

early concept sketch,

→ Propose a solution that prevents theft while improving user experience.

→ The tester should be open and easy to use without needing staff explanation.

↳ New products should feel like part of a display, not easily accessible.

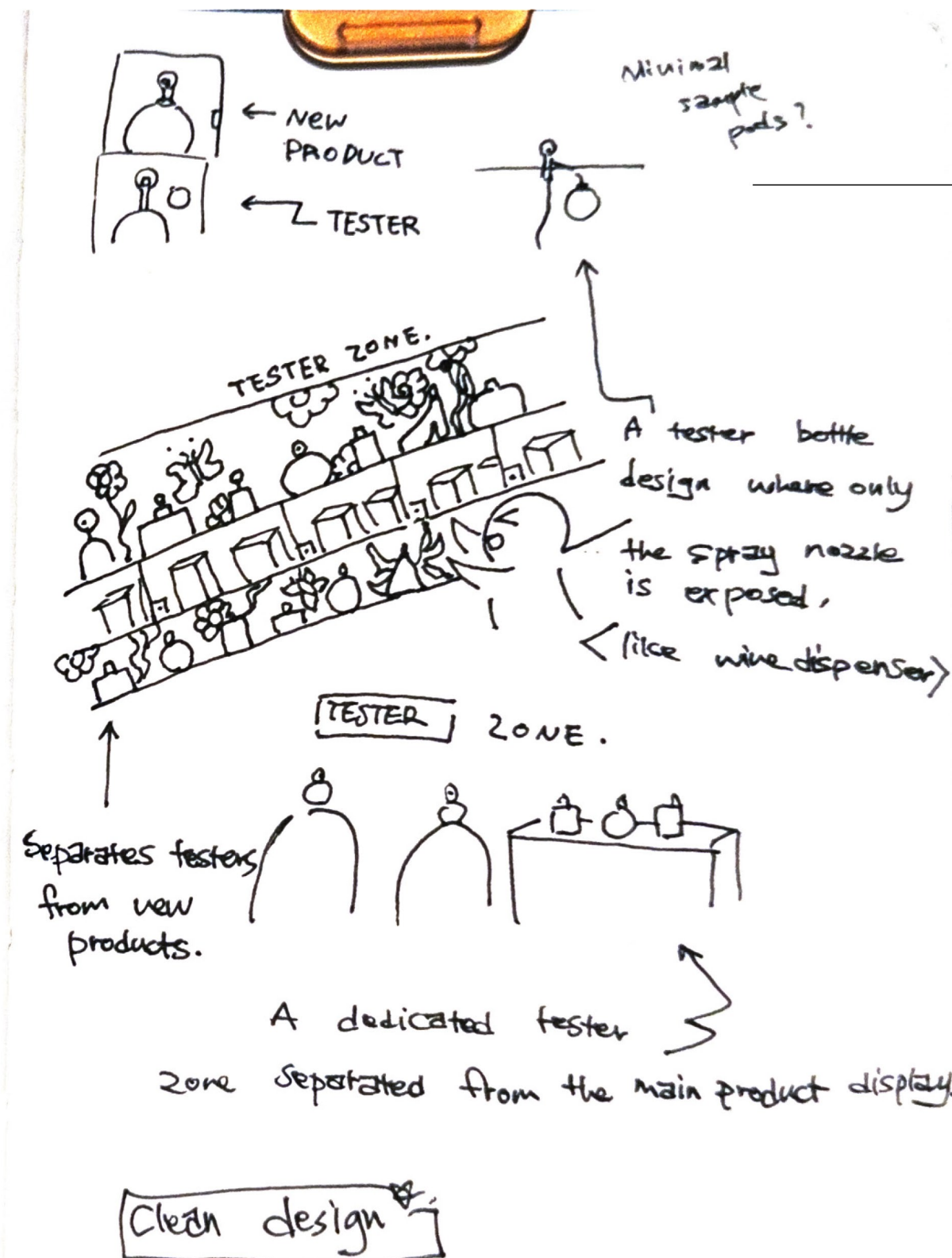
→ Design should be easy for STAFF to manage

↓  
So it's doesn't create more work for them.

→ The perfume should not appear cheap or unimportant.

No too much Tech system

↑ expensive X.  
or high cost X



By separating the tester area from the new product display, the store layout looks cleaner and customers can clearly tell which products are for testing and which are for purchase. This physical separation also gives a more hygienic impression.

The tester should only have the spray part exposed to reduce the risk of theft and improve security. At the same time, it's important to make the design intuitive so anyone can use it easily. For example, it could use a balloon-style pump or a simple mechanical button to spray the scent. The area for new products should focus only on display, making them look more like objects on show rather than something to touch.

Another idea is to create a separate tester area, where only the testers are displayed outside, and the new products are kept inside the cabinets. The tester zone should be designed to be simple and efficient so that it doesn't take up too much space in the store. It would also be nice if the space reflects each brand's mood, even with just a few small visual elements that show its identity.

thought process ,

⇒ The opportunity to buy disappears before the thought even forms.

↓  
★ Design should also create a reason to buy, even for people who didn't plan to.

