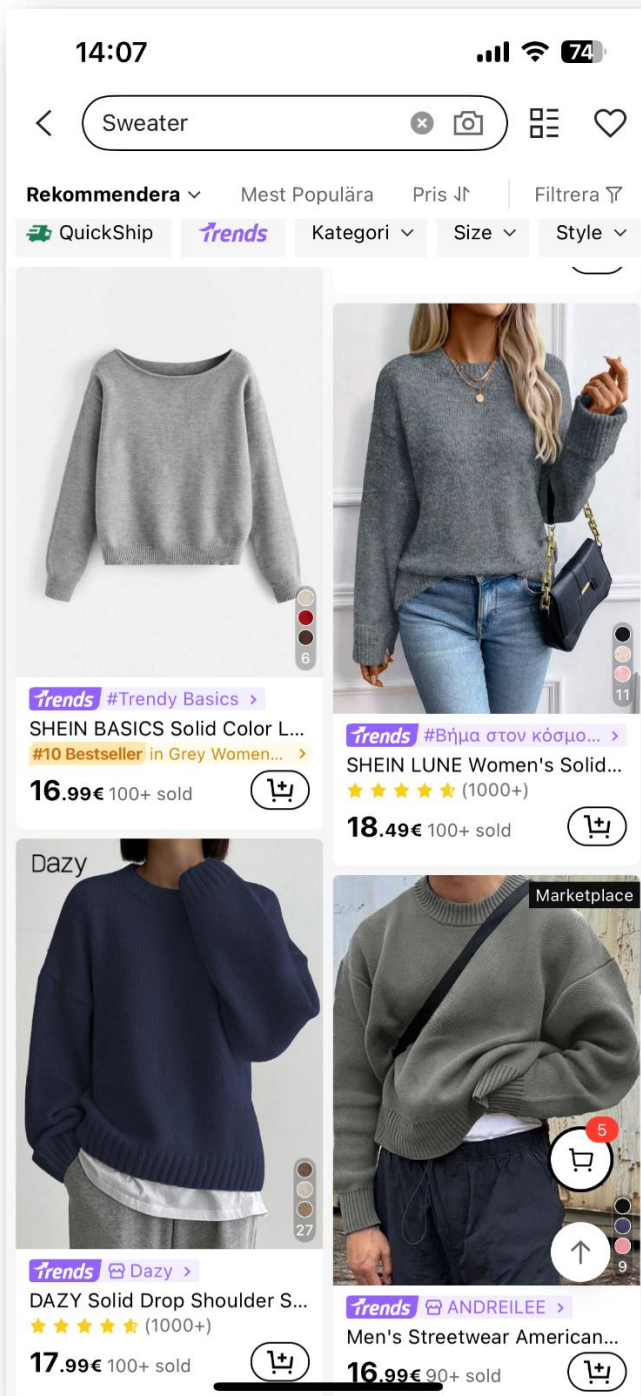
Example from SHEIN app – 6 March 2025.

- When deciding to not create an account or not log in through Google or Facebook, the following pop-ups appear. The button to “continue login” is big and highlighted in black, while the “return” button below is small and is not highlighted in any bright colour. The cross in the top right corner is also not highlighted in any bright colour.

INFINITE SCROLL



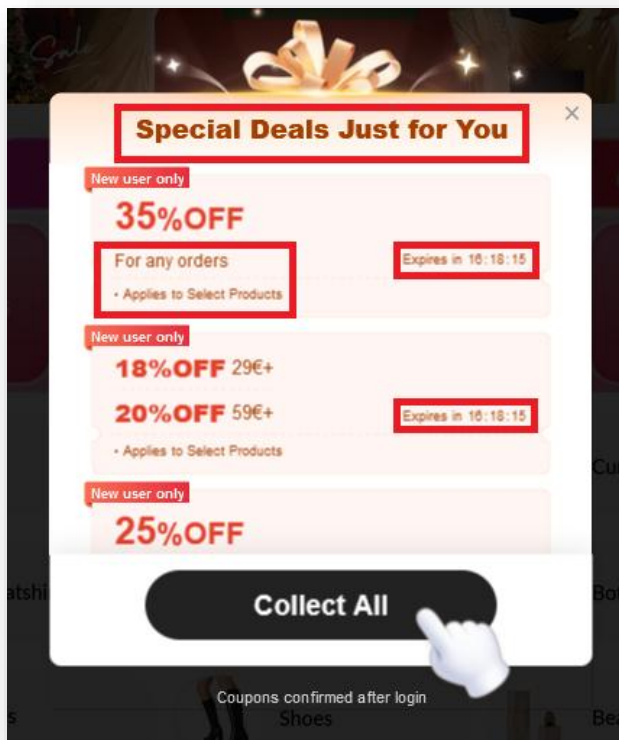
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 28 November 2024.



