

# Advanced Selling Guide

Sellers are often asking us “How can I be more successful on eBay?” or “How can I sell more items without overly increasing my time spent on listing and closing sales?” If you find yourself wondering the same or thinking how you can grow your sales to maximize profit, then this guide should provide the first major step in advancing your sales on eBay. It is full of best practice hints and tips that we have collected from you, the selling community, split into the following sections:

1. Effective Item Title
2. Effective Photos
3. Clear & Concise Item Descriptions
4. Selling Tools
5. eBay Shops
6. PayPal
7. Other

You might want to consider printing this document off or saving it to your computer for future reference.

## Step One: Effective Item Title

An effective item title is the most important thing a seller can do to attract more buyers.

- **55 Characters** – Use all 55 characters in your item title.
- **Key (Search) Words** – Since most buyers find items via the Search Box on the eBay Homepage, make a list of potential key (search) words you think they’d use to find your item. Include a combination of product type words to cast a wide net, e.g., “car stereo,” and specific key words such as the brand name “Pioneer” or model number.
- **Most Popular Key (Search) Words** – You can find out the keywords used by buyers who view your listings from your eBay Shops Traffic Report.

**Note:** All key words in the title must be relevant to the item offered for sale. Keyword spamming can lead to suspension. Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/listing-keywords.html>

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- **Grammar and Spelling** – There can be nothing worse than misspelling the key words in the title. Buyers will miss your items that way so be careful to ensure that your spell check is switched on!
- **Subtitle Feature** (when appropriate) – Give buyers additional descriptive information and make your listings stand out with 55 additional characters about your item as they browse categories or view search results. Include words they would generally not search for, but that would be of interest to them such as item age or origin. Or, promote the extras you offer, such as “batteries included,” “free shipping” or “money back guarantee.” Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/itemsubtitle.html>
- **Include Specific Attributes** – Once you have included sufficient key (search) words, then you can include specifications. For example, when listing a laptop, you could include model, processor speed, memory, accessories, and colour.
- **Vary the Key (Search) Words for Multiple Listings of Same Items** – If you have several listings of the same product, consider using synonyms for some of the listings, such as “notebook” instead of “laptop.” You could also experiment with common abbreviations and misspellings. For barbecue, you could also try “barbeque” and/or “BBQ.”

## Step Two: Effective Photos

A picture is worth a thousand words and many buyers won't bid on items without photos. To generate the most bids and the highest selling price, follow these tips:

- **Clear Images** – Ensure your images are in-focus, free of background clutter, and well lit. The best practice is to photograph your item at a close range, at an angle, and using at least two light sources to show more detail.
- **Photo at Top of Listing** – Be sure that the photo is one of the first things that a buyer sees. You can choose this option when listing your item with the SYI (Sell Your Item) form.
- **Gallery Feature** – Entice buyers to click on your listing from search results pages.
- **Multiple Images/Multi-Dimensional Views** – Remember that buyers are not inspecting the item in-person, so you want to provide as much detail as possible, particularly if the item is not new in the box or is damaged. Include the tag, label, or box in the image to prove its authenticity, if appropriate.

- **Own Pictures** – Copying pictures (without permission) from another eBay Seller or manufacturer/retailer is illegal and can lead to suspension. Learn more at

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/confidence/programs-vero.html>

- **Manage your File Size** – If you are hosting your own picture, the file size should be under 50 KB (kilobytes) for quick page downloads.

## Step Three: Clear and Concise Item Description including Clearly Stated Policies

Providing more details about your item and policies will not only improve your buyer's experience (and trust) but also save you time by lowering the number of email inquiries, minimising returns, and reducing the number of unpaid items. It also properly sets buyers' expectations and leads to better feedback.

### Complete Item Description

- **Item Title Repeated** – Repeat your item title at the top of the description without any abbreviations. Feel free to expand the title to include other relevant information to help buyers make a purchasing decision.
- **Complete Information** – Include details on the product type, brand, condition, attributes, model number, size, style, measurements, colour, etc. If the list of specifications is lengthy, we recommend placing this information below other important product details.
- **Highlight Value** – If the product you are selling is a great deal for buyers, point this out by stating the RRP (Recommended Retail Price) and the pound sterling amount or percent savings you are offering on your item, if appropriate. For example, you could state, "the RRP is £200, but my Buy It Now price is £100. You save 50%!" Please note that an unrealistic RRP may break the Consumer Protection Act's rules on misleading prices.
- **Easy to Read** – The description should be complete but easy to read. Bullet points and clear spacing make for far easier reading than does everything in one long paragraph.
- **Use Item Specifics** – For applicable categories, be sure to fill in the "item specific" fields so buyers can find your items more easily when searching. Learn more at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/item\\_specifics.html](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/item_specifics.html)
- **Pre-Filled Items Feature** – For applicable categories - Automatically fill in your listing with Item Specifics information. It can

provide basic pre-written descriptions about your item and even provide a stock picture in some cases. Currently available in Movies (DVDs) and Music (CDs).