↓  
User experience needs to be considered seriously.

↓  
★ Users are not just shoppers - they can be staff too.

- The display and system must be easy to install and manage for staff.
- Don't make it complicated. the focus should be on helping staff concentrate on selling.

• The product should be designed to fit all types of Boots stores easily.

↳ Store Size / Staff member number

↓  
different.

⇒ The system must be flexible depending on the space.

★ <Display>

- Brand customization.
- visual atmosphere.
- Luxury alignment.

★ Why do people buy perfume at Boots?

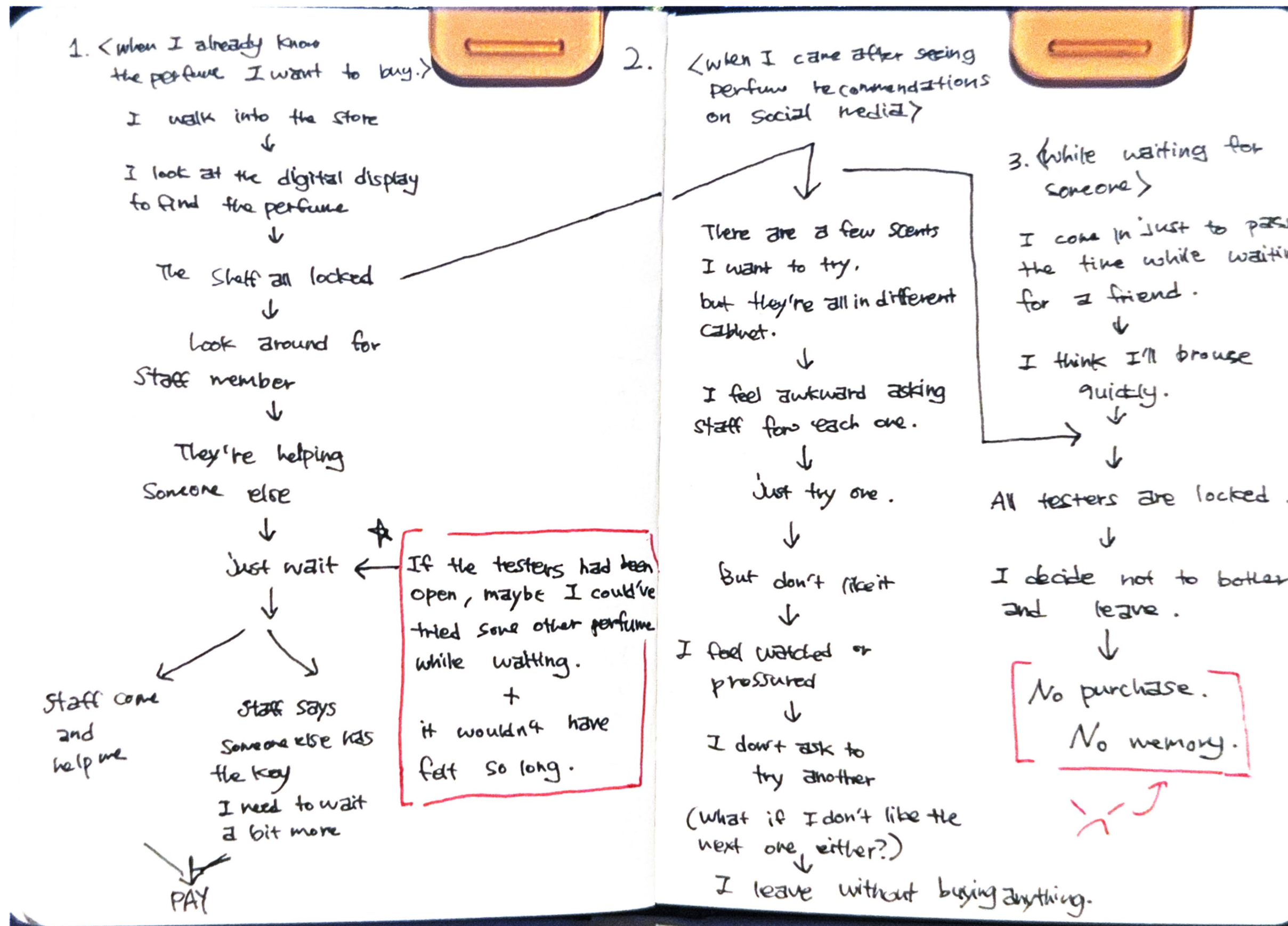
- They can explore many perfumes in one place.
- Good discounts + sale.
- Easy to access.
- membership - Boots. <point>

○ possibility to test perfume.  
(↳ though currently it's limited or uncomfortable.)

I started to see how the overall mood and look of the display (brand's identity, user experience)

Next, I want to keep developing the design by separating the tester area from the product display, making the tester easy to use, and not making the staff's job more complicated. But I also started to wonder if one design can really work for every store, since each store is different in size, staff number, and brand needs.

thought process ,



Initially, I wanted to think about different situations users might be in and asked myself, "What would be helpful in this case?" I started to question whether testers are really important to users, when exactly they feel the need for one, and how the design could make that experience easier and more natural.

