

Secure Online Shopping Checklist

Before You Start Shopping

- ☐ Use a trusted device (your own computer, phone, or tablet)
- ☐ Ensure you're on a secure internet connection (avoid public Wi-Fi for purchases)
- ☐ Have your credit card ready (never use debit cards for online shopping)
- ☐ Clear your browser history if using a shared computer

Choosing a Safe Website

- ☐ Start with retailers you know and trust (Amazon, Target, Walmart, etc.)
- ☐ If trying a new website, search for "[company name] reviews" first
- ☐ Look for contact information (phone number, physical address)
- ☐ Check that the website looks professional with proper spelling and grammar
- ☐ Verify the return policy is clearly stated and reasonable

Security Check Before Entering Information

- ☐ Look for "https://" at the beginning of the web address (note the "s")
- ☐ Check for the lock icon next to the web address
- ☐ Never enter personal information on sites that only show "http://"
- ☐ Avoid websites with multiple pop-ups or aggressive advertising

Safe Payment Practices

- ☐ Use a credit card instead of a debit card
- ☐ Consider using PayPal or other secure payment services when available
- ☐ Never pay with wire transfers, gift cards, or cryptocurrency
- ☐ For new websites, choose not to save your payment information
- ☐ For trusted sites you use often, saving payment info is generally safe

Mobile Shopping Safety

- ☐ Download apps only from official app stores (Apple App Store or Google Play Store)
- ☐ Avoid clicking shopping links in emails or text messages
- ☐ Look for the same security features (https:// and lock icon) on mobile browsers
- ☐ Wait until you're on secure home Wi-Fi before making purchases

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Red Flags to Avoid

- ☐ Prices that seem impossibly low for brand-name items
- ☐ "Limited time" offers that pressure you to buy immediately
- ☐ Websites with poor spelling, grammar, or unprofessional appearance
- ☐ Pop-ups claiming you've "won" something or are a special visitor
- ☐ Requests for unusual payment methods
- ☐ No clear return policy or contact information
- ☐ Pressure to provide unnecessary personal information

Before Completing Your Purchase

- ☐ Review your cart carefully for correct items and quantities
- ☐ Verify the shipping address is accurate
- ☐ Check the total cost including taxes and shipping
- ☐ Read the return policy one more time
- ☐ Make sure you understand delivery timeframes
- ☐ Take a screenshot or save confirmation details

After Your Purchase

- ☐ Save your order confirmation email
- ☐ Take a screenshot of your order details
- ☐ Monitor your credit card statement for the correct charge
- ☐ Track your package using the provided tracking information
- ☐ Contact customer service immediately if something seems wrong

If Something Goes Wrong

- ☐ Contact the retailer's customer service first
- ☐ Keep all documentation (emails, screenshots, receipts)
- ☐ Call your credit card company if charges are incorrect
- ☐ File complaints with appropriate authorities if needed
- ☐ Share your experience in reviews to help other shoppers

Monthly Security Maintenance

- ☐ Review your credit card statements for any unfamiliar charges
- ☐ Update your passwords for shopping accounts every few months
- ☐ Clear your browser history and saved passwords on shared computers

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☐ Check your credit report for any suspicious activity

Remember: Trust your instincts! If something feels wrong about a website or deal, it's better to shop elsewhere. There are always other options, and your safety is worth more than any bargain.

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