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# 1

## Clear out your clutter

*Are you a hoarder or do you just have a lot of items in your home that you do not use?*

*Whatever your motivation, selling online is a fast way to make money whether you sell by auction or at a price set by yourself.*

## Selling items online

It is often said that one man's trash is another man's treasure. That is very much true when it comes to websites such as eBay which, for years, have allowed you to quickly sell your unwanted items.

Selling items online is far more effective than selling face-to-face from a market, garage or the back of a motor. It allows you to:

- Potentially sell to a worldwide audience
- Have your items available to view 24-hours-a-day
- Set your own rates or allow buyers to bid
- Conduct sales safely and with protection
- Relax and wait for a sale, so making efficient use of your time



And there are numerous ways of selling online.

As well as eBay, which is perhaps the most well known method, you can also choose from Amazon Marketplace where your goods will appear on the world's largest retail website or you can decide to opt for the classified ad services offered by Gumtree and Craigslist.

There are many other websites too but we are going to concentrate on this selection.

# Introducing eBay

The story goes that eBay began life in 1995 to allow the girlfriend of founder Pierre Omidyar to sell Pez dispensers to a wide audience. Whether or not that is true matters little. The fact is that eBay remains a brilliant way to sell unwanted items.

With eBay you can:

- Sell items at a fixed Buy It Now price
- Allow users to bid on your item
- Invite buyers to make you an offer

You can also control how your item appears online, set postage rates and communicate with buyers. The feedback scheme lets you see the reputation of the people with whom you deal.

## Signing up to eBay

- 1 Click register on the homepage at ebay.com
- 2 Select your country and fill in your personal details
- 3 Create a user ID and password and pick a secret question
- 4 Read the User Agreement and Privacy Policy. Click Submit

**Hot tip**



Choose a memorable username and one which marks you out as respectable to encourage people to buy from you.

# Create an eBay listing

So you have rummaged through your home and you now have a pile of unwanted items you want to sell. To make as much money from them as possible, you have to create a listing. It is the most important part of the selling process: get it right and you will maximise your revenue.

## Start an eBay listing

- 1 Click Sell at the top of the screen and select Sell an item
- 2 Type in a keyword related to your product
- 3 Quick sell or Advanced sell? If you want to make your listing stand out, you will want to put in some extra graft so let's go with Advanced

- 4 On the next page, search for the category which best fits your item. Select the Browse categories tab if the suggested categories are not correct. Click continue



- 5 If you have a recognized item, eBay will show you many suggested examples of that item. Select the one that is identical to your product

...cont'd

## Refining your listing

In order to stand out, you need to ensure your listing draws people to what you have to sell.

1

The title is the first thing people will see:

- Make sure it is spelt correctly. This will not only help when people search but you will sound trustworthy too
- Abbreviate but not too much. Try BNWT for brand new with tags, for example, or BN for brand new
- Above all, make it descriptive. Ensure it gives as much information about the product as possible

2

Be honest when writing your description. Point out any damages. Don't pretend something is rare if it isn't. And explain why you are selling an item. The more you engage with your buyer, the easier your sale will be

3

Check out other people's listings. See how they are describing their items, particularly so if they are selling the same item as the one you are listing

4

Use the Advanced Search option to look at completed listings and the prices they sell for. They are great guides

Hot tip



If you want to see a good list of abbreviations, go to this great guide on the eBay website: [bit.ly/P9zZHd](https://bit.ly/P9zZHd)

## Setting a time scale

When selling items on eBay, you have a choice of timescale. The one you choose depends on how urgent you need to sell and whether you want to maximise your revenue.

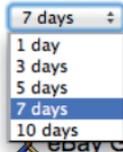
### How many days?

With eBay, you have a choice of listing an item for one, three, five, seven or 10 days. The crucial thing to remember is that your listing will move up the list as the days go by and it is likely to only be prominent as the duration comes to an end.

1

Most people are said to use eBay on a Sunday evening so if you coincide your listing to end at that point, you will catch the largest number of potential buyers

Duration ?