I realized that the users of this cabinet system aren't just customers but also the staff. That made me want to design something that works well for both. Based on what I observed during my research at Boots, I felt that instead of focusing only on security, it's important to create a space where customers can test products in a clean and trustworthy way.

# why fragrances are especially targeted for theft ,

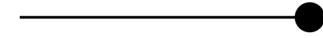
**portability**  
perfumes are small and easy to carry, so thieves can steal them quickly without being noticed

**high value**  
many perfumes, especially luxury ones, are expensive. This makes them attractive targets for theft

**easy access**  
perfumes are often displayed in open areas like department stores, which makes them easier to steal

**online resale**  
stolen perfumes are easy to sell online, which encourages more theft

**personal meaning**  
perfume is a personal item tied to taste and memory, so losing it can feel worse than just losing money.

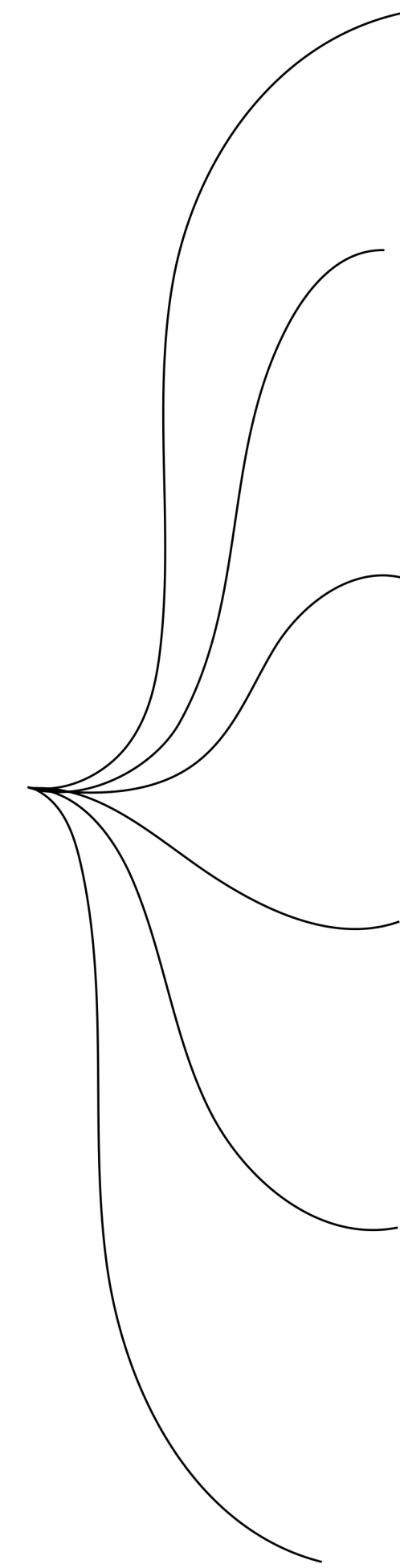


Hiding the item in a bag or inside clothing ----- Perfume bottles are usually 10–13 cm tall

Stealing in groups by distracting staff ----- One person distracts the staff while another steals the perfume. This often happens in crowded stores

Swapping the product with an empty bottle ----- Swapping an empty bottle with a new one on the shelf

Removing the security tag to steal the perfume ----- Thieves peel off the sticker-type security tag, hide it in the store, and steal the perfume



Thieves often strike during busy times, like weekends or lunch hours, when staff are distracted

Some thieves place cheap product barcodes on expensive perfumes to trick the cashier

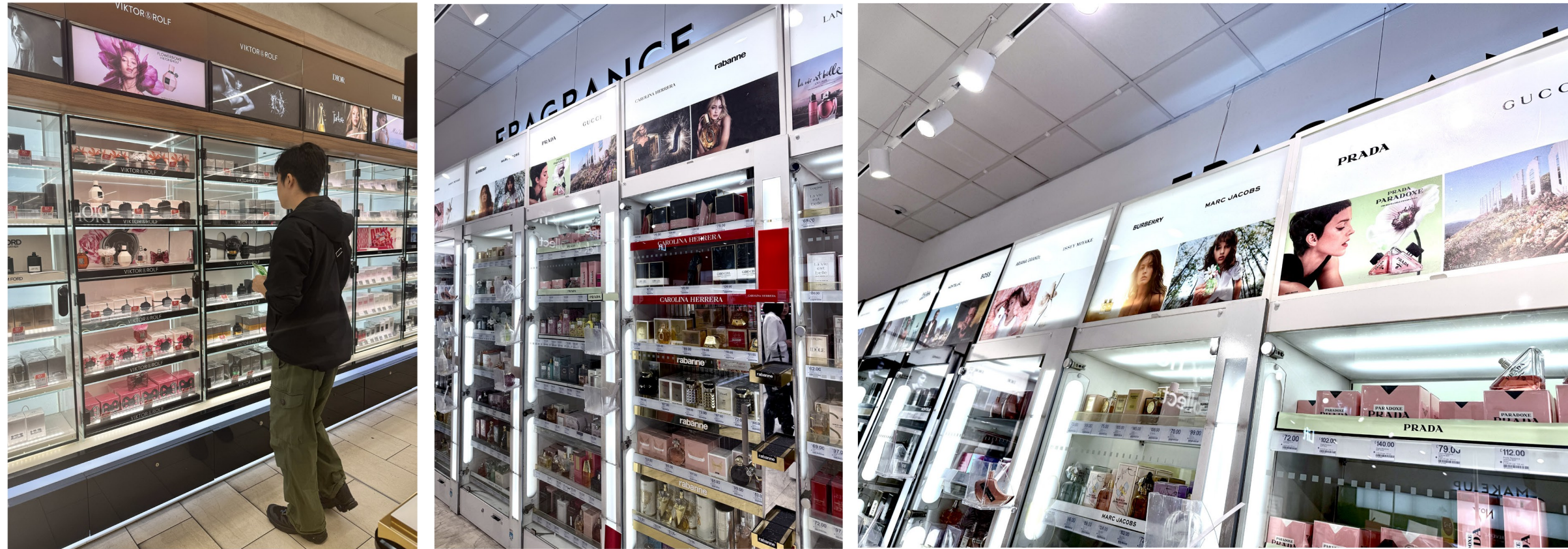
They carry the perfume as if it's a tester and casually walk out of the store

