

Savvy and Safe Online Shopping

The Internet has opened new avenues for communication, interaction and conducting business.

The NYS Consumer Protection Board provides these tips to inform and empower consumers about how they can be savvy and safe when shopping.



PROVIDED AS A PUBLIC SERVICE BY THE

NYS CONSUMER PROTECTION BOARD

Advocating for and Empowering NY



5 Empire State Plaza, Suite 2101
Albany, New York 12223

www.nysconsumer.gov

Make Sure Your Connection is Secure

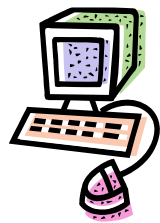
- \$ BEFORE entering your personal information, check to see that "https" precedes the Internet address AND a closed lock or an unbroken key symbol is present in the lower portion of your web browser.
- \$ Don't transmit sensitive information in a public wi-fi hotspot you don't trust, even if the transmission is encrypted.



Information Privacy and Your Computer

- \$ Find and read the website's privacy policy to find out what a site will do with any personal information you divulge.
- \$ Use complex passwords and change them regularly.
- \$ Periodically delete your web browser's "cookies."
- \$ Make sure you keep your operating system, firewall, anti-virus and anti-spyware programs current by regularly downloading updates which contain security patches.
- \$ Never respond to e-mails from "sellers" or anyone asking for your passwords, Social Security number or other personal information.

Purchasing Online



- \$ Carefully choose the online websites from which you purchase. Look for third-party privacy verification.
- \$ Check for feedback about sellers on auction sites before conducting business. Avoid shady sellers and odd listings.
- \$ Double check the total price and quantity.
- \$ Check whether the item has been recalled by visiting the recall pages of the federal Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC.gov) and/or the NYS Consumer Protection Board (nysconsumer.gov).
- \$ Compare prices and availability for specific items at stores and other sites. Consider carefully whether you are paying too much for an item, especially on auction sites.
- \$ Make sure you know the shipping and handling, return, and refund policies and that there are no extra shipping or handling costs.
- \$ Use a dedicated credit card to allow an easy review of purchases.

After the Purchase

- \$ After making a purchase online, be sure to print out the receipt and confirmation information for your records. Also, print, date and save for your records a copy of terms, conditions, warranties, item description and company information from which you purchase the item.
- \$ Look at your purchase carefully as soon as you receive it. Contact the seller as soon as possible if you discover a problem. Tell the seller in writing about any problems you have, ask for a repair or refund, and keep a copy of your correspondence.