2

To maximise a listing's exposure by ending it at the optimum time, perhaps list on a Thursday evening for 10 days. This will ensure it ends on a Sunday evening and you will also get an extra weekend of exposure for your item

3

If you cannot wait for a weekend to arrive, try and end the listing on a week day evening. More people are found to bid and buy on eBay in the evening than earlier or later in the day

4

Yet if your item is a common one and there are many similar listings, choose an irregular end time (i.e. not an evening) to help to cut down on the competition

# Using photographs on eBay

According to eBay, items which carry a photograph are 14% more likely to sell. That sounds like a conservative figure to us. A photograph is one of the most vital aspects of your listing and you want to be able to give your buyer a good look at what you are selling.

## Uploading images

- 1 Within the listing, select the Add function and browse your hard drive for a photograph
- 2 You will be able to view the image and make amends



Crop  
Rotate  
Exposure  
Brightness

Don't forget

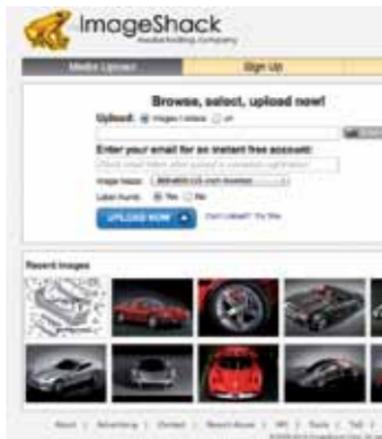


The eBay listing will tell you how many images you can have for free so make use of your maximum allocation.

...cont'd

## Photograph tips

- 1 Take photographs of your objects against a plain background: clutter around an item takes a buyer's attention away
- 2 Give your item the maximum light. People want to be able to see clearly what they are buying
- 3 If there is an imperfection, don't hide it. Zoom in and show it so that your buyer feels more confident
- 4 Photograph items from a variety of angles
- 5 Don't reduce your images to fit eBay requirements because they will look small on the screen. Crop instead
- 6 Use a photo hosting website such as ImageShack to host images and link to them for free within your site. Copy the URL and paste it within this HTML code: `` (where xxx is the URL). Then copy and paste that code into your eBay listing and it pulls in your image



# Introducing Amazon Marketplace

As well as eBay, you can also sell items on Amazon via its Marketplace. When buyers visit Amazon, they see products which are sold via the online retailer itself as well as any other identical new and used products sold via a third party. It is a popular way to sell unwanted items.

## Open an account

1

Go to <http://services.amazon.co.uk/services/sell-on-amazon/> for Europe (or [amazonservices.com/content/sell-on-amazon.htm/](http://amazonservices.com/content/sell-on-amazon.htm/) for America)

2

Choose between one of two accounts:

- Basic – charges per item listed
- Pro – has a monthly fee

3

Make your choice and select Start selling. You will have to register a Pro account if you choose Pro otherwise you can start selling straight away



# Selling an item on Amazon Marketplace

Once you have begun to sell your item, Amazon takes you through the process of finding an existing product within its online store.

- 1 Select the product category from the dropdown menu, choosing from books to films, toys to kitchenware

- 2 Amazon will show you items which best fit your description in the category you have chosen



- 3 Select Sell Yours Here next to the item which best matches the item you wish to sell

...cont'd

4

Fill in the form with details of your item, inputting:

- Its condition, from new to various levels of used
- A note on the condition if there is something specific
- The price you wish to sell
- The quantity of the item you have for sale
- The delivery method

The screenshot shows the Amazon.co.uk 'Sell' form for a product listing. The form is divided into several sections:

- 1. Verify that this is the exact product you want to sell:** This section includes a product image and a list of details: Brand Name: Hilti, ASIN: B000000000, Manufacturer: Hilti, Manufacturer Part Number: 222222, Model: 2222, EAN: 2222222222, and MPN: 2222222222.
- 2. Describe the condition of your product:** This section includes a dropdown menu for 'Condition' (with options like 'New', 'Used - Like New', etc.) and a text box for 'Condition Note'.
- 3. Review low price:** This section includes a text box for 'See price' and a link to 'View all other listings to see the price'.
- 4. Enter the price of your product:** This section includes a text box for 'Your price' and a link to 'View all other listings to see the price'.
- 5. Enter the quantity you have for sale:** This section includes a text box for 'Quantity'.
- 6. Select your delivery methods:** This section is partially visible at the bottom of the form.

5

Review your listing and, if you are happy, then Submit it

Don't forget



Amazon shows you the lowest price at which others are selling your item, which helps when deciding on your own price.