Some wrap the perfume in shopping bags near the display to make it look like they already paid

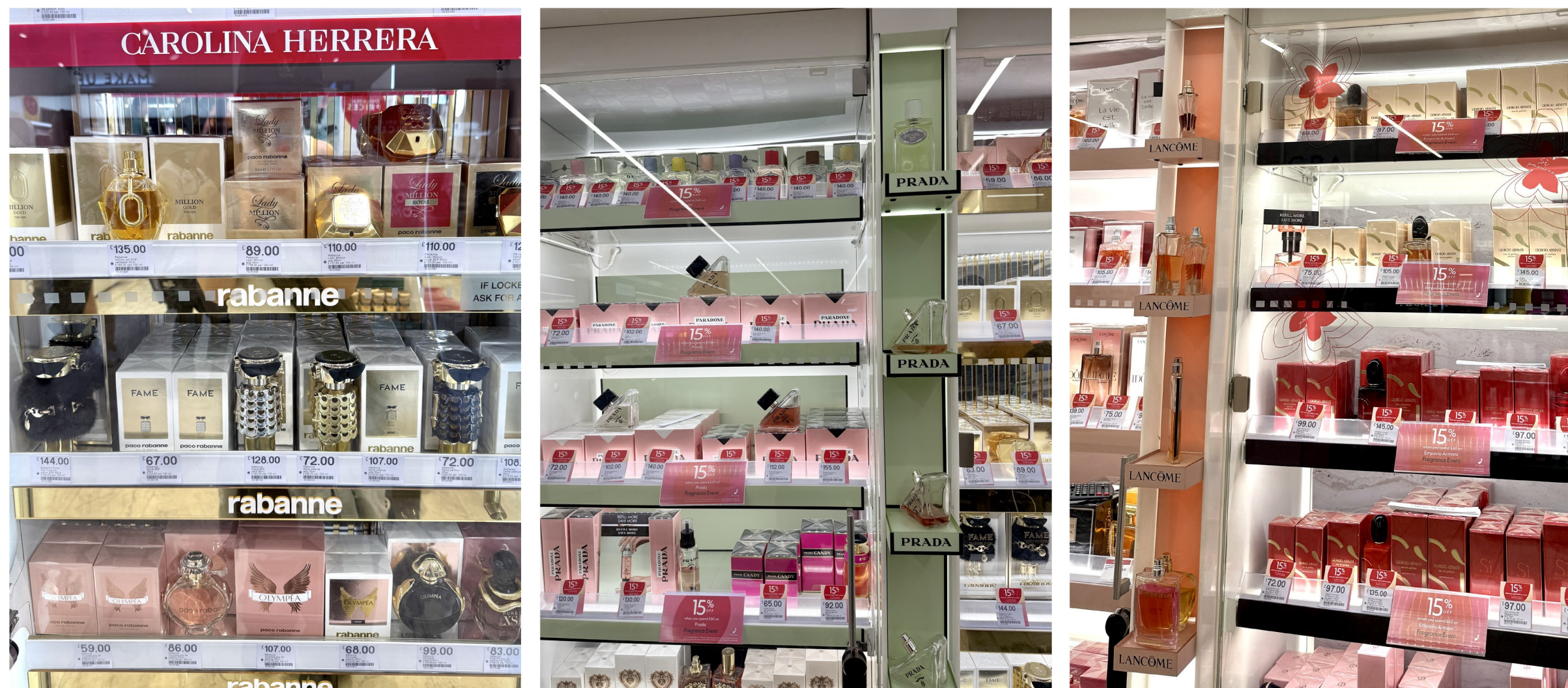
They steal when employees briefly leave the counter or display area

Thieves sell stolen testers online at lower prices. Most buyers can't tell the difference

perfume display from retail store ,



After visiting three different Boots stores, I noticed that each fragrance display was designed to match the brand's unique concept. The tester areas also looked different depending on the brand ,the visuals and overall mood varied, and the way the perfumes were arranged wasn't always the same. Inside the store, digital screens helped customers easily locate each brand. These screens didn't just show brand names, but also included campaign images or ads, which helped communicate the brand's identity clearly. Visually, the space felt well put together, but since each brand had its own layout and style, the overall store sometimes felt a bit inconsistent and slightly confusing.



