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4 min article

How to handle a return request as a seller

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You can choose whether to accept returns if a buyer changes their mind about a purchase. However, if an item arrives damaged, doesn't match the listing description, or if the buyer receives the wrong item, you'll generally need to accept the return.

 To improve your experience, please sign into your account.

[Sign in](#)

Read our most popular questions and answers about handling return requests from your buyers.

You can also find more information in our full article below.

I don't accept returns, why am I getting a request from the buyer?

What happens if the buyer used the item, or it's damaged while it's being returned?

What happens if the buyer doesn't send the item back?

- Are you a buyer looking to return an item? Read our article on [returning an item](#)
- Need help with return shipping? See our page on [return shipping for sellers](#)
- Would you like us to help with an open return request? See our page on [asking eBay to step in and help for sellers](#)

When you create a listing, you'll add a [return policy](#), which will determine your options if a buyer wants to return an item for "change of mind" (or "remorse") reasons.

If the buyer reports that the item arrived damaged or doesn't match the listing description, you'll see different options for responding to the return. If the purchase is covered by the [eBay Money Back Guarantee policy](#), you'll have to accept the return, even if you have a no returns policy.

When the buyer opens a return request we'll notify you by email (to your registered email address) and through [eBay Messages](#). You have 3 business days to respond to the request and resolve the buyer's issue. We've outlined your [response options](#) below. In some cases, we may automatically accept a return request on your behalf.

If you're unable to resolve the issue within this time, the buyer may ask us to step in and help. In some cases, if you haven't responded to the return request, we may issue a refund to the buyer and seek reimbursement from you without requiring the buyer to return the item.

Tip

When listing an item, it's important to include [your returns address](#). If you don't, and the buyer requests a return, the item will be automatically returned to your registered address.

How to start resolving a return request

Open your Returns dashboard and select **View return details** from beside the item.

You'll be able to see the buyer's reason for requesting the return, the date you need to respond by, and any additional comments or photos provided by the buyer.

Check buyer returns

Your options for responding to a return request

Your options for responding to a buyer's request depend on the reason they're returning the item and the return policy you stated in your listing.

The buyer received the wrong item, it arrived damaged, or it doesn't match the listing description

You accept returns in your policy, and the buyer changed their mind about a purchase

You don't accept returns in your policy, and the buyer changed their mind about a purchase

Tip

In some cases, your response options may differ. For example, you may have opted to [automatically accept return requests](#).

How to accept a return

To accept a return:

1. Go to your [Returns dashboard](#).
2. Select **View return details** beside the item.
3. Select **Accept the return** and then **Continue**.
4. If you're responsible for return shipping, [choose how you'll arrange for the item to be returned](#).
5. If the buyer is responsible, choose your return address from the dropdown menu.
6. Enter a return merchandise authorization number, if you use them.
7. Select **Confirm**.

We'll then ask the buyer to ship the item back to you:

How long a buyer has to ship the return:

Once the return is accepted, we'll provide the buyer with a date by which they should ship the item back to you. After 15 business days, if we don't see any indicators that the item is on its way back to you, we may close the return and protect you from negative feedback. Some returns may remain open for up to 35 business days. Returns cannot be closed at the request of a seller.

- **eBay or seller-provided labels:** If an eBay label was automatically provided or [you provide non-eBay return labels and upload tracking](#), we may close the return if we don't see tracking scans or signals from the buyer showing the item was shipped within 15 business days of when the label was provided. If tracking is not uploaded, we may wait up to 35 business days before closing the return
- **No label provided:** If the buyer is responsible for return shipping, we may close the return if we don't see tracking scans or signals showing the item was shipped within 15 business days of the return being accepted. If you are responsible for providing return shipping and do not upload a label, we may wait up to 35 business days from the date the return was accepted before closing the return.

How to issue a full refund

How to offer a partial refund

How to decline a return

How to send the buyer a message

How to offer a replacement or exchange item

Payment holds

When a buyer opens a return request the funds related to the sale may be [put on hold](#). Once the return has been resolved, the hold is lifted and you'll receive your funds in your next scheduled payout.

Refunding the buyer

When you agree to give the buyer their money back, or once you receive the returned item, you'll need to issue their refund within 2 business days. To do this, go to the case in your [Returns dashboard](#) and choose **Refund buyer**. If you don't refund the buyer within 2 business days of receiving the item, we may automatically issue a refund to them on your behalf.

When you issue a refund to the buyer

- **They'll be refunded through their original payment method.** In most cases, the refund takes 3 to 5 business days to process. However, depending on the payment method the buyer used, it can take up to 30 days
- **We'll automatically relist your item for you.** If you don't want your item to be relisted, simply uncheck the **Relist item** box when issuing the refund
- **You may be eligible for fee credits** if you refund the buyer on eBay without us stepping in. Learn more about [fee credits](#)

Tip

Carefully check the returned item before issuing a refund. Eligible sellers may be able to deduct an amount from the refund if an item is returned used or damaged. See our [seller protections](#) for more details.

What to do if an item is returned used or damaged

Once you receive the item back, you need to refund the buyer. However, if the item has been used, altered or damaged, it may be appropriate to deduct an amount from the buyer's refund to cover the loss in the item's value.

If the return is eligible, you'll see the option to deduct a specific amount or a percentage when you refund the buyer through the return request. Once you've sent the refund, we'll keep the return open for up to 10

days so that we can help the buyer if they ask us to step in, but because you're protected there's nothing more for you to do.

See our seller protections for full details of eligibility and how we protect you in these situations. Keep in mind that you're not eligible for fee credits when you deduct from the buyer's refund for a return that was used, altered or damaged, and you'll no longer see this option if eBay steps in to help with the return.

How to deduct from the buyer's refund when the item is returned in a different condition

Guidelines for how much to deduct from the refund

Misuse of this protection

Sellers may only deduct an amount from the buyer's refund in order to recover lost value when an item is returned used, altered or damaged. Sellers may not use this protection to recoup market losses on items returned in the same condition or recoup return postage and/or restocking costs.

See the [Seller protections abuse policy](#) for more examples of activity that we don't allow.

Ask eBay to step in and help

We know that you want to provide buyers with a great experience, but sometimes you're not able to reach an agreement. If you and the buyer haven't been able to resolve the issue within 3 business days, we're always ready to step in and help.

If we're asked to step in, we may ask the buyer to return the item to you if any of the following apply:

- We can't determine that the item received by the buyer matches the listing description
- You offered returns and your stated return window applies
- You already offered to accept a return

If we're asked to step in at any stage, you'll no longer be able to deduct an amount from the buyer's refund, even if you qualify under our [seller protections](#).

You can ask us to step in from the **Returns & Refunds** section of Seller Help. Simply select **Take Action** beside the item and then **Ask eBay to step in**.

[Go to Seller Help](#)

How to ask eBay to step in and help in Seller Hub

How to ask eBay to step in and help in My eBay Sold

When we step in, we'll review the details of your case and will aim to resolve it in the fairest way possible. We normally come back with an answer within 48 hours, though occasionally it might take longer if we need more information.

Top Takeaway

The buyer is entitled to return an item that arrives faulty or damaged—even if you said in your listing that you don't accept returns.

Was this article helpful for you?



Related help topics

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[How sellers manage returns and refunds](#)

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Return shipping for sellers

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4 min article

Best practices for avoiding and handling issues with buyers

There are some simple, practical steps you can take to reduce the risk of something going wrong with your buyers' purchases....

4 min article

Help didn't work

If a buyer returns an item and you don't receive it, you can request a refund. If a buyer returns an item and you don't receive it, you can request a refund.

3 min article



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Contact us

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