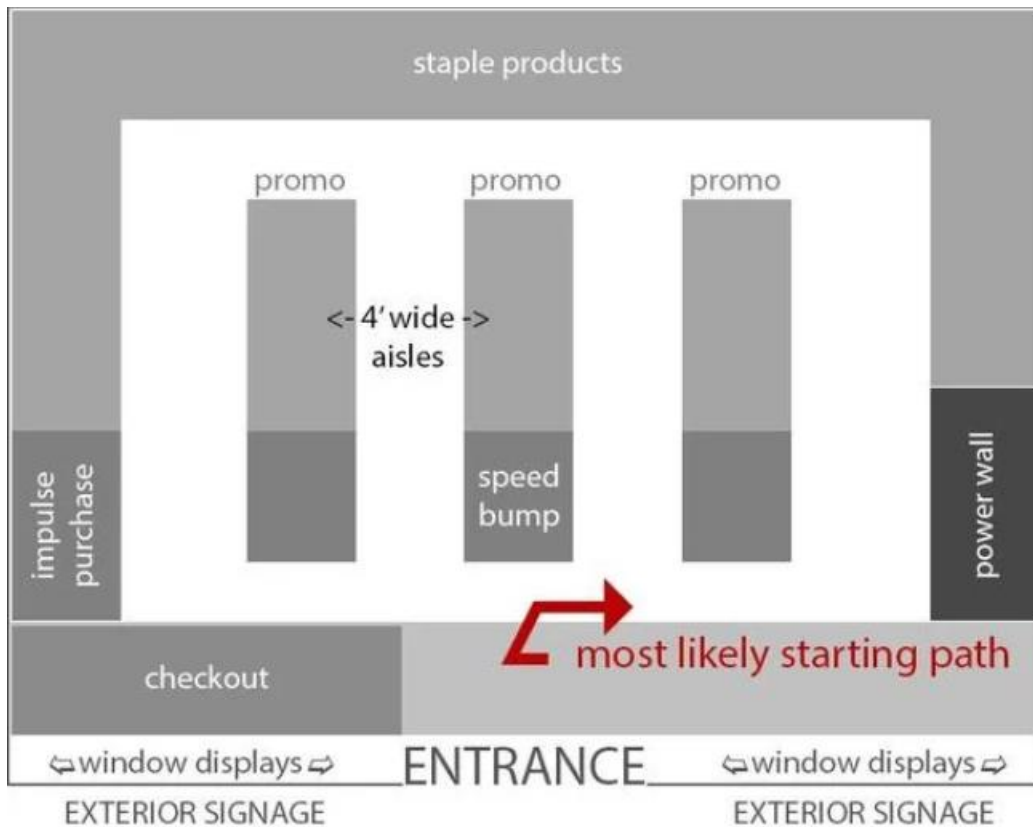




Store Layout 1- Grid



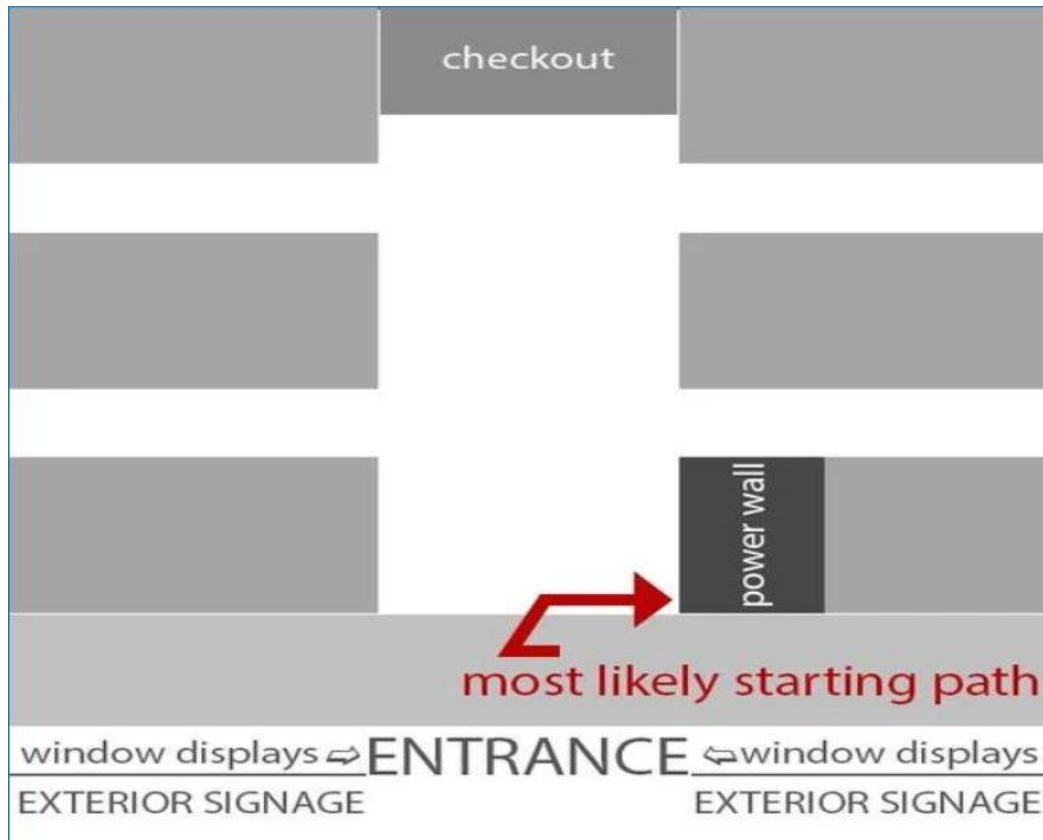
Everyone will be familiar with the traditional grid layout. Typically, newsagents, pharmacies and supermarkets are all big advocates for laying out their products in this fashion. The grid layout is where lots of merchandise and products are displayed on long aisles in a predictable fashion. For example, in a supermarket, all the dairy items will be together, all the household essentials will be grouped together and likewise with the bread too.