- Each brand has a different design for its perfume stand or base.
- Brand specific stickers or graphic decorations are applied to the glass cabinets.
- The overall concept or mood of the brand can often be guessed from the display.
- Products from the same brand are grouped together in one area.
- Digital screens help customers easily locate each fragrance brand.
- These screens show not only the brand name, but also campaign visuals or advertisements.
- Some testers are locked behind cabinets, while others are left open.
- Tester zones are not always separated from regular product shelves.
- Products are generally organized, but tester papers or bottles are sometimes out of place.

# interview ,

## interview with jh

age 25, living in the UK for 6 years  
prefers testing perfume on skin

Interview with JH

1. Takes time to find staff.  
↳ Just want to test, but asking everytime feels burdensome.  
↳ Ended up walking away.  
→ High staff dependency breaks the testing flow and discourages engagement.
2. Feels like untouchable jewelry.  
"If I don't know what I want, it's not appealing."  
→ Limited access reduces product appeal.
3. Staff were just protecting the perfume.  
↳ Not everyone feels 'monitored', but physical access remains inconvenient.
4. Feels like items in a fridge.  
Department stores → perfume zones  
↳ spatial design create luxury feel special, not just locking.
5. Test → Skin Paper ← Just use once and throw it away.  
But, sometimes we keep scent strips with notes and come back later to buy.  
→ Testing links to memory. Method and quality of testing influence buying.
6. Changed his mind after smelling.  
↳ Testing allows flexibility.
7. Stay longer when they have tester.  
↳ "Since I invested time I'd feel like I should treat myself by leaving with a perfume."

## interview with jay

age 23, in the UK for 3 years. Also prefers applying perfume directly on the body

Interview with Jay

1. Uncomfortable asking staff?  
→ Often skips testing because asking feels awkward.  
→ Also feels pressure to buy after testing.
2. Thoughts on locked testers?  
→ Feels like the product isn't really for sale.  
↳ Cabinets make the experience feel restrictive and passive.  
↳ it feels like the perfume are just "on display." not meant to be used!!
3. Felt watched, or treated with suspicion?  
→ Yes, being "allowed" to test and watched closely feels uncomfortable, even when planning to buy.
4. Did you feel locked cabinets & luxurious?  
→ No, it actually lowers the brand's image!  
→ if customers can't try the product it feels disconnected!
5. How important is free testing?  
→ I think it is very important to customers.  
↳ Unlike other products, fragrance reacts differently depending on person's skin and body chemistry.  
"I think letting customers experience the product is the most important part of selling perfume."  
6. How much does testing a perfume affect your decision to purchase?  
→ If I can't test it, I won't buy it.  
↳ "I always test before I decide."  
7. If testing were easier, would you stay longer?  
→ Yes!!!. Smell is tied to memory! A more open experience would create a stronger connection with the brand!

## interview with eun

age 24, studying in China for 2 years. Focuses on testing and noticing the after-scent

Interview with eun

1. Yes, I always find it uncomfortable!  
"I don't like initiating conversations with strangers!!"
2. very very inconvenient...  
↳ some stores, the testers barely have any fragrance left, so I went there just to smell it and couldn't even do that.
3. I just saw it part of the process, and it didn't bother me personally.
4. Not at all. It just looked like a way to prevent theft to me.  
[It didn't make the product seem more luxurious.]
5. If testers aren't available it limits my options.

