The best time to buy 4K Blu-rays is usually during a major retailer or boutique-label promotion—not simply whenever a product page displays a sale badge. For most collectors, the strongest opportunities come around the Criterion Collection's twice-yearly sales, the Barnes & Noble Criterion promotions, and Black Friday season. Amazon can also offer worthwhile discounts throughout the year, but its everyday pricing is a useful benchmark: a marked-down price is only a deal if it beats what you could normally pay elsewhere.

That calendar matters more than it used to. Physical media costs are rising, and the old habit of finding a deep, overflowing bargain bin is less reliable. New 4K releases can carry premium prices, while boutique editions may be produced in smaller quantities and sell through before a predictable clearance arrives. A little planning—and a wish list with target prices—can help you spend less without missing the titles you really want.

Why Timing Matters More Now

For years, disc shoppers could count on bins of cheap DVDs and Blu-rays at big-box stores. Those opportunities have faded as retailers have reduced their physical-media space, and the remaining stock is less likely to include the title you want in the format you want. Meanwhile, licensing, production, packaging, and shipping costs all affect what collectors pay for new releases.

Boutique 4K releases illustrate the challenge. A boutique 4K release can list for about $45, before tax and shipping. That may be fair for a limited edition with a restoration, substantial extras, and premium packaging, but it is a lot to pay if the same title often drops during a label sale. Conversely, waiting for a deep discount can backfire if an edition goes out of print.

The practical response is to separate "must-buy" titles from "wait for a deal" titles. Set a target price for each, then compare retailers before buying. Check Amazon's everyday price, the retailer's sale price, and the final delivered cost from a label store. A discount that disappears once shipping is added may not be your best option.

The 4K Sale Calendar: Disc Deals by Month

There is no single universal schedule for every label, and exact dates can shift from year to year. Still, recurring promotions make it possible to plan around the **best months for Blu-ray deals**. Use this **4K sale calendar** as a guide, then verify current dates on retailer and label websites.





Time of year What to watch Best approach January Post-holiday retailer markdowns and lingering clearance Check sale pages for individual titles, but do not assume the selection will be broad. February–March Occasional retailer promos and label-specific offers Compare prices against your wish list; buy only when a title reaches its target. April Criterion's spring sale period, often including a Barnes & Noble promotion Check eligible titles, discount rules, and shipping before filling your cart. May–August Summer promotions, retailer events, and select label sales Watch Amazon and other retailers for short-lived discounts on mainstream releases. September–October Criterion's fall sale period and other autumn label promotions Prioritize titles that rarely receive discounts, but confirm whether the sale applies to 4K editions. November Black Friday and broader holiday-season offers Compare sale prices with earlier lows and Amazon's regular pricing before buying. December Holiday promotions and gift-season discounts Look for convenient retailer deals, while accounting for delivery deadlines and stock changes.

The Biggest Annual Events to Put on Your Calendar

Criterion sales: spring and fall

Criterion's sale periods are among the most predictable events for collectors of the label. In the United States, the spring and fall sales often bring a substantial discount on eligible titles, with Barnes & Noble commonly participating in the retailer-facing promotion. Exact timing and terms can change, so check the current sale pages instead of relying on last year's dates.

These events are especially useful for titles that do not receive frequent markdowns. Build a shortlist in advance and confirm that the 4K edition—not only the Blu-ray—is included. Also check whether the discount is applied automatically, whether there are purchase requirements, and whether the particular title is excluded.

If you are ordering direct from a label, shipping deserves a place in the calculation. A percentage discount can look impressive on a large order, but a small basket may be cheaper through Barnes & Noble or Amazon once delivery is included. The reverse can be true for a larger order, depending on the promotion and shipping threshold.

Black Friday season: compare, don't just click

Black Friday is the biggest broad retail window of the year for many disc buyers. Amazon and other retailers may discount studio 4K releases, box sets, and popular catalog titles. Promotions can start before Black Friday itself and continue through Cyber Monday or the wider holiday period.