- **Write Your Own Description** – Copying a substantial amount of another's description and pasting it into a listing is illegal and violates eBay policy. Learn more at

[http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/ia/writing\\_a\\_title\\_description.html](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/ia/writing_a_title_description.html)

- **Cross Promote Other eBay Listings** – Every listing should be viewed as an advertisement for your other listings. Include a link in your descriptions that goes to your eBay Shop or About Me page (that lists your inventory). Consider using a linkable phrase such as, “Click here to find other great items I am selling.” You may also link to your eBay Shop categories using clickable photos. For instance, you may recommend a battery in a laptop listing using a photo that links to the Battery category in your eBay Shop. Also, please see the section on “Cross Promotional Tool” in Step Five: eBay Shops.

You can also encourage buyers to bookmark your eBay Shop by adding you to their favourite sellers list. To do so include the following HTML in your listing description:

```
<A HREF="http://cgi.ebay.co.uk/aw-cgi/eBayISAPI.dll?AcceptSavedSeller&sellerid=YOUR USER ID">Add me to your favourites</A>
```

- **PowerSeller Logo** – If you are a PowerSeller, we recommend including the PowerSeller logo in all of your listings to add credibility with buyers. To learn more about the PowerSeller Programme visit

[www.ebay.co.uk/powersellers](http://www.ebay.co.uk/powersellers)

- **Product Condition** – Clearly state the product condition i.e. new, used, or refurbished. Disclose full product details including defects and any information that may impact a buyer's decision to purchase your item.

- **Obtain Permission for use of Trademarks (including logos)** – For example, if you're selling an Alpine car stereo, you are not authorized to use the Alpine logo in your listing without permission from Alpine. Unauthorized use can lead to suspension. Learn more about the VeRO program at

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/confidence/programs-vero.html>

- **Proper Grammar and Spelling** – Poor grammar and spelling reflect on your professionalism and may prevent buyers from finding your item. Use eBay's free “Spell-check” feature located in the “Item Description” portion of the SYI (Sell Your Item) form.

## Clearly Stated Policies

Setting customer expectations is one of the most important ways of pleasing your customers and saving you time.

- **Shipping Policy** – State when you ship your items (i.e. “within 24 hours of payment”), shipping costs, shipping methods, and ship-to locations (including international shipping policy) in both the “Description” and the “Payment instructions & return policy” fields of the SYI (Sell Your Item) form.
- **Payment Methods** – State payment methods and details in both the “Description” and the “Payment instructions & return policy” fields of the SYI (Sell Your Item) form. In the event that you do not accept a form of payment, state it in a positive tone by outlining which methods you do accept rather than those you don’t. The more payment methods you accept the more buyers you will be appealing to.
- **Return Policy** – Buyers are more likely to purchase from sellers who have return policies, and if you are a business seller you will have certain obligations under the Distance Selling Regulations. Whether you accept returns or not, clearly say so in your listings. List in both the “Description” and the “Payment instructions & return policy” fields of the SYI (Sell Your Item) form. Learn more about Return Policies at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/your-return-policy.html> and learn more about legal requirements at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/business.html>.
- **Warranty Information** – Providing a warranty on items helps overcome a buyer’s resistance to buying online and may be the deciding factor in whether a buyer purchases your product over that of another seller. If you offer a warranty, clearly describe it and make it prominent in your listing.
- **Customer Service** – State your expected response time to buyer emails and how long it takes you to ship items after receiving payment.
- **Feedback Policy** – State your feedback policy including when you leave feedback for buyers.

## Step Four: Selling Tools

Whether you list ten, a hundred, a thousand or more items, Seller Tools will help make you much more efficient at listing and managing your sales.

### **eBay Turbo Lister**

A free desktop software tool designed to make listing multiple items faster and easier.

- List multiple items all at once and save listings to re-use again and again
- Access convenient HTML templates
- Create listings easily with a WYSIWYG ("What You-See-Is-What You Get") design editor
- Schedule your listings instantly
- Turbo Lister is free of charge

Learn more at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/turbo\\_lister/](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/turbo_lister/)

### **eBay Selling Manager**

The easy-to-use online sales management tool that makes keeping track of your sales simple.

