

Tips & Advice on How to avoid eBay fraud

by Noah W - Wednesday, August 29, 2007

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Are you considering buying something on eBay but afraid of getting ripped off? Well, you're not alone. There are millions of eBay users and the scammers and fraudsters abound. This simple video created by iwantcollectibles.com includes great tips and advice for beginner eBay buyers. Warnings include how and what to look for when choosing a seller on eBay.

[YouTube Video](#)

If you're considering a sizable purchase (a few hundred dollars or more) for collectibles or a vehicle perhaps, it's always a great idea to do your homework (background check) and research the seller.

About 3 years ago I purchased a medium priced SUV from an eBay seller. Here are the steps I took to ensure I was dealing with a reputable seller.

1. Reviewed all feedback from buyers
2. Made sure seller had sold vehicles previously (or at least sold other large ticket items).
3. If it was the seller's first vehicle (everybody has to have a first) make sure the seller had a 'Me' page posted on eBay and/or listed all personal information in the auction.
4. When you have nothing to hide and are a stand up citizen or reputable business you should be willing to have your profile be public, especially if you're asking someone to spend \$1,000 or more and you are basically doing business with strangers. [I sell things on eBay and I have an about me page. I'm easy to find and verify.]
5. If the seller does not have any information posted on the auction about who they are, send a message to them using the eBay system.
6. Tell the seller you are interested in the item and ask them to provide their name and contact phone number. This is a very basic request.
7. If someone is selling a laptop or other piece of expensive equipment, or a high ticket electronic device, or a vehicle and they are not a full time eBay business they should provide their name and phone number. If they are a full time eBay business, their auction should list their business name and address or phone number.

If the auction you are interested in does not have name or contact info and you ask the seller for their name and phone (just send a simple message that says:

'Hi, I'm [insert your name] and my eBay name is [xxxx]. I am interested in bidding on your [describe item and include auction number].

Before I place a bid on such an expensive item I like to know who I am doing business with. If you would be so kind as to reply to this message with your contact information (name and phone number) I would like to speak with you for my peace of mind.

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Once we speak I will feel more comfortable bidding on your item. If you prefer to call me, please do so at [add your phone number]. The best time to reach me is [enter day and time]. Sincerely, [your name].

This simple message may save you hundreds if not thousands of dollars as well as the anxiety and time of dealing with eBay fraud.

There are thousands of thousands of honest sellers on eBay, both businesses and individuals. You just have to make sure you're dealing with one of them, because there are also thousands of scammers too.

If you do not get a response from the seller from your request, please don't bid on that item. There are plenty of legitimate auctions and sellers that are more than happy to speak with potential customers.

Have you ever heard of a business that does not want to speak to their potential customers? Well, okay, some of our competitors don't post phone numbers or contact info, but you probably wouldn't want to do business with them either.

I successfully heard from the seller and he provided his name and cell phone number. Once I had his name and cell number I requested a [reverse cell phone number lookup](#) to be sure this was actually his cell number and obtained the address associated with it.

Once I had his name and address and was comfortable with the conversation we had and was pretty sure I was going to bid on the vehicle, there were a number of things I could request to put my mind at ease even more.

I actually requested a few things including a [complete background check](#) (only \$67) and a [Financial Due Diligence](#) report (\$57). Since he claimed to be a business, I had a [Business Background Check](#) done too. After all, a vehicle purchase can be in the tens of thousands, and I was required to send a cashiers check for the vehicle. So for less than \$250 I assured my check was safe and that I was fairly confident I would get the vehicle I paid for.

This method has been successful for several of my friends, family members and other bestpeoplesearch customers who successful purchased very nice vehicles at substantial savings from eBay motors sellers.

If you've already been ripped off and have lost your money, there are way to try and track down the fraudster.

First thing is to contact the police in the town where you mailed your check (if you paid by Paypal or credit card, file a fraud report). You can also contact the secret service (they are the agency that deals with Internet fraud).

Aside from that, you can try and track down the thief yourself (try an [email trace](#) if you have an email from them), then notify the authorities that you've found the thief and need help apprehending them.

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