

How To Report And Handle Ebay Transaction Problems

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Even when there aren't any disputes, you might run into a few transaction problems on eBay - glitches that aren't really anyone's fault, but are just the result of a technical malfunction or another situation beyond the buyer or seller's control. The number one cause of problems like this is email.

Email Problems.

If you use the Internet a lot, you'll no doubt be familiar with the problems eBay can cause, and many buyers and sellers are relying on email to keep them informed about their transactions. Sometimes, you might find that your emails to a seller bounce -you might have the wrong email address, or there could be a problem with their email. This happens especially often when buyers have free webmail accounts at places like Hotmail and Yahoo Mail.

When this happens, the buyer might not know you're trying to contact them. Consider it urgent to contact them in the real world, before they leave you bad feedback. To find out someone's real-world contact details, follow these steps: Click "Advanced Search" near the top of your eBay screen, then "Find Contact Information" in the menu on the left (under the "Members" heading). All you need to do then is enter the other user's eBay ID and the item number of what they bought.

You might find that the address you end up getting doesn't exist, and the phone number seems to be disconnected, or wrong. However, if you didn't get any working contact information for the buyer, then this means they've violated eBay's contact information policy. You can report them at <http://pages.ebay.com/help/policies/identity-false.html>, and nothing that they do from then on will reflect badly on you.

Be patient, though: Don't send masses of angry emails to someone's account: for all you know, they might be having problems with their computer or their Internet connection. Try phoning, and try waiting a while for a response.

PayPal problems.

You might also find that you have problems with people who aren't quite sure how PayPal works. For example, they might try to send you money directly and send the wrong amount - this means that you need to refund any overpayment and get them to pay underpayment. If your buyer is reasonable, though, this should be an easy enough problem to solve - remember that they're hardly going to refuse to pay the right amount when you've already got some of their money!

If Nothing Helps, Who Do I Report It To?

You need to click "Help" on the toolbar and then "Contact us", to contact eBay's customer service. You might find you have better luck with the "Live Help" function than you do with trying to get sensible responses to emails. PayPal have the same procedure - "Help" then "Contact us" - and offer limited phone support if you need it.

If you run lots of auctions at once, some of your problems might be caused simply by things getting lost and forgotten, because you have no way of keeping track of them. In the next email, we'll

look at how to manage multiple auctions effectively.