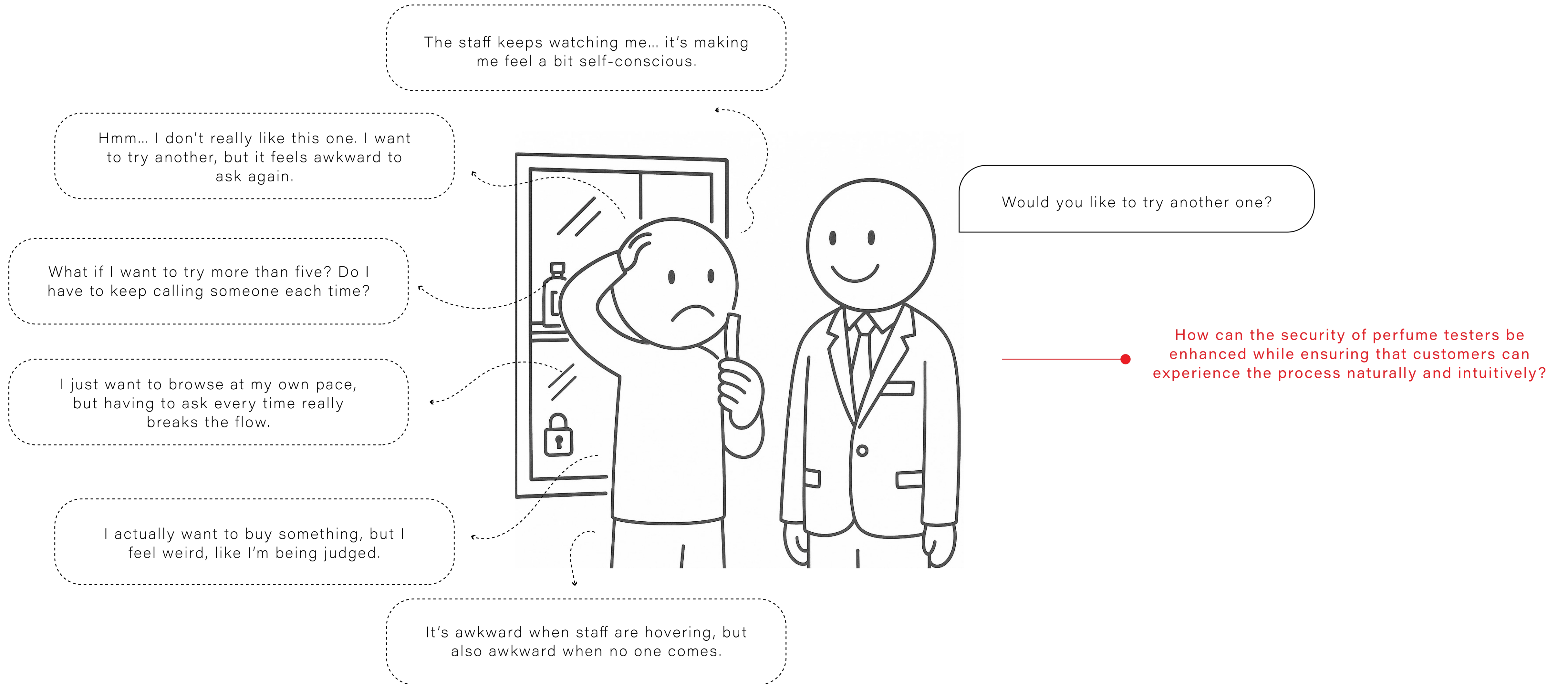
I think having a full range of testers is necessary so customers can choose fairly and confidently!

6. A lot. So much!  
I would never buy a fragrance without testing it first.
7. Yes. If I could test more freely I would try more options and spend more time exploring.

I noticed that three of the interviewees gave similar answers during the interviews. I heard that many of them just came to test the perfume, not to buy it, and felt uncomfortable asking a staff member for help. I realized that people prefer to be left alone when they don't need assistance, and only want help when it's truly necessary. I found that when someone steps in without being asked, it can feel uncomfortable or even annoying. I learned that this kind of experience often leads people to avoid the situation entirely. For people who find it hard to talk to strangers, even asking a staff member to unlock a cabinet can feel like a burden.

One interviewee said this kind of system made them give up on testing the perfume altogether, and that really stood out to me. Perfume is something people need to experience directly to know if it suits their taste, but when asking for help feels uncomfortable, they might just walk away without buying. That made me feel like this is a problem worth solving. Also, I realized that while locking up new products might make sense, locking up testers just makes them unusable. Many of the interviewees said that if testing had felt more free and accessible, they would've stayed longer and been more interested in exploring different scents.

customer senario ,



insights from visiting boots,

1

**Mismatched shelf and bottle size gives a neglected look**

The shelves are too small for the perfume bottles, making them look unstable and poorly managed.

2

**Scratches and cloudiness raise hygiene concerns**

The acrylic shelves are scratched and cloudy, which makes them look unclean and discourages people from touching the products.

3

**Limited testers increase reliance on staff**

Only a few products have testers out, so customers always need to ask staff for help to try something.

4

**Weak materials and lack of locks make testers easy to steal**

There aren't enough security tags or locks, and the materials seem flimsy, so testers could be taken without much effort.

5

**Disorganized tester strips cause confusion**

Used and unused tester papers are mixed together, making it unclear what's clean and what's not.

6

**Messy display hurts the brand's premium image**

The disorganized layout makes the perfume area feel less high-end and less professional.

problems observed at boots ,

The holders don't fit the bottles properly and are only secured with Scotch tape, making the setup look insecure.



Tester strips and products are mixed together, creating a completely disorganized appearance.

Each brand uses a different nozzle holder, resulting in inconsistency, and they only work with specific perfume bottles.



The acrylic shelf surface is cloudy and heavily scratched, raising hygiene concerns and making it unappealing to touch.

problems observed at boots ,

Sticker-type security tags appear easy to peel off, increasing the risk of theft.



The fully open shelf design makes it easy to grab testers, and no theft-prevention measures are visible.

The shelf is too small for the perfume bottles, making the display look cluttered and giving an overall impression of neglect.

