

Selling on eBay

What can be sold on eBay

With 15000 categories, most legal things can be sold on eBay. However, some items cannot be sold:

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/prohibited-restricted-items/prohibited-restricted-items?id=4207>

Sellers should avoid the following:

- Product requiring a licence, e.g. alcohol, tobacco
- Recalled items
- Restricted

Some brands (e.g. high-end fashion brands) do not like products sold on eBay. eBay has a programme called VERO (Verified Rights Owners) that enables them to remove listings that they feel infringe on their intellectual property rights. Unfortunately, this programme is abused by rights owners who use it to remove legitimate listings.

Details on Vero programme: <https://www.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/listing-policies/selling-policies/intellectual-property-vero-program?id=4349>

It is challenging to appeal once a listing is removed due to a VERO complaint. Brands often employ agencies to manage the process, and from experience, these agencies are unresponsive.

If an account has too many infringements against it, it can be restricted or closed permanently.

eBay listing types

eBay began as an auction platform, but most products sell at a fixed price nowadays.

Auction Listings

When you list an item for sale in an eBay auction, you choose a starting price, and interested buyers bid. When the auction ends, you sell to the highest bidder.

Fixed Price listings

With a fixed price Buy It Now listing, buyers know the exact price they need to pay for your item and can complete their purchase immediately. There is no bidding on fixed price listings.

Fixed price listings are created using 'Good 'Til Cancelled' duration. This means your item will be relisted on eBay every month until it sells or you end it.

When to use different listing types

Fixed price and auction listing are suitable for different types of products.

Auctions

Auctions are suitable for unique items where the price is hard to know in advance (e.g. collectables, antiques, second-hand items).

Auction benefits

- Potential for higher prices by a competitive auction
- Market determines the price
- Better sell-through rate with a low starting bid
- Sense of urgency. The scarcity and limited duration of auctions encourage buying activity

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Auction drawbacks

- Difficult to automate. Auctions must be started manually.
- If an auction does not sell, it must be manually relisted
- Buyers may pay several days after auction end

Fixed Price benefits

- More automation. Fixed price listings are like inventory at a regular retail store.
- Everything is for sale at any time.
- With Good 'til cancelled duration, items renew automatically every 30 days.
- Listings can be edited in bulk
- Immediate payment
- Markdown manager. This feature gives sellers the ability to run sales.

Fixed Price disadvantages

- **No Sense of Urgency.** Buyers may bookmark or watch a listing and never return. However, buyers get a sense of urgency with auctions that they must bid or buy the item now.
- **Fees.** Fixed Price and GTC listings incur charges each month if they renew. These fees can add up over time.

Listing items

Quick listing form

The quick listing tool is the form within eBay used to create listings one by one.

Features of an eBay listing

- **Title.** A descriptive title helps buyers find your item. State exactly what your item is. Include words that buyers might use to search for your item. Max 80 characters
- **Subtitle.** Subtitles appear in eBay search results in list view and increase buyer interest by providing more descriptive info.
- **Custom label.** Create a custom label to enter the information you want to track, such as your own SKU number.
- **Category.** Each listing must have at least one category. A second category can be added. This may incur a charge.
- **EAN.** Buyers often search using product identifiers, so eBay recommends product identifiers to ensure your listings have maximum visibility in buyer search results.
- **Condition.** Select the condition of the item you are listing.
- **Photos.** Add up to 12 photos. eBay does not allow photos with extra borders, text or artwork.
- **Item specifics.** Provide info about the item you are selling, such as brand, size, type, size, colour and style. These details help buyers find your item when they filter their searches and appear in a consistent format at the top of your listing description.
- **Description.** Describe the item you are selling and provide complete and accurate details. Use a clear and concise format to ensure your description is mobile-friendly. The description can be entered using the WYSIWYG editor or HTML
- **Format.** Select auction or fixed price items
- **Duration.** Select how long you wish your listing to run. Auction items are 1, 3, 5, 7 or 10 days. Fixed price items can only be Good til cancelled, meaning they automatically renew every 30 days until they sell or are ended. Listing can start immediately or be scheduled for a later time.
- **Price.** See below
- **Business policies.** See below

- **Package weight and dimensions. Size and weight of an item.** They are used for calculating international postage when you use postage tables that price per kg.
- **Items location.** The geographical location of the item. Used chiefly for local pickup only items.

