

## How to Avoid eBay Scams and Fraud

Countless people have been scammed and defrauded on eBay. eBay is a fun place to bid on items and to sell items - but you must know how to recognize a scam, and how to avoid them, then or you quickly join the ranks of those who have lost their money to eBay scams. Of course, if you are scammed, there are some actions you can take to correct the situation - but in many cases, the scammer does indeed get away! The best option is to avoid being scammed.

You can easily avoid many scams with the payment method that you use - whether you are a buyer or a seller. eBay owns Paypal, and in most cases, Paypal is the payment method you should use. First, as a buyer, if you are scammed or less than satisfied with the item when it arrives, you can dispute the charge easily, and demand a refund. The seller must reply and show proof that the item was shipped, and that it arrived in the condition that you expected, or Paypal will return your funds to your account.

As a seller, you can protect yourself by only accepting Paypal. This will eliminate the chances of receiving a bad check or having the buyer dispute a credit card charge. Instead, they must dispute the charge through paypal, and you of course will be able to prove that you shipped the product. You cannot, however, prove that the product arrived in the condition that was expected. In this case, you should demand that the product be returned to you before the refund is issued.

Another common scam that buyers use is the bidding scam. This type of scam is run either with two separate eBay accounts - with one person in control of both of them, or with two friends with separate eBay accounts. A very small bid is placed on your item, using one account. This is followed by a very high bid, from the other eBay account. Right

before the bidding ends, the high bid is cancelled or withdrawn, leaving the low bid as the winning bid. This bid can only be avoided by setting a reserve price - the lowest bid that can be placed is the same as the reserve price that you set.

If you are an eBay seller, you can further protect your auctions by placing a notice on your auctions page, declaring that you have the right to back out of the sale if you suspect potential fraud. As both a buyer and a seller, also beware of spoofed emails. These emails appear to be from eBay. The email may claim that you need to verify your information, and ask you to login to your eBay account, using the link provided. If you follow that link, the site looks exactly like eBay, but it is actually a scam to get your eBay login details, as well as your credit card details! eBay will never ask you to do this. If you suspect a spoofed email, report it to eBay immediately!

Don't let scammers ruin your eBay fun! Just use good common sense, and a reasonable amount of caution, and everything should run smoothly. Report suspicious activity to eBay, and if a deal doesn't feel right, simply back away from it and move on to the next auction.

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