Example from SHEIN app – 7 May 2025.

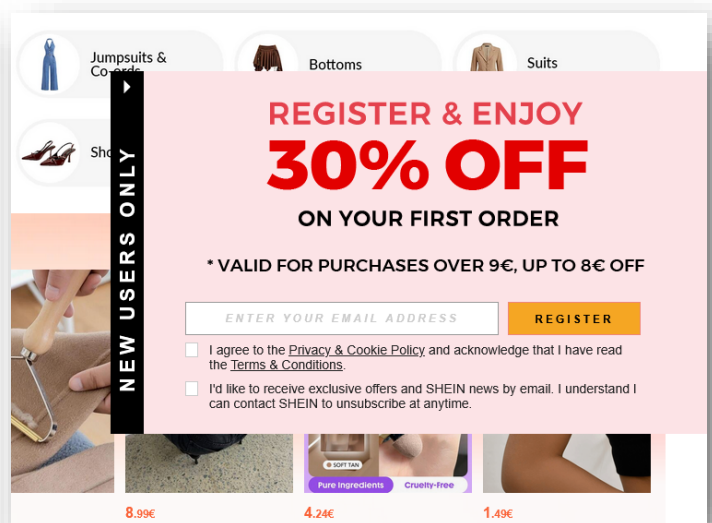
- When accessing the home page, it is not possible to reach the bottom of the website, where important information such as contact details, terms and conditions and, return policy is typically found. The website and app continuously reveals new content.

NAGGING



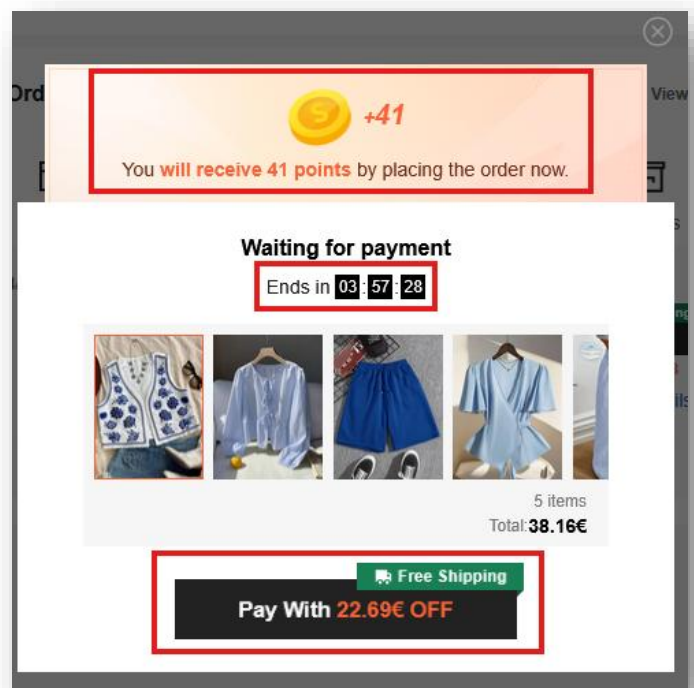
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 29 November 2025.

- The first pop-up that appears when entering the home page.
- Combination of two dark patterns: nagging and limited time message including a countdown timer saying, "Expires in 16:18:15".