Listing pricing

Auction listings

Auction prices have three components:

- **Starting price.** The price at which the auction starts
- **Reserve price.** The price below which the auction will not sell
- **Buy it now (BIN) price.** The Buy It Now price is available until someone bids on the item or meets the reserve price. Until this point, the item can be bought immediately at the BIN price
- **Best Offer.** Best Offer enables buyers to make an offer for the product for immediate purchase. According to eBay, adding Best Offer increases sell-through by 3 to 7 percent.

A classic auction strategy is to start the bidding at £0.99 with no reserve price. Often a low starting price will encourage bidding and result in a higher winning bid.

Fixed Price

Fixed price items only have a buy it now price. Sellers can also add the best offer option.

Business policies

Three types of business policy can be applied to listings: postage, payment and returns

Product identifiers

Product identifiers are essentially unique codes that can identify a specific product. They work like barcodes and include European Article Numbers (EANs), International Standard Book Numbers (ISBNs) and Manufacturer Part Number (MPN).

For many categories, an item identifier is required. If one is not available for your product, you can select 'Does not apply.' Item identifiers are used for the following by eBay:

- **Appearance in Google shopping.** Google's shopping search requires product identifiers to appear in their search results. A large proportion of eBay traffic comes from Google shopping
- **Product reviews.** eBay collect product reviews across multiple listings using the same identifier.
- **Customer search.** Customers use barcodes to search for products on eBay
- **Catalogue.** eBay has a catalogue of product information assigned to products based on barcode.

By assigning product identifiers to products, you increase the exposure of your inventory.

Item Specifics

Item specifics are category-specific attributes added to products to help buyers find the products on eBay. The item specifics available for a product are based on the chosen category.

Item specifics may include brand, size, type, colour, style, or other relevant info about your selling item. Item specifics are required in several categories on eBay, including the Fashion, Home & Garden, Toys & Games, and Vehicle Parts & Accessories categories.

Recommended
Buyers frequently search for these item specifics

Improve your chances of selling
Add more details about your item

Many buyers are searching for **X** this item specific when looking for items like yours. It will become required on September 9, 2020.

Model Required soon
Frequent: Apple iPhone 11 Pro Max , Apple iPhone 11 , Apple iPhone 11 Pro

Color Required soon
Frequent: Green , Gray , Black

Storage Capacity Required soon
Frequent: 64 GB , 256 GB , 512 GB

Network 11.8M searches
 1&1 1pMobile 360Coms Telecom
 A1 Telekom AAPT Access Wireless
 ACG Telecom ACN ADAC
 Adamo

The above image shows the item specifics recommended for a product in the mobile phone category. Specifics are divided into required, required soon and recommended. Complete all item specifics for a product to maximise its search visibility. Above each specific is the number of searches for which that specific is used.

Postage policies

A postage policy needs to be assigned to set shipping on a listing. Within a postage policy, there are two ways to specific shipping:

- Zone
- Postage rate table

Postage by zone

The seller can set 4 international and four domestic shipping zones. For each zone, the following is set

- Location (e.g. EU)
- Shipping service (e.g. Royal Mail Airmail)
- Cost (e.g. 3.99 + 1 per additional item)

These zones are quick to set, but with only 4 zones allowed, large world areas are combined. This frequently combines cheap to ship locations (e.g. France) with more expensive places, e.g. Cyprus.

Postage rates tables

Sellers can set domestic and international postage tables to define shipping more granularly. The table allows sellers to offer rates for Express, standard and economy shipping services. Within these services, destinations and price are specified. Rates tables override any shipping set at the zone level.

Rate Table Set postage rates by Create new

Table Name

Express (1 working day)

Region	Cost	+per kilogram	Delete
Africa - Algeria, Botswana, Cameroon	£10.00	£10.00	
Add regions / states			

Standard (1-2 working days)

Region	Cost	+per kilogram	Delete
Europe (including UK) - Belarus, Bulgaria	£10.00	£11.00	
Add regions / states			

Economy (2-5 working days)

Region	Cost	+per kilogram	Delete
Add regions / states			

The postage per item is then calculated using the weight set at the item level. The benefits of working with shipping tables are that the shipping can be charged at the country and not the zone level. They are, however, a bit fiddly to set up.

Other shipping settings

- Despatch time. Select the number of takes taken to dispatch an order
- Excluded postage locations. You can specify the destinations you do not wish to ship to at the postage policy level. This can also be set at the account level.
- Combined postage discounts. This set the rule for how postage for multiple items is calculated (see account setting lecture)

Note: to qualify to be a premium eBay listing, the following postage options must include:

- Offer a free domestic delivery option within three working days.
- Offer an express delivery option within two working days for no more than £10.
- For items over £20, all delivery services must be designated tracked services, and valid tracking must be uploaded within the dispatch time (this includes auction-style listings and Best Offers where the final price is over £20).