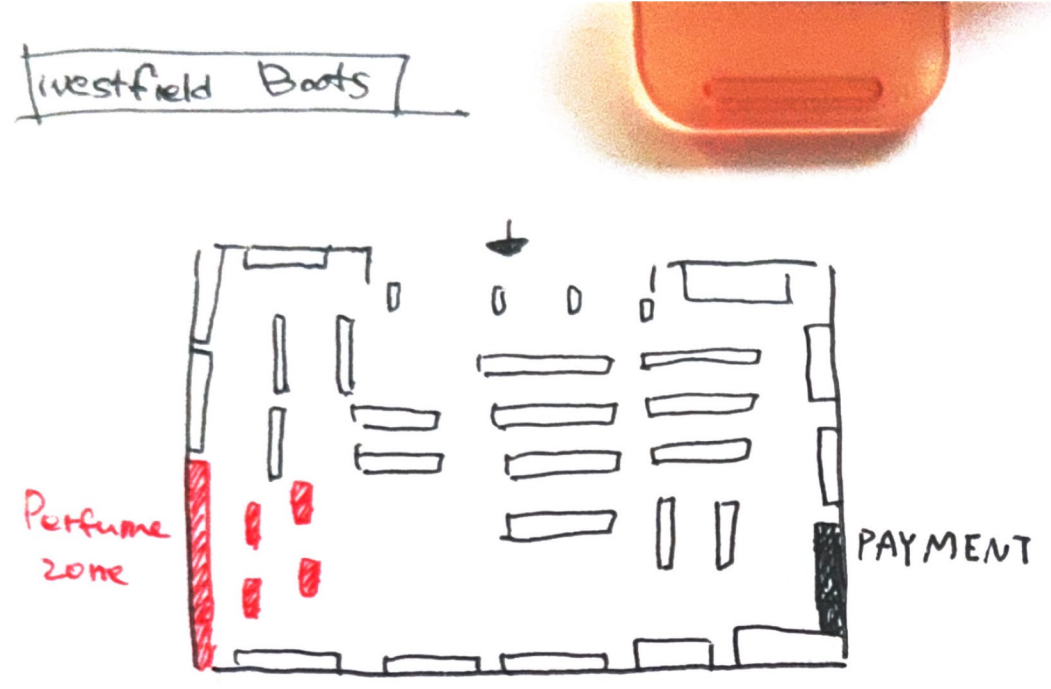
Scattered tester strips make it hard to tell which are used or new, contributing to a sense of disorder.



There are too few tester shelves, so only some products are on display while the rest are locked away, forcing customers to seek staff assistance to test.

problems observed at boots ,

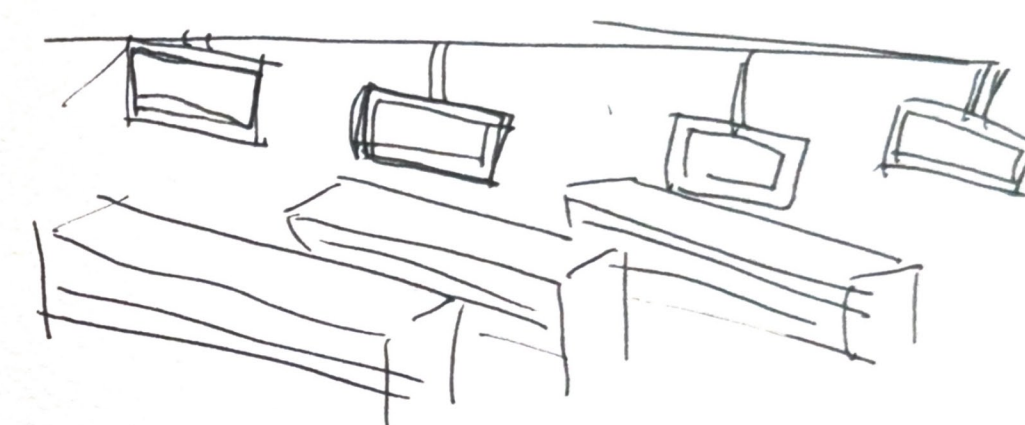
### Westfield Boots



Perfume zone

PAYMENT

→ The main checkout was the back, but there were other counters around the store where staff could assist with payment.



→ CCTV cameras were installed all around the store.