- Access this online sales management tool through My eBay
- Relist multiple items at once
- Get a one-page snapshot of your business
- Track buying, selling and account activities
- Reduce the time you spend on emails with custom templates
- Print shipping labels and invoices
- Selling Manager is free of charge

Learn more at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/selling\\_manager/](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/selling_manager/)

### **eBay Selling Manager Pro**

The all-in-one online tool providing a powerful way for high volume sellers to list, manage sales and make more informed business decisions.

- Save time with this online bulk listing and sales management tool
- Become more efficient with bulk functionality
- Track buying, selling and account activities
- Manage customer emails faster
- Print shipping labels and invoices
- Manage inventory with ease and create financial reporting
- Free for 30 days, £4.99 per month thereafter

Learn more at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/selling\\_manager\\_pro](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/selling_manager_pro)

- Learn which eBay Seller tool to use at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/seller\\_tools\\_finder/](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/seller_tools_finder/)

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■ **eBay Solution Directory** – The new eBay Solution Directory is a one-stop online resource for software applications and services that can increase your eBay business productivity. Included are hundreds of tools and services comprising of everything from auction management to inventory management to category specific tools. For more information please visit

<http://cgi6.ebay.co.uk/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?SolutionsDirectory>

■ **Account Guard Protection (Using eBay Tool Bar)** – A new feature of the eBay Tool Bar that helps you protect your eBay account information, Account Guard detects when you are on a potentially fraudulent (spoof) website and warns you. It also lets you report such sites to eBay. Download for free and learn more at

[www.ebay.co.uk/ebay\\_toolbar](http://www.ebay.co.uk/ebay_toolbar)

■ **Listing Designer** – You can improve the visual appeal and effectiveness of your listing by adding attractive themes and layouts without having to know HTML. To learn more, visit

<http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/listing-designer.html>

## Step Five: eBay Shops

eBay Shops helps sellers maximize their businesses on eBay. Sellers with an eBay Shop get powerful and easy-to-use tools that allow them to build their own brand on eBay and encourage buyers to buy more. Best practices and benefits include:

■ **Personalised Shopfront** – When adding your Shop description, ensure you are including key (search) words in it. This enables buyers to find you. You can also add your own logo. The more relevant key words you use in your Shopfront will also be picked up for free by search engines like Google driving more buyers to your eBay Shop!

■ **Customised Categories** – Since you control the look and feel of your Shop, create up to 20 custom categories to merchandise your unique listings effectively.

■ **Cross-Promotion Tool** – Only Shop sellers are given the opportunity to display and control complementary items from their Shop to prospective buyers. For example, if you're selling a laptop, use the Shops cross-promotion tool to advertise any accessories you might be selling such as speakers, batteries, or monitors. Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/cp-intro.html>

■ **Traffic-Reporting Tool** – Become a more informed seller by receiving data including page views, referring URLs and keywords used by potential buyers. Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/stores/traffic-reporting-basics.html>

- **eBay Shop** – There are three subscription levels for eBay Shops including Basic, Featured, and Anchor. Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/storefronts/featuredstores.html>
- **Save on Listing and Feature Fees** – Post items for just five pence for each 30-day period and five pence for the Gallery feature.
- **Save Time on Relisting Items** – Stock your Shop with Shop Inventory listings that last for longer durations - 30, 90 days or even Good 'Til Cancelled. Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/storefronts/storeinventory.html>
- **Credibility and Polish** – A professional-looking Shop gives you credibility as an online retailer and makes shopping easier for your buyers.
- **Your Web Address** – Receive your very own URL so you can drive buyers, both on and off eBay, directly to your Shop.
- **Free Monthly Reports** – All Shop sellers receive monthly sales reports that outline their activity by category (e.g., monthly gross sales, conversion rates, number of buyers).
- **Own Search Engine** – With your very own Search box within your Shop, buyers will be able to search through your items to find exactly what they want. There's no better way on eBay for buyers to do such searching and finding.
- **Promoting Your Shop** – eBay will help you bring buyers to your Shop through all eBay Shops pages, the eBay Shops box on all search and listings pages on eBay.co.uk, and Shops merchandising on the eBay.co.uk homepage.
- **Optimise for Search Engine Placement** – To increase your chances of appearing on external search engines, use relevant keywords in your Shop Name, Custom Categories and Shop Description.