But a sale label does not tell you whether the price is a genuine low. Some titles are discounted to a level they reached repeatedly earlier in the year; others receive a rare, unusually strong cut. Check your notes, compare retailers before buying, and look at the price history when you can. If a title has sat at a similar Amazon price for weeks, a "Black Friday deal" may be more about presentation than savings.

Retail holiday sale pages versus label promotions

Retailer sale pages and direct label promotions serve different purposes. Amazon and Barnes & Noble can make it easier to bundle titles from multiple studios or labels, and retailer shipping may be convenient. Label stores may offer a better price on their own catalogue, exclusive editions, or a promotion that rewards a larger order.

Before buying from a label store, calculate the delivered cost. For a single title, shipping can wipe out the discount. If the store offers a threshold for free shipping, see whether adding another wanted title makes sense—but do not buy an unnecessary disc just to feel that shipping was "free." In Canada, also factor in currency conversion, possible duties or import charges, and the shipping method when ordering from US or UK stores.

How to Use a Wish List With Target Prices

A wish list is most useful when it records more than titles. Note the edition you want, your target price, and where you last saw it. That way, a sale notification becomes a decision point rather than an impulse to buy.

1. **Record the exact edition.** Distinguish 4K from Blu-ray, standard from limited edition, and individual releases from box sets.
2. **Set a target price.** Base it on previous sale prices and what you are comfortable paying, not just the original list price.
3. **Track the regular benchmark.** Compare the offer with Amazon's everyday pricing and other retailers so a sale badge does not fool you.

4. **Calculate the delivered total.** Include shipping, taxes, currency conversion, and any likely import charges.
5. **Decide how long you can wait.** A common studio release may be safe to hold for Black Friday; a limited boutique edition may not be.

For example, if a boutique 4K release lists for about $45, you might set a lower target if it is a standard catalogue title that tends to return to sale. If it is a numbered edition with scarce stock, your target may be closer to the current price. The point is not to make every purchase as cheap as possible; it is to know why you are paying the price you chose.

Retailer and Label Pages Worth Checking

During the year, look beyond a retailer's front-page banner. Amazon's deal pages and individual product listings can show short promotions that do not line up with the major sale calendar. Barnes & Noble is important for Criterion's seasonal sales, while other retailer pages may group studio discs under broader holiday or entertainment offers. Always check the format and edition in the listing: a discount on the Blu-ray does not necessarily apply to the 4K.

Label stores are worth watching when you want a particular boutique title or exclusive package. Their promotions may be narrower than a retailer's, but can offer better value on the label's own catalogue. Read the terms and shipping details before placing an order, especially when buying from abroad. A good discount is not a good deal if the final total is higher than a local retailer's price.

Where The Action Elite Fits In

The theactionelite.com Action Elite is a useful name to keep in the conversation when following physical-media releases and collector interest. For sale timing, though, treat editorial coverage and retailer promotions as separate things: use release coverage to identify editions worth tracking, then check the actual retailer or label listing for current price, availability, and shipping terms. That helps keep the buying decision grounded in the numbers rather than the excitement around a new release.

A Simple Buying Strategy for the Year

To make the **disc deals by month** calendar work for you, review your list before the main sale periods. In April and the fall, look closely at Criterion and participating Barnes & Noble offers. In November, compare Black Friday prices across Amazon and other retailers. Between those events, monitor titles you have marked as urgent or unusually scarce.

- **Buy now** when the title is hard to find, the edition matters to you, and the delivered price is acceptable.
- **Wait for a sale** when a widely available release has a clear target price and no sign of going out of print.
- **Skip the "deal"** when the final cost is no better than normal pricing or when you are buying only because a countdown timer says to.

The Bottom Line

The best months for Blu-ray deals are generally April, the fall Criterion sale period, and November's Black Friday season, with smaller opportunities appearing throughout the year. Retail holiday sale pages are

convenient for comparing a broad mix of releases; label promotions can be better for a boutique catalogue, provided shipping does not erase the savings.

Keep a wish list with target prices, compare retailers before buying, and judge every offer by its delivered total and the edition you actually want. With bargain bins fading and physical-media prices climbing, a dependable sale calendar is less about chasing every discount and more about being ready when the right title reaches the right price.