

Usability Report for Amazon.com

Heuristic Evaluation of Amazon.com

1. Visibility of System Status

Strength: The website provides real-time updates, such as order status, delivery tracking, and stock availability.

Example: When a user adds an item to the cart, a confirmation message appears, showing the total number of items in the cart.

Area for Improvement: Some background processes, like payment verification, don't always display real-time status updates.

Example: When a payment fails, the system doesn't immediately notify the user, leading to confusion.

2. Match Between System and the Real World

Strength: The language and icons used are intuitive and align with real-world shopping experiences.

Example: The shopping cart icon is universally recognized, and product categories are logically structured.

Area for Improvement: Some product descriptions use technical jargon that might be unclear to non-expert users.

Example: Tech products sometimes list specifications without explanations, making it difficult for casual users to understand.

3. User Control and Freedom

Strength: The website allows users to easily edit or cancel orders within a certain time frame.

Example: Users can cancel orders or modify shipping addresses before the item is shipped.

Area for Improvement: Some irreversible actions lack clear warnings.

Example: Accidentally placing an order with one-click purchasing can be difficult to undo without immediately navigating to the cancellation page.

4. Consistency and Standards

Strength: The design follows standard e-commerce conventions, making navigation intuitive.

Example: The "Buy Now" and "Add to Cart" buttons are consistently placed across all product pages.

Area for Improvement: Some layout inconsistencies appear between mobile and desktop versions.

Example: The mobile version hides certain filtering options that are visible on the desktop site, making it harder to refine searches.

5. Error Prevention

Strength: Amazon provides clear validation for errors, such as missing required fields during checkout.

Example: If a user forgets to enter a ZIP code, the system highlights the field with an error message.

Area for Improvement: The "one-click purchase" option can lead to unintended purchases.

Example: Users might accidentally buy an item without reviewing order details if they misclick on "Buy Now."

6. Recognition Rather Than Recall

Strength: The website remembers previous searches, recently viewed items, and personalized recommendations.

Example: Users returning to the homepage see a section with recently viewed items and recommendations based on past purchases.

Area for Improvement: Some saved preferences (e.g., payment methods) are not easily accessible.

Example: Users must navigate through multiple settings to update or switch default payment methods.

7. Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

Strength: Amazon provides quick actions like "Reorder" and "Subscribe & Save" for frequent purchases.

Example: Users can quickly repurchase items from their order history without searching for them again.

Area for Improvement: Advanced filtering options are not always obvious.

Example: On mobile, users have to scroll through multiple menus to find specific filters, reducing efficiency.

8. Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

Strength: The interface is clean and visually structured, with a balance between product images and text.

Example: Product pages prioritize key details such as price, reviews, and delivery options without overwhelming users.

Area for Improvement: Too many promotions and ads clutter the homepage.

Example: Flash deals, sponsored products, and suggested items can make it harder to focus on primary shopping tasks.

9. Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Strength: Clear error messages help users understand and fix issues.

Example: If a promo code is invalid, Amazon specifies why and suggests alternatives.

Area for Improvement: Some error messages could provide more guidance.

Example: When a payment fails, the error message doesn't always specify whether it's due to insufficient funds, a bank issue, or an expired card.

10. Help and Documentation

Strength: Amazon has extensive help sections, FAQs, and customer support options.

Example: Users can access chat support, detailed return policies, and troubleshooting guides for common issues.

Area for Improvement: Some help topics require multiple clicks to access.

Example: Locating details about order disputes or refund processes takes multiple navigation steps, which can be frustrating for users in urgent situations.

Summary of Findings

Strengths:

Real-time status updates (e.g., order tracking, stock availability).

Consistent and user-friendly interface with intuitive navigation.

Strong personalization with saved searches and recommendations.

Areas for Improvement:

Overuse of promotions cluttering the homepage.

One-click purchase lacks confirmation, increasing the risk of accidental orders.

Error messages need more detail, particularly for payment failures.

Amazon's website is highly functional and user-friendly, but improving these areas could further enhance the shopping experience.

Test Tasks

Participants will complete the following tasks while being observed:

1. Search for a product and apply filters

- Search for a "wireless mouse"
- Apply a price filter (\$10–\$30)
- Sort results by customer rating

2. Add an item to the cart and proceed to checkout

- Select a product from the search results
- Check product details and reviews
- Add it to the cart and proceed to checkout

3. Cancel an order from the order history

- Navigate to the order history
- Locate a recent order
- Attempt to cancel it

Participant	Task	Observations	Errors/Difficulties	Comments
Hidemi	1	Successfully searched for a wireless mouse and applied filters.	Took extra time finding the filter option on mobile.	"The filters are not immediately visible; I had to scroll to find them."
Hidemi	2	Added the item to the cart but had trouble locating the checkout button.	Confused by multiple checkout-related options (Buy Now, Add to Cart).	"It should be clearer which button takes me to checkout."
Hidemi	3	Found order history but struggled to locate cancellation options.	The "Cancel Order" button was not immediately visible.	"It would be nice if canceled orders were separated from active ones."
Pedro	1	Used search bar easily but had trouble applying filters.	Didn't immediately recognize the filter icon on mobile.	"It would be better if the filter options were more prominent."
Pedro	2	Added item to cart quickly but mistakenly clicked "Buy Now" instead of "Add to Cart."	Accidentally purchased the item without reviewing details.	"One-click purchase should have a confirmation step."
Pedro	3	Navigated to orders but was unsure how to cancel.	Confused about whether cancellation was possible after shipment.	"The process for canceling an order could be clearer."