Usually, in the grid format, impulse buys are placed near the front of the aisles and the staple items towards the bottom. That way, the shopper has to walk past all of the impulse stuff, increasing their chances of them picking up something extra on the way to their staple items.

Grid layouts are great for giving shoppers plenty of exposure to products as the layout encourages people to browse various aisles in order to pick up just a few items. It's the perfect type of layout for stores like supermarkets that have lots of stock. However, an on-trend retail brand probably wouldn't opt for the grid layout as it won't make for the greatest in-store experience. Shoppers may not be able to easily get to the products that they want. In some cases, this can force them to leave your store. Overall, for certain shops like supermarkets and newsagents, the grid system works well as shoppers are familiar with it and you can predict the traffic flow.



Store Layout 2- Herringbone



If you have a long and narrow store, then the herringbone is a layout that you should investigate for your business.

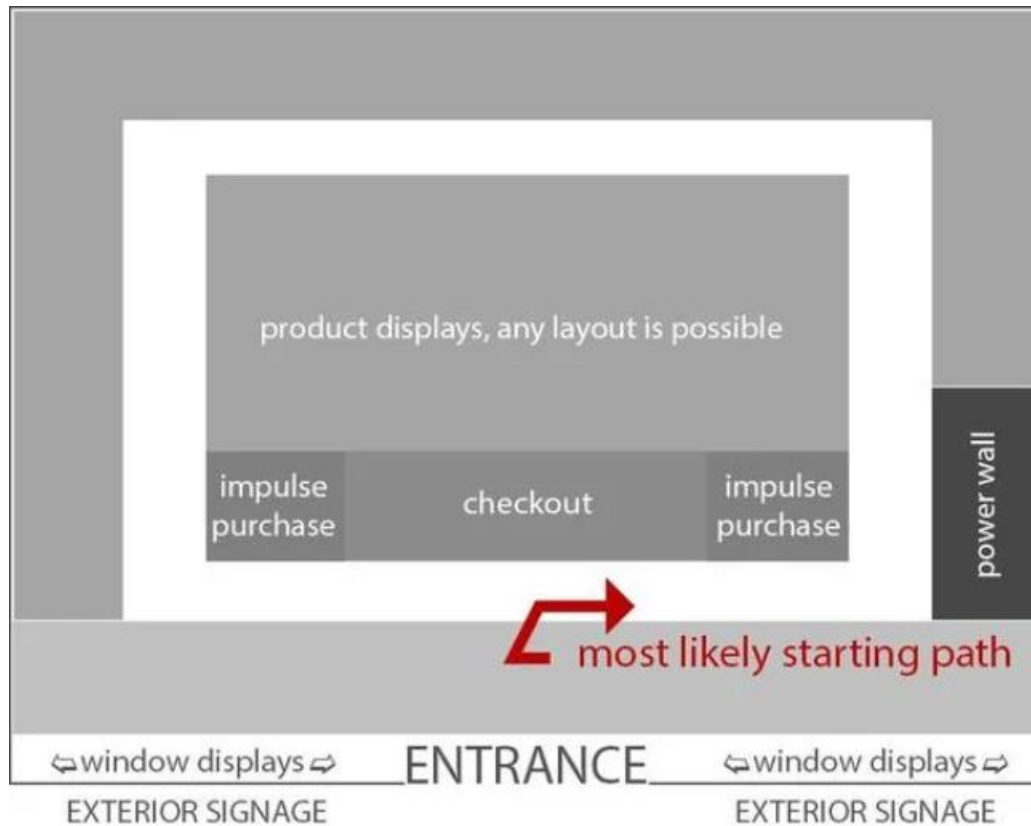
The herringbone layout has a lot of similarities to the grid. If you need to pack a tiny space full of your products, like bookshops and hardware stores, then it can be used to great effect. The side walls can be used for your promotional items and add in some visual breaks to split up the wall-to-wall products on offer. This allows your store to breathe and doesn't make it seem cluttered.

There are some things to consider though. As there's a lot of products in a small space, customers might start bumping into each other which will no doubt become annoying very quickly.