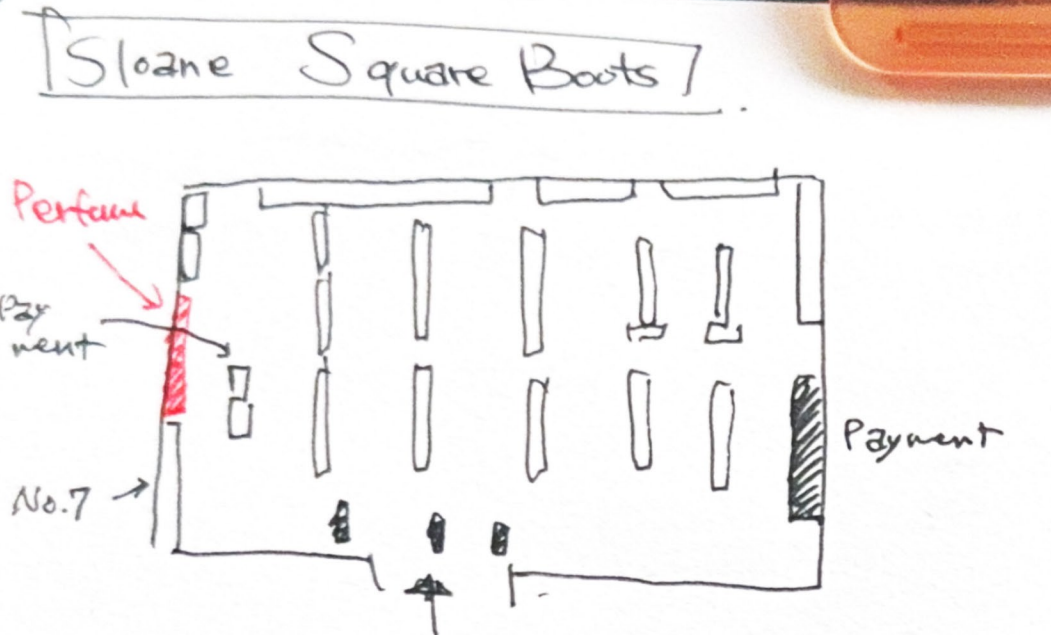
+  
Monitors hanging from the ceiling.

↓  
Staff and customers could see <sup>it</sup> in real time.

Perfume zone.

- The perfume section was at the back with a few staff members around.
- One security guard was also nearby.
- Some testers were open, others were fixed.
- A few brands used posters and display to present testers more privately.

### Sloane Square Boots



Perfume

Payment

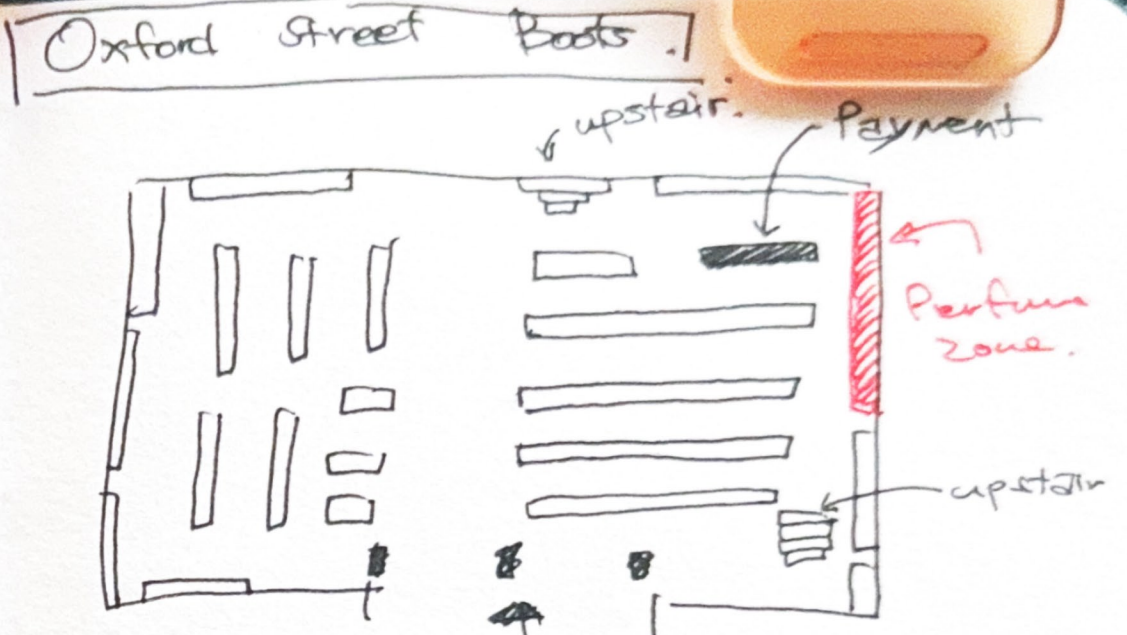
No.7

Payment

Perfume zone.

- The store was small, and the perfume cabinets felt clutter than other store.
- ↳ ... I didn't really feel like buying perfume here....
- Most testers were locked or not accessible.
- I saw a customer ask to test a scent, but the staff didn't have the key and had to call someone else.
- The perfume section was right near the entrance. + checkout counter in front.

### Oxford Street Boots



upstairs.

Payment

Perfume zone.

upstairs

Perfume zone.

- There was very crowded → staff + customers.
- Most perfume testers were locked inside cabinets, and only a few were displayed outside with little to no security.
- Some testers were placed on branded stands, but most were just sitting on scratched acrylic shelves.
- Shelves looked messy ← several empty tester place.
- Payment counter was located in front of the perfume area, but staff seemed too busy to approach easily.
- Overall, the perfume section was bright, but it didn't feel a clean and organized impression.

After visiting the Boots stores in Oxford Street, Sloane Square, and Westfield, I found that they all shared similar issues related to the security, hygiene, and accessibility of perfume testers.