

AMAZON GO

Amazon Go is a new kind of grocery store: no waiting in line and no checkout stands. With Amazon's advanced shopping technology called "Just Walk Out," you use the Amazon Go app on your smartphone, swipe it at the entrance gate, take products you want, and just walk out. Checkout-free shopping is made possible by the same types of technologies used in self-driving cars: computer vision, sensor fusion, and deep learning. "Just Walk Out" technology automatically detects when products are taken from, or returned to, the shelves, and keeps track of them in a virtual cart. (A newspaper reporter asked Amazon's permission to test the technology by "shoplifting" an item, but store cameras caught him in the act and charged his account for the "stolen" item.) Shortly after you leave the store, Amazon emails you a receipt and charges your Amazon account. All you need is an Amazon account, the free Amazon Go app, and a recent-generation iPhone or Android smartphone. (The free app is available on the Apple App Store, Google Play, and Amazon Appstore.) The first Amazon Go store to open is in Seattle. Its roughly 1,800 square feet of retail space is compact so busy customers can get in and out fast. The store offers ready-to-eat breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snack options made by chefs and local kitchens and bakeries. Grocery essentials range from staples like bread and milk to artisan cheese and locally made chocolate. Chef-designed Amazon Meal Kits have all the ingredients you need to make a home-cooked meal for two in about 30 minutes. Store associates work in both the kitchen and the store to prep ingredients, make ready-to-eat food, stock shelves, and help customers with product recommendations and information. (Source: Amazon Go website)

INFLIGHT LIGHT

United Airlines says it saves 170,000 gallons of aviation fuel annually (worth \$290,000) by printing its inflight magazine "Hemispheres" on paper that's one ounce lighter than before. (Source: Daily Briefing, San Francisco Chronicle, January 24)

MIND OVER MATTER

"Age is a question of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter." (This saying has been attributed incorrectly to Mark Twain, Satchel Paige, Jack Benny, and Muhammad Ali, among others. In fact, it originated with an anonymous government researcher in 1968, according to the Quote Investigator website.)

DUMB GUM

San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) launches its Get Us Moving (GUM) campaign. What? I can't think of a worse acronym for a public transportation initiative. The word "gum" has all kinds of counterintuitive negative connotations, especially in a transportation context. "Gum" connotes "stuck" and "sticky" as in "I am stuck in traffic" and "buses have sticky gum stuck on the floor and under the seats." Please go to SMCTA.com, take the survey, and tell these geniuses that GUM is the dumbest acronym you have ever heard!

WONDERING

Scott McKellar wonders if the well-known marijuana munchies will give you a potbelly.

SWAMI SEZ

In filling out an application form, where it says "In case of emergency, please notify...", I answered "a doctor." (Swami Umami)

GRAMMARJAMMER

Q: Which word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it? A: Short.
(Tatiana Ayazo)

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