

Make sure the seller delivers

Know your rights so you can shop online with confidence

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Protecting Consumers
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What are my rights when shopping online?

If you bought the item online, you automatically get a 'cooling-off period' when you buy something you haven't seen in person - unless it's bespoke or made to measure. You normally have up to 14 days after receiving your goods to change your mind and get a full refund. You then have a further 14 days to send the item back.

It's the seller's responsibility to make sure the item is delivered to you. If you haven't received your purchase you can ask for a redelivery, or in some cases a refund.

If there's a problem with your item:

- Within the first 30 days of delivery, you could get a refund, replacement or repair
- Within the first 6 months, you're normally entitled to a repair or replacement, or if this isn't possible a full refund
- After 6 months, you may be able to get a part-refund, repair or replacement,

but you may need to prove that you didn't cause the fault

Your rights can be different if you're buying online from a private seller, where the principle of 'buyer beware' applies.

- Goods must be as described to you by the seller, but the seller doesn't have to disclose any faults
- The seller can't misrepresent the item – for example claiming something used is brand new

What can I do if something goes wrong?

If something's gone wrong with an item you've bought, you might be entitled to a refund, repair or replacement. It doesn't matter whether you bought the item new or secondhand - you'll still have rights.

You'll have legal rights if the item you bought is:

- broken or damaged ('not of satisfactory quality')
- unusable ('not fit for purpose')

- not what was advertised or doesn't match the seller's description

You won't have any legal rights if either:

- it was damaged by wear and tear, an accident or misuse
- you knew about the fault before you bought the item

If there's nothing wrong with the item but you've changed your mind, you might be able to return it if you act quickly.

If you bought the item from a shop, either in person or online, check the shop's policy on returns as some give you longer than the required cooling off period to return items.

Stay on the lookout for scams

It's important to look out for scams - they can and do affect anyone.

Take your time and do your research

- Be wary of unofficial sites offering big discounts, and make sure you're buying from the retailer's official

website so that you know you're buying a genuine product

- Scammers may appear like a trusted business, using links in ads or emails to direct you to a fake website. Don't click on any links you don't trust
- Don't be pressured by cold callers or door-sellers offering deals. Take time to explore the options available to you

Before you buy anything, check the company or website you're using:

1. Search for the company's details on gov.uk. This will tell you if they're a registered company or not. Sole traders (someone who runs their own business) and partnerships (where two or more people run a business together) don't need to register with gov.uk, so you'll need to do further research on their site to make sure they're a genuine seller
2. Read reviews from different websites
3. Find the companies terms and conditions. The company's address should have a street name, not just a post office box

Stay safe when buying

- Don't send bank transfers - pay by card to get extra protection if things go wrong. Paypal also offers protection via their buyer protection
- Ask the trader you're buying from whether they offer any after-sales service or guarantee or confirm their dispute resolution process. Any guarantee is in addition to your legal rights, so ask for details of this in writing and keep it safe
- Confirm the seller's return policy, and who will pay for returning unwanted goods

Where to get more information and help

For more advice, visit citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer.

We have lots of advice on:

- Steps to take when shopping online
- What to do if things go wrong
- How to check if a deal really is a deal

If you've had a problem you can also contact the Citizens Advice consumer service on **0808 223 1133**. Lines are open 9 to 5, Monday to Friday (except public holidays).

If you think someone might be trying to scam you, get advice. Contact the Citizens Advice consumer service for help with what to do next, and report scams or suspected scams to Action Fraud by calling **0300 123 2040** or going to **actionfraud.police.uk**.

Citizens Advice helps give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward – whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

Our network of charities offers confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free.

citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer



#ShopAware

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