Learn more about eBay Shops by visiting <http://stores.ebay.co.uk/>

## Step Six: Paypal

### Offering PayPal gives sellers multiple benefits:


- **Attract More Buyers** – When buyers see the PayPal logo in your eBay listings, they're more likely to bid and buy because they know their privacy is protected and their payments are safe. In fact, 3 out of 4 eBay buyers prefer PayPal over any other payment method.\*





▪ **Spend Your Time Effectively** – Payments made with PayPal clear instantly so you can skip the trip to the bank to deposit checks and money orders. Plus, you don't have to worry about bounced or lost cheques.

▪ **Reduce Unpaid Items** – Letting your buyers pay right away reduces the risk that they'll forget or change their mind about their purchases. In fact, items that do not accept PayPal are 50% more likely to become an Unpaid Item.\*\*



▪ **Rotate Inventory Quickly** – The faster you receive payment, the faster you can ship an item. This means that you don't have to store an item while you wait for cash to arrive or a cheque to clear.

▪ **Build Confidence** – When you offer PayPal, you increase the safety of every transaction and let buyers know that you take their financial security seriously.

▪ **Accept Credit Cards Affordably** – With no start up or monthly fees, PayPal allow sellers of all sizes to accept credit cards more easily and more affordably than merchant accounts.

### Additional PayPal Benefits

▪ **PayPal Buyer Protection** – PayPal offers £500 coverage for buyers on your listings when you qualify for PayPal Buyer Protection (98% positive feedback rating and 50+ feedback).

▪ **Immediate Payments** – Create a retail-like purchase experience and eliminate Unpaid Items on your Buy It Now listings when you require Immediate Payment.

▪ **PayPal Seller Protection** – Get protection from fraudulent chargebacks on qualifying transactions. A dedicated chargeback team will help you fight chargebacks on non-qualifying transactions.

▪ **Invoicing** – Automatically invoice your buyers with customised emails.

▪ **Reporting** – Download your transaction history, uncover trends, and manage your business better.

▪ **Multi-User Access** – Provide unique levels of access to your PayPal account to all your employees.

Learn more about PayPal by visiting [www.ebay.co.uk/paypal/seller](http://www.ebay.co.uk/paypal/seller)

○ Based on the results of online survey of randomly selected eBay buyers

▪ \*\* eBay Unpaid Item research, Oct 2003

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## Step Seven: Other Seller Tactics

Because eBay is a growing and changing marketplace, innovation and agility are key competitive advantages for you. Below are additional and important strategies that you can use to grow your eBay business. Try them all to see which ones work for you, including:

- **List in the Correct Category** – It's important that you list your item in the most intuitive category to ensure buyers will find it. If you're not sure in which category to list your item, click on the link entitled, "Try the enhanced, easier category selector" in the SYI (Sell Your Item) form, or check completed auctions to see how others have successfully listed a similar item.

- **Keep Informed of Category Changes** – At eBay we strive to build the most relevant and up to date category structure for your items. Changes and additions are debated on the Category Chat Board. To participate visit <http://forums.ebay.co.uk/forum.jsp?forum=5>

- **Second Chance Offer** – Provides you additional opportunities to sell your items. You can make a Second Chance Offer to a bidder other than the winning bidder when:

- The winning bidder in an auction-style listing fails to buy the item
- Reserve Price isn't met
- The seller has duplicate items for sale but hasn't chosen to run a Multiple Item Listing

Learn more at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/personal\\_offer.html](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/personal_offer.html)

- **Variety of Selling Formats** – Different buyers prefer shopping in different ways. Some enjoy the thrill and excitement of an auction-style listing. Others like the immediate gratification of "Buy-It-Now." If you only use one format, you will only reach a subset of eBay's total buying population. Reach the largest audience by using all of eBay's selling formats:

- Auction-style – Single Item Listing, Multiple Item Listing
- Auction-style – with Buy it Now
- Fixed Price – Increase your selling velocity
- Shop Inventory – Lower listing fees

Learn more at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/formats\\_ov.html](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/formats_ov.html)

- **Bundling of Complementary Products** – Anticipate the needs of your customers by bundling products in the same manner that people purchase them in other channels. Try listing products in various combinations, i.e., with accessories to see which combinations yield the best results. Bundling different accessories with a product can

allow you to have more listings of an item without breaking the 10-item auction rule.

