

# WM Morrison Supermarkets PLC

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## Morrison's biggest loser as 'big four' market share continues to decline in November, but pumpkins showcase power of seasonal spending

WM Morrison Supermarkets PLC (LON:MRW) was the biggest loser among the 'big four' UK grocers as they continued to suffer market share declines ahead of the all-important Christmas season.

In the latest Kantar data for the 12 weeks to 4 November, Morrison's market share fell 1.7% to 10%, followed by Walmart Inc (NYSE:WMT) owned Asda, down 1.2% to 15%, Tesco PLC (LON:TSCO) which shrank 0.6% to 27%, and finally J Sainsbury PLC (LON:SBRY) which suffered a 0.2% decline to 15.6%.

### READ: Sainsbury's teams up with Australia's Coles in wholesale deal

The decline of the big four is contrasted with the continuing ascendancy of the German discounters, with Aldi and Lidl seeing their share of the market grow 6.7% to 8% and 8.8% to 5.9% respectively.

However, in terms of growth, the stand out winner was online player Ocado Group PLC (LON:OCDO), which saw its market share jump 13.5% to 1.4% in the period.

### Overall sales growth slows

Looking to the sector as a whole, supermarket sales in the 12 weeks reported year-on-year growth of 1%, although Kantar said this was "slightly slower" than the equivalent rate from last month.

Kantar referenced "a backdrop of political uncertainty and a persistently wet autumn" as possible reasons behind the slowdown in sales growth.

Looking ahead, the supermarkets were already gearing up for the critical festive period, with Kantar saying it was "no surprise" the brands were jostling for position early given the massive amount of money that consumers usually spend over the holiday season, including £11bn expected for December alone.

Kantar noted that a 62% increase in pumpkin sales over the past decade as punters became more engaged with Halloween was "a telling barometer of how retailers have found success by increasing focus on seasonal spend."

In mid-morning trading on Tuesday, Morrisons' shares were 0.4% lower at 197.4p while Tesco fell 2% to 232.9p and Ocado slipped 0.6% to 1,095.8p. Sainsbury's meanwhile, received a boost from its 'less bad' market share decline, with the shares up 1% at 206.4p.

**Price:** 173.55

**Market Cap:** £41.42 m

#### 1 Year Share Price Graph



#### Share Information

**Code:** MRW

**Listing:** LSE

**52 week High Low**  
210 157.55

**Sector:** Retail

**Website:** [www.morrisons.co.uk](http://www.morrisons.co.uk)

#### Company Synopsis:

*Morrisons is one of the UK's largest supermarket chains, offering a range of goods including both branded and own label products.*

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