

# Op shop trawling

*"I've found some awesome cameras in mint condition."*



Shopping can be the bane of a student's existence, going to busy same-same shopping centres with prices more than anyone can justify. But for those living week to week on rations and in desperate need of a new pair of jeans, **ALEXANDRA DUGUID** has discovered the

places to look. First of all, and probably most famous, is Savers – the 'Recycle Superstore'. Savers is a series of five thrift stores, located in Brunswick, Dandenong, Footscray, Frankston and Greensborough. It is basically an op shop of 'Kmart'-sized

proportions, stocking second hand goods. You're likely to find something you fancy, whether it is clothes, furniture, kitchenware and crockery, or even books and records. The task of rummaging through the racks of clothing can be an arduous task, but you really can find heaps for less, and 20 per cent off for students on Sundays can sweeten the deal. For clothes, Salvos – the Salvation Army have a plethora of op shops everywhere, and for some reason I have always found them to be the best when it comes to finding clothes.

Op shops aren't just for dress-ups and 'vintage' attire, and I realise there can be a real stigma on the whole 'second hand' thing, but you can find some genuinely good clothes for an even better price. ([www.salvos.org.au](http://www.salvos.org.au))

For furniture and homeware, Vinnies – St Vincent De Paul's stores are by far the best for cheap furniture. Whether you need some retro-esque velour couch, new crockery setting for the share house or even a wardrobe or set-of-drawers, Vinnies seem to always have these in abundance.

While Vinnies and the Salvo's stores are the best known organisation-run thrift stores, there are always small, independent stores run by local churches and charities that are good to have a rummage through. On my own op-shopping expeditions I've

found some awesome cameras in mint condition, even some good CDs (managed to add Blur, Hole and even a Mountains in the Sky single to my collection).

I realise op shopping isn't everyone's 'thing', it is a very time consuming activity and while I enjoy trawling through thrifts stores, sometimes we just want everything we need under the one roof, and there are some great places that offer just that, but still at the affordability of a uni student.

First off is DFO, the Direct Factory Outlet housing some of Australia's biggest name brands. It sells them much cheaper than you'd be able to find anywhere else. Melbourne has three stores, Moorabbin, Essendon and in the CBD on Spencer St, open 7 days a week. They may be from last season, or end-of-line stock, but who cares when they're up to 70% off.

Recently opened out in Bundoora (handy for La Trobe and RMIT students) is Brand Junction, working much the same way as DFO. It has available all the brands at just a fraction of the cost.

TSL, The Saving Link offers good value in Fitzroy, Prahran, Camberwell and Hampton while Target's Bourke store is convenient to everyone coming into the city. And on the Lilydale/Belgrave train line is Brand Smart in Nunawading, a similar outlet mall to DFO and Brand Junction.



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## Northern outlet

Brand Junction is a new outlet shopping experience with over 100 international and national brands marked at up to 70 per cent off fashion and accessories, streetwear and sportswear and a selection of homewares.

The very first brand outlet centre in Melbourne's north, Brand Junction is conveniently located on the corner of the Metropolitan Ring Road and Plenty Road, directly opposite RMIT Bundoora campus west. The fashionistas will love the funky brands such as MNG, Lolitta, Zu, Novo and Mollini. Popular sporting brands like Lorna Jane, Fila, Russell Athletic and Converse have great savings for the sports minded. And if you are setting up house, visit Laura Ashley, Sheridan, Pure Zone or Crabtree & Evelyn.

[www.brandjunction.com.au](http://www.brandjunction.com.au)



## Student furniture

Okay, you've gotten away from the nest, gotten a job, fitted in most of your lectures and found yourself a pad...and ah, you're going to spend up big (potentially starving you of pots and chips at the pub!) for an old bed, second-hand couch, TV and smelly fridge this weekend after you finish your stack of assignments and head out with your mates – RIGHT!

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