■ **Shipping Discounts on Multiple Items** – By offering shipping discounts, you'll encourage your buyers to buy more from you. Prominent messages will automatically appear in your listings encouraging your buyers to save on shipping by buying more from you, a seller they already know and trust. Learn more at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/shipping\\_discounts.html](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/shipping_discounts.html)

■ **Opt-in for eBay Marketing Communications** – By opting in, you will receive valuable information by email and telephone, such as getting advance notice of upcoming events, promotions and the latest details on:

- Free Listing Days & Price Promotions
- Feature Discounts (Penny Gallery, eBay Picture Services, etc.)
- Tips & Resources
- Category Programmes
- Selling Statistics (Top Searches, Hot Lists, etc.)

You can opt-in by going into “My eBay” then clicking on “eBay Preferences” then “Notification preferences.”

■ **Stagger Auction Style Listings Ending Days and Times** – Many buyers only place bids near the end of an auction-style listing, so if you're selling the same items in multiple listings, you should test staggering the ending days and times. To find out more visit <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/schedule.html>

■ **Drive More Traffic to Your Listings** – In addition to best practices already mentioned, below are a few more to bring you more buyers:

**Pricing** – Try a low opening bid and No Reserve for your auction-style listings. This increases bidding activity, which in turn increases eyeballs to your listings. Note that a high opening bid can "choke" bidding on your item, and setting a reserve price can often have the same negative effect.

**Leverage eBay Promotions** – Familiarise yourself with eBay's merchandising promotions on the homepage and category index pages and be sure to list at the most opportune time.

**Editor Kit** – You can display your eBay items on your own website and it's free. Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/api/editorkit.html>

**Affiliates Program** – If you have a website, you can earn cash as an eBay Affiliate. Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/affiliate/index.html>

■ **Test Selling New Types of Products** – You can source product at <http://wholesale.ebay.co.uk/>, trade shows, liquidators, Internet search engines, or by becoming an eBay trading assistant <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/tradingassistants.html>

■ **Experiment with eBay Listing Upgrades** – Listing upgrades help you to attract more buyers. Test such upgrades as Gallery, List in Two Categories, Featured Plus, Highlight, Bold, and more. Learn more at [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/ia/promoting\\_your\\_item.html](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/ia/promoting_your_item.html)

■ **Feedback** – Buyers use eBay's feedback system as a tool to gauge the trustworthiness of a seller. Improving your feedback is analogous to building your brand. To build and manage feedback, we recommend the following:

- Include a thank you note or email with your item asking buyers 1) to leave positive feedback if they are delighted with the purchase, or 2) to contact you immediately if not delighted and give you the opportunity to make the buying experience a positive one.

- Track buyers' feedback comments including negatives, neutrals, and even positives where the comments were less than satisfactory. Watch for trends and make necessary adjustments. Consider contacting buyers by phone to learn more and to keep them as your customers.

- Reply to negative feedback received in a professional manner. "Flaming" the buyer could reflect badly on you and scare off future buyers.

- Put on a "service face" when replying to emails and feedback. Sometimes taking one deep breath will help you relax and act more service oriented.

- Consider resolving feedback disputes by utilising eBay's new "Mutual Feedback Withdrawal" or [www.squaretrade.com](http://www.squaretrade.com). Learn more at <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/feedback/feedback-disputes.html>

## Quick Links

eBay Explained - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/ebayexplained/>  
Seller Services - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/services/>  
Seller Tools - [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/seller\\_tools\\_finder/](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/seller_tools_finder/)  
Trading Assistant Programme - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/tradingassistants.html>  
eBay Picture Manager - [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/picture\\_manager/index.html](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/picture_manager/index.html)  
Shops - <http://stores.ebay.co.uk/>  
PayPal - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/ebayexplained/paypal/>  
Fees Overview - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/sell/fees.html>  
Community & Seller Boards - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/community/>  
PowerSeller Programme - <http://www.ebay.co.uk/powersellers>  
eBay University - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/university/>  
Wholesale Lots - <http://wholesale.ebay.co.uk/>  
eBay Toolbar - [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/ebay\\_toolbar/](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/ebay_toolbar/)  
Trust & Safety Overview - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/safetycentre/>  
VeRO Programme - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/confidence/programs-vero.html>  
Customer Support - [http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/contact\\_inline/index.html](http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/contact_inline/index.html)  
Bidder Management - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/services/buyandsell/biddermanagement.html>  
Legal Guidance for Business Sellers - <http://pages.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/business.html>

Note: This information is intended as a guide only and sellers should remember that they are responsible for their listings and for ensuring that they comply with eBay's [User Agreement](#) and policies. eBay is not responsible for any seller's activities on the eBay Site or any consequences of following this guidance.

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