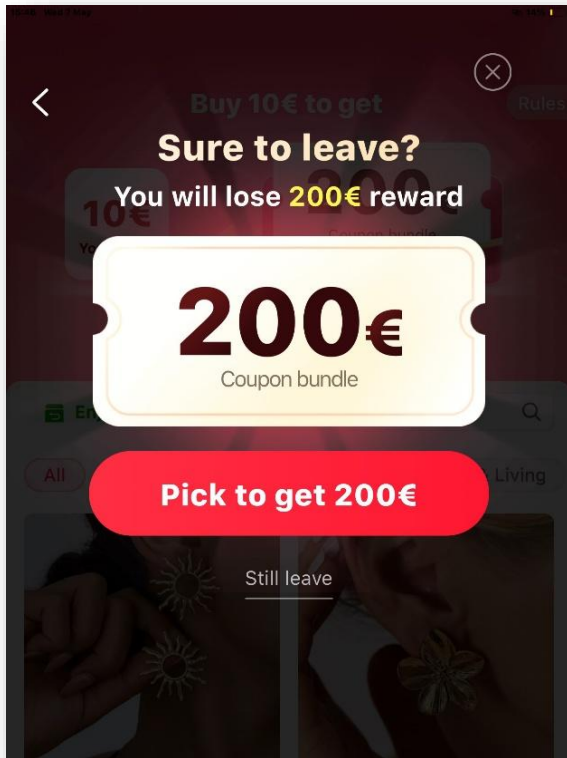
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 29 November 2024.

- The second pop-up that appears when entering the home page.



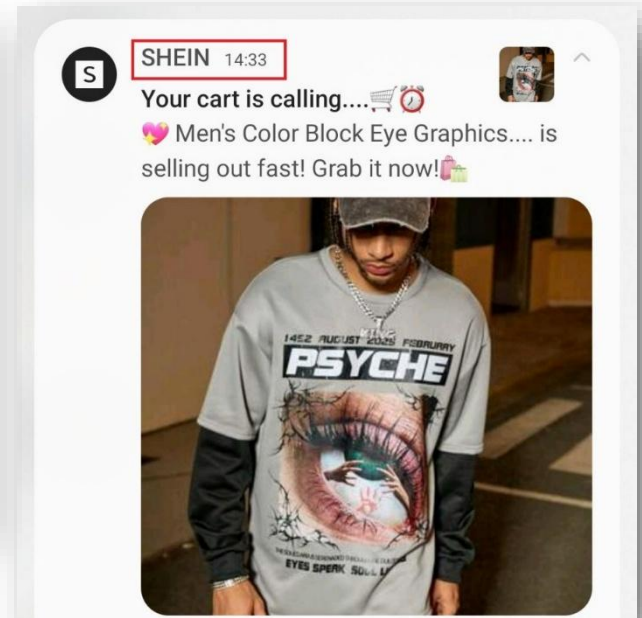
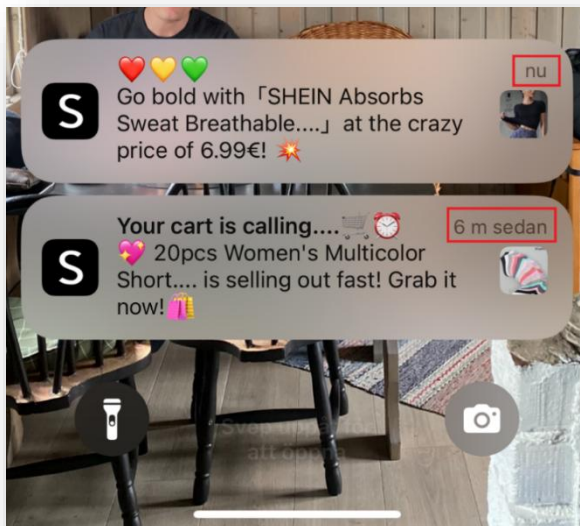
Example from <https://euqs.shein.com/> - 10 April 2025.

- After creating an account and putting items in the shopping cart, but not proceeding to check-out and pay, the following pop-up appears. It contains several dark patterns, both a countdown timer and toying with emotion (highlight of phrases such as "will receive 41 points" and "22.06€ OFF").



