

# The Benefits of Supporting an Independent Toy Store Near You

Next time you're in the market for a new toy, consider a trip to the neighborhood toy store. Supporting independent retailers not only fosters a sense of community, it provides real benefits to consumers and the neighborhoods they live in. Here's a closer look at the top 5 benefits of buying local:

**1. Economic stability**

Spending your money at an independent retail store supports the local economy. Local businesses create jobs, fund city services through tax dollars and promote neighborhood development.

**2. Community development**

Local businesses foster community well-being by building strong neighborhoods, sustaining communities, and contributing more to local causes. Not only do these stores add unique character to the local neighborhood, they increase the quality of life for residents and contribute to the value of homes in the area. In addition, local ownership means local decision making by people who live and work in the community and are therefore personally invested in its success.

**3. Reduced environmental impact**

Local stores help sustain vibrant, compact, walkable town centers, which in turn are essential to reducing sprawl, automobile use, habitat loss, and air and water pollution. Neighborhood stores require less travel for consumers, which decrease traffic congestion and carbon usage.

**4. A diverse product selection**

An abundance of small locally owned businesses, each selecting its own product mix, guarantees a much wider range of product choices for everyone in the community. In addition, independent toy stores tend to carry many of the high-quality, boutique and specialty products not typically found at big box stores.

**5. Better customer service**

Small business owners are committed to keeping customers happy. They tend to tailor their product offerings to meet the needs of the community, host local events and create incentive programs for loyal shoppers.

*Adapted in part from the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, a national nonprofit organization working to rebuild local economies. To learn more, visit [www.newrules.org/retail](http://www.newrules.org/retail).*