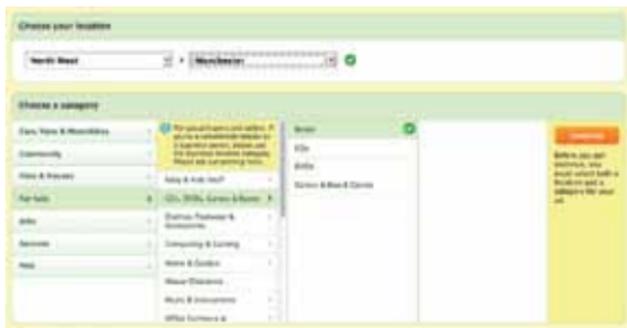
## Sell via a free classified advert

There are more traditional ways of selling items online using what are, in effect, classified advert websites such as Gumtree and Craigslist.

As well as items for sale, you can also use them to post items of interest to your community, advertise a job, flat or house or a whole range of services from home building to travel.

### Using Gumtree

- 1 Go to [gumtree.com](http://gumtree.com) and select Post an ad
- 2 Choose your region and select a city or county
- 3 Choose a category and select Continue



- 4 Fill in the listing form. Many adverts - such as For Sale - are free unless you want it to be urgent or you want to promote it
- 5 You can add pictures or video to your advert too

...cont'd

## Using Craigslist

- 1 It may not look like much but craigslist.com is packed with free ads and the various regional hubs are well-used
- 2 Select Post to Classifieds and choose the type of item you are posting, in this case an item For Sale
- 3 You will be presented with a list of categories so select one that is most relevant to you
- 4 Input the title, price, location and a description. Bear in mind our eBay description tips for optimum listings



Beware



Craigslist and Gumtree do not have the same level of support as eBay and Amazon Marketplace so take extra care.

## Finding postage fees

Don't be left in the dark and undercut yourself when it comes to postage fees. Ensure you quote a buyer the right price every time by going online and checking the exact postage price.

### Royal Mail Price Finder

- 1 If posting from the UK, go to [royalmail.com/price-finder](http://royalmail.com/price-finder)
- 2 Select where your item is going to
- 3 State the type of item and when you want it delivered to see the price you need to pay. You can buy and print a stamp too

The image shows three sequential screenshots of the Royal Mail Price Finder interface.   
**Step 1: My item is going to:** A dropdown menu is open, showing 'UK' selected. Other options include 'Europe' and 'All Parts'. A note below says '\* for Channel Islands select Overseas'.   
**Step 2: My item is a:** A dropdown menu is open, showing 'Letter' selected. Other options include 'Large Letter' and 'Parcel'. Below this, there is a text input field for 'My item weighs no more than:' with '50 grams' entered.   
**Step 3: Delivery options:** A dropdown menu is open, showing 'When would you like your item to arrive?'. The menu lists 'Please select...', 'Please select...', 'Royal Mail', 'Within 2-3 Days', 'Within 1 Day', 'Within 10 Days', 'Within 2-3 Days', and 'Within 4-5 Days'. A 'Print price' button is visible at the bottom right.

### USPS Price Finder

- 1 Posting from the US? Go to [usps.com/ship/service-chart.htm](http://usps.com/ship/service-chart.htm)
- 5 You can ship online or calculate a price for your item

# Discover cheap couriers online

Delivery firms are traveling up and down the country every day of the year and they often have spare capacity. It is possible to input your requirements and allow companies with space in their truck to bid on taking your item to the destination of your choice.

## Get free quotes

1 Go to uship.com (alternatively, anyvan.com or shiPLY.com)

2 Chose Get Quotes and select a category



3 Select if the item is being sold via eBay



4 Describe the item and its weight and upload any photos

5 Input the collection and delivery details and set up an account

6 You will begin to get quotes. Simply choose the company you wish to use

## Avoiding scammers online

Unfortunately, when you sell items online, you will invariably come across people who attempt to con you out of money or items.

### What to watch out for

- 1 Buyers trying to encourage you to complete a sale outside of the confines of eBay
- 2 People who insist on having items sent to them before you receive the money, promising they will pay
- 3 Cheques. If you are paid this way, ensure it clears first before sending an item. Insist on PayPal wherever possible
- 4 Spoof emails claiming to be from eBay or PayPal. If the email does not contain your name after the word 'Dear' be wary



- 5 Chargebacks. Some buyers will receive an item, claim there is something wrong or say it has not been received and get a refund from PayPal. Always check a buyers' feedback