

The Virginian-Pilot

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Shop opens in downtown Norfolk for those who want to wear high-end shoes but can't afford it

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Ace Shapiro is opening the second location of retail shop Sole Food Kicks, this one on Granby Street in downtown Norfolk. It sells shoes, clothing and accessories, along with consignment items. He was photographed on Wednesday, July 25, 2018.



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The second location of retail shop Sole Food Kicks, this one on Granby Street in downtown Norfolk, is getting ready to open, photographed on Wednesday, July 25, 2018. It sells shoes, clothing and accessories, along with consignment items.



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Ace Shapiro shows a flyer on Wednesday, July 25, 2018 for the second location of retail shop Sole Food Kicks, this one on Granby Street in downtown Norfolk. It sells shoes, clothing and accessories, along with consignment items.



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NORFOLK

Buy a pair of shoes. Wear them for a week. Bring them back and get something else.

Whether it's Nike Jordan, Adidas Yeezy, Supreme or Palace, Sole Food Kicks is bringing new and consignment shoes, clothing and accessories to downtown Norfolk.

The small Granby Street shop, which opened on Saturday, is the second location for Ace Shapiro. He opened his first store in the Lynnhaven Shopping Center in Virginia Beach in 2014.

Shapiro's business is based on a buy-sell-trade model. He said there's a culture growing around the concept, which is why he was able to open a second location.

Most of the items will be new, but the consignment inventory will grow over time.

“The shirts are expensive. It’s essentially a \$100 shirt in some cases,” he said. “So for the kids that are wearing it, they don’t have \$500 to buy five shirts. But they can buy one and bring it back.”

It’s not uncommon for customers to buy a pair of shoes, wear them for a few days and then trade them in for something else.

“Once you take an Instagram or Facebook photo, you don’t want to be seen in the same outfit five times. So you’re going to get rid of it,” he said. But not everyone is so fast to dump their new duds.

“Some people keep it. I’m a collector so I keep my stuff,” Shapiro said. “But it’s essentially using something and then getting your money back.”

Much of the shop’s business is based on exclusive items. Shapiro will wait for a limited release of shoes or clothing, buy some of the items, and then resell them at a higher price.

“It’s simple and old-fashioned supply and demand,” he said. “Once something sells out, people are going to pay extra just because it’s gone and they want it.”

Shapiro is setting up shop where Textbook Brokers used to be, next to the Grilled Cheese Bistro. With apartment buildings, the NorVa and Tidewater Community College close by, Shapiro hopes downtown foot traffic will bring more exposure and business.

Even though the shop sells consignment, don’t expect cheap items. Merchandise ranges from \$75 to \$2,500.

“It’s a wide range,” Shapiro said. “There’s something here for everybody.”