Shipping rules

There are two types of shipping rules

- **Flat rate postage rule.** This is applied to domestic or international shipping to define how shipping is calculated for multi-item orders where the items are different. This is either an additional amount or a subtraction of shipping per item ordered. Multiple rules can be created and assigned to different shipping profiles.

- **Promotional postage rules.** These rules can be used to define the shipping cost for multi-item orders - for example, free shipping over a specific order value or a maximum shipping per order. Only one rule can be set per account.

Payment Policy

If you are not yet a managed payments customer, you have the option of specifying the payment options you will accept. These are:

- Postal order/Banker's draft
- Personal cheque
- Cash on collection
- Credit cards
- Escrow

Other than PayPal, these payment options are completed outside eBay.

If you are a managed payments seller, forms of payment will be automatically selected for you. Your buyers will be able to pay with a credit or debit card, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and PayPal.

With eBay Managed Payments, the options for setting payments are limited to:

- **Require immediate payment.** This will prevent buyers who do not pay. It will, however, prevent buyers of multiple items from sending a request for shipping totals
- **Payment on collection.** If a payment on collection is allowed, immediate payment cannot be selected

Return Policy

The return policy sets the condition that a return is acceptable for domestic and international orders. This includes:

- Return period. Options are 14, 30 or 60 days
- Who pays for returns – buyer or seller

To qualify for top seller status, a 30 day return period must be specified.

Variation listings

eBay variation listings allow multiple product versions to be sold from a single listing. For example, a shoe might come in numerous sizes or colours.



Ladies Gladiator Sandals New Womens Flat Strappy Fancy Summer Beach Shoes Size

5 sold in last 24 hours

Condition: New with box

UK Shoe Size (Women's): - Select -

Main Colour: Navy

Multi-buy: Buy 1 £4.95 each, Buy 2 £4.70 each, Buy 3 £4.60 each

Quantity: 1

3 available
582 sold / See Feedback

Price: £4.95 each

Buy it now

Add to basket

Watch this item

An example eBay listing varied on colour and size.

Instead of creating a separate listing for each option, all variations can be sold from a single listing. This has two advantages:

- Customers can find all the options they want from one listing
- A single listing can build more listing history and perform better in Best Match

On the downside, variations are more time consuming to list and cause problems with 3rd party listing tools.

Variations are only available for fixed-price items.

Manage active listings

Listings that have been created on eBay can be managed from seller dashboard > Listings > manage active listings. From there, listings can be edited and quantities updated.

eBay inventory and templates

eBay inventory offers a basic inventory management system for eBay fixed price or auction listings. eBay inventory support up to 50 products. If you have more products than that, you should look at more sophisticated 3rd party tools

The stages involved in creating an inventory item are as follow:

Create an inventory item

Inteventy items have the following attributes:

- Product title
- Customer label (SKU)
- Folder
- Unit cost
- Qty available
- Reordering information

Note the product title is separate from the listing title

Assign a template

An inventory template contains all the details from a product listing. A template is assigned to an inventory item to create a listing.

Assign automation rules

Automation rules define when an item is listed. Automation options are:

- List according to my schedule. Create a custom listing schedule
- Relist once if the item does not sell
- Relist as fixed price if the item does not sell
- Relist continuously if the item does not sell
- Relist continuously if the item sells or does not sell

These automation rules are only relevant to auction listing as fixed price items are listed as GTC (good 'til cancelled), so scheduling is not required.

Automation Preferences

Automation preferences automate the following functions:

- **Leaving feedback.** The seller can choose to leave feedback when a buyer pays for an item or leave positive feedback themselves.
- **Automation schedule.** Suspend automated listing between two dates

Relisting items

When creating an auction listing, you can select to relist it automatically if it does not sell. Fixed price items will automatically list.

Listing Policies

eBay's listing policy covers the content of items listings.

<https://www.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/listing-policies/listing-policies?id=4213>

The main things to note are:

- **No links.** eBay does not allow buyers to be directed off eBay
- **No emails.** The seller's email cannot be included in the listing template
- **No JavaScript.** Javascript is not permitted in listings through standard HTML tags are
- **Accurate descriptions.** The listing should accurately describe the item. If it does not, the seller opens themselves up to buyer disputes
- **Accurate locations.** Sellers cannot state they are in one place when, in fact, they are based in another, e.g. say they are in the UK then they are in China
- **Accurate keywords.** Keywords in the description and the title must relate to the item on sale. For example, a seller cannot say 'Chanel style' if it is not a Chanel dress.