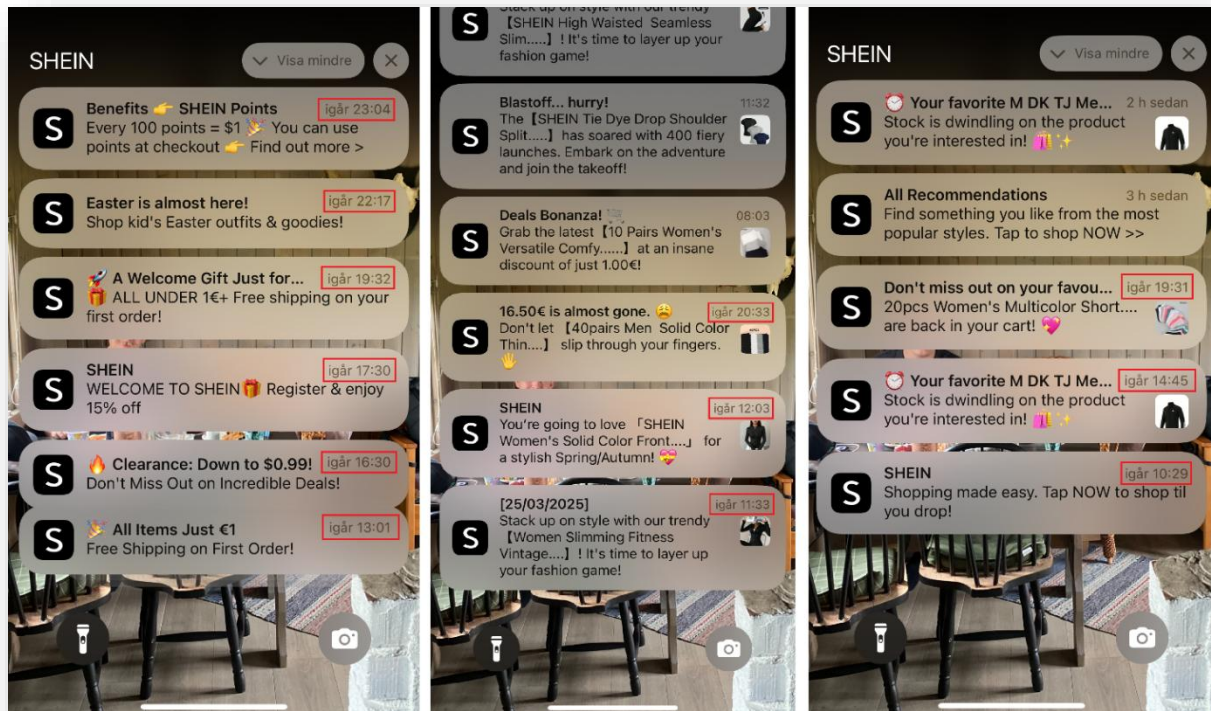
Example from SHEIN app – 7 May 2025.

- After downloading the app and creating an account, an offer to win coupons appeared on the screen. A virtual wheel started spinning. When attempting to close the pop-up, the following appeared: “Sure to leave? You will lose 200€ reward”.
- Notice the combination of several dark patterns: nagging, confirm-shaming (asking if the consumer is sure it wants to leave) and toying with emotion (the “pick to get 200€” button is big and coloured in red, while the “still leave” button is small and not highlighted in any bright colour). The cross in the top right corner is also not highlighted in any bright colour.