Plus, this layout is more at risk to theft too. The visibility from the checkout to the products on each aisle is likely to be poor, so don't try and rely on human policing. Invest in security cameras to make sure shoppers aren't lifting smaller items without paying for them.



Store Layout 3- Loop (racetrack)



The loop or racetrack layout is a great way of predicting and manipulating your customer's traffic flow. By enforcing this kind of layout, you make your customers walk past every item within the store from entering to them paying and leaving. This is clever as it increases the chances of somebody impulsively picking up an item that they didn't intend on buying.

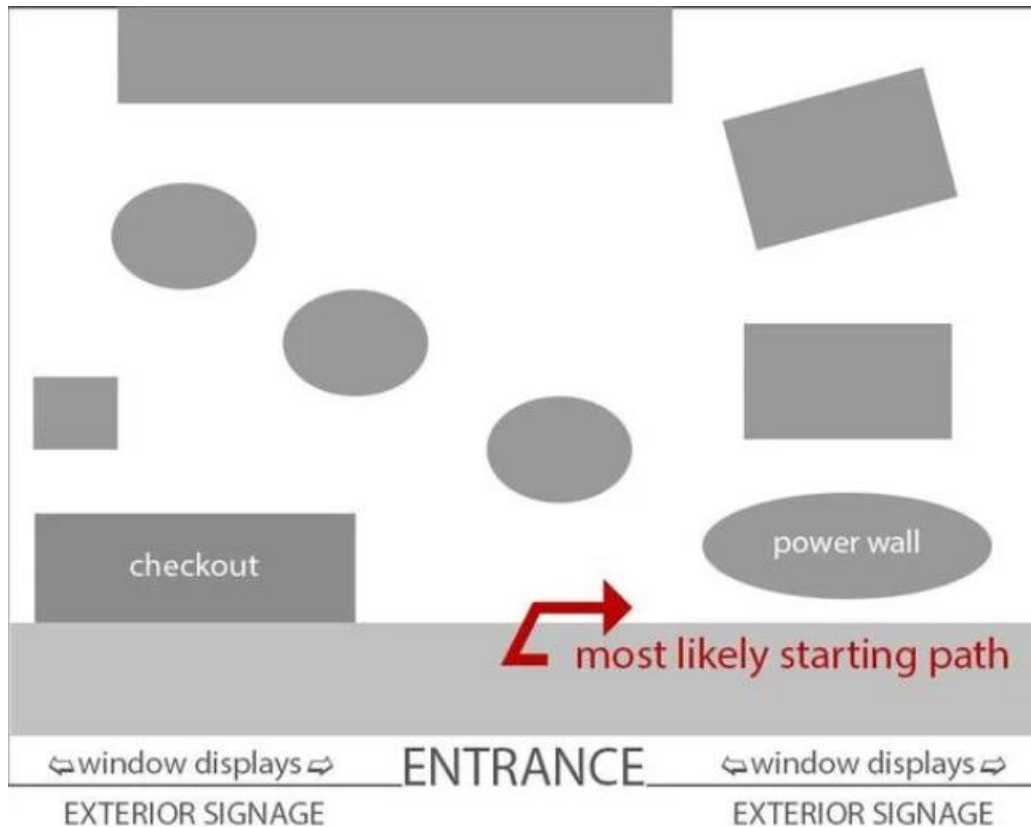
If you've been to IKEA, you'll have seen the loop layout in one of its most extreme forms. If you're there to browse, then this layout is ideal. The "hanger flickers" amongst shoppers will really take to this layout as it allows maximum product exposure, allowing you to flick through every item in the store if you really wanted to. Loop layouts are usually married together with particularly creative displays to spark ideas for your home or wardrobe.

If you've gone into a shop with this floor plan for just a few items, it can quickly become frustrating and may even lead you to not returning. However, a well-designed loop layout allows retailers to express themselves and tell stories with their displays.

Pop-up shops are a brilliant example of how loop layouts are used to tell a story as the shop becomes a time-bound museum exhibition, rather than just another retail space.



Store Layout 4- Free Flow



Free-flow allows you to channel your inner creativity. It's a type of layout that doesn't conform to any strictly regimented layout rulings. It's completely up to you where you decide to locate your products. With free-flow, there are fewer rules, but it doesn't mean that there aren't any. Free-flow tends to lean on the common behavioural trends of shoppers.

With so few rules, it's easy for retailers to get their free-flow layouts completely wrong. However, the biggest mistake a retailer can make when choosing to set their store out in this way is to think that there aren't any best practices at all. You should investigate your shoppers' preferences and behaviour when considering where to place items. Well-designed free-flow layouts are perfect for driving impulse buys and browsing. Ideally, upmarket or creative brands that follow this style as they want to prioritise a customer's experience in the store to harmonise with the amazing products that they're displaying.

One common problem with free-flow layouts is placing the checkout in the wrong position. Usually, you'd want to place the checkout in a position where the shopper has to walk past the majority of products in order to encourage impulse buys on the way to the tills.

However, with free-flow, it can be difficult to choose where to place them. Again, you should consult your shopper behaviour and look at the highest areas of traffic.