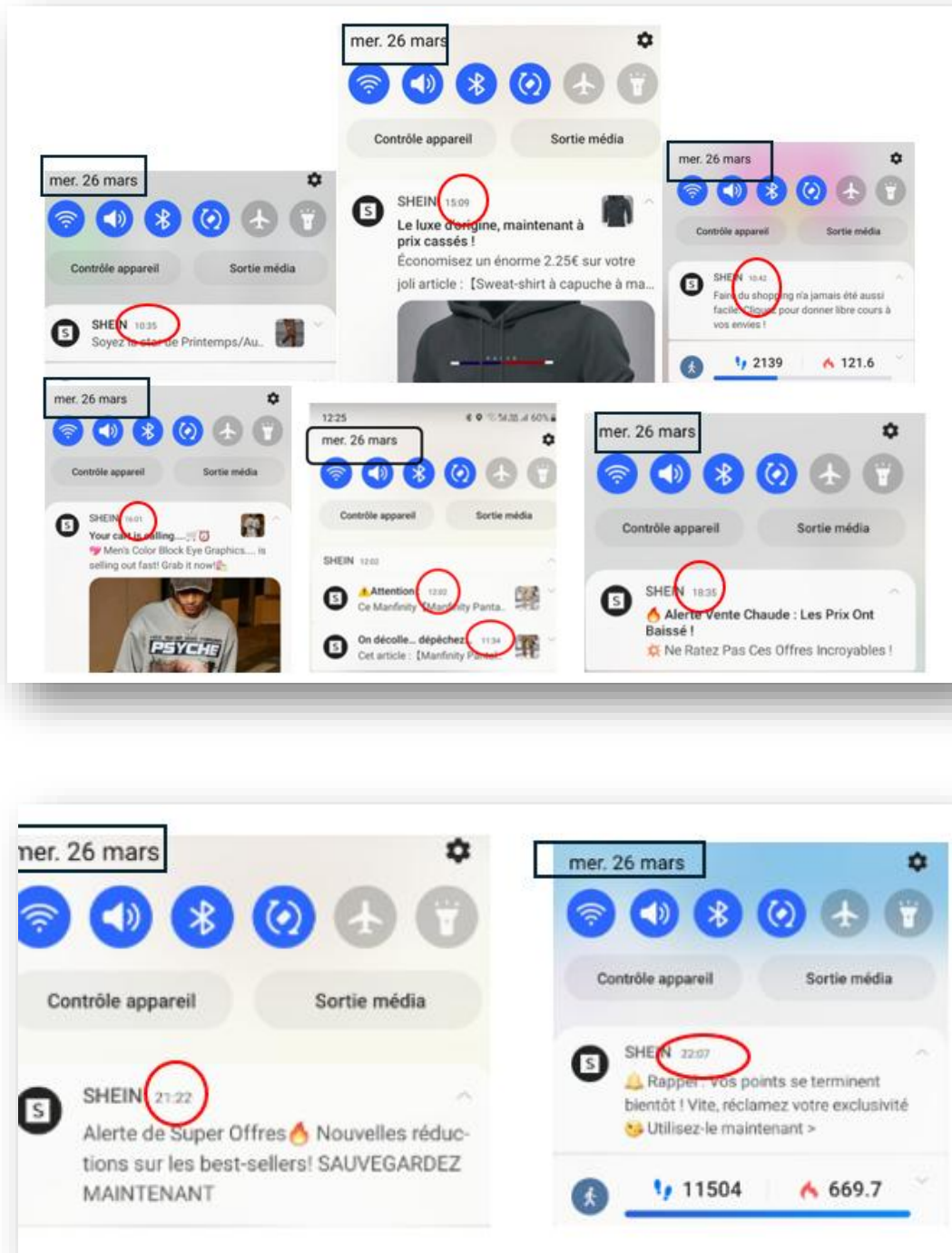
Example from SHEIN app – 21 March 2025.

- When downloading the app and allowing the app to send notifications, notifications such as those shown in the example appears. Notice that it's only six minutes between the two notifications in the first example.



Example from SHEIN app – 26 March 2025.

- Example of notifications from the app in one day; 12 in total. Times when the notifications were sent: 10:29, 11:33, 12:03, 13:01, 14:45, 16:30, 17:30, **19:31**, **19:32**, 20:33, 22:17 and 23:04 presenting new offers, discounts or requesting to complete purchases.
- Notice that two of the notifications were sent with only one minute apart: 19:31 and 19:32.



Example from SHEIN app – 26 March 2025.

- Example of notifications from the app in one day; 9 in total. Times when the notifications were sent: **10:35, 10:42, 11:34, 12:02, 15:09, 18:35, 21:22** and **22:07** presenting new offers, discounts or requesting to complete purchases.
- Notice that two of the notifications were sent with only 6 minutes apart: 10:35 and 10:42.

