Online Fraud

Online fraud is common and you must be aware of it to ensure they are not getting scammed. There are many different types of fraud that you should be conscious of so that you can protect yourself from these scam artists.

One of the types of fraud that occur are the online auction and retail scams where the customer buys something from an auction website, such as EBay, for incredibly low prices and then either the seller doesn’t deliver the item or when the item arrives it is not the same as the one advertised such as a used item or counterfeit. To avoid being scammed by this type of fraud is to make sure that you only pay by Pay Pal or Paymate because your money is traceable and your details are hidden to the seller. Pay Pal also has a buyer protection scheme that gives the buyer protection of up to $20000.

Another type of scam is the Pay Pal fraud where the customer sells an item on an auction website, such as EBay, that allows the buyer to pick the item up from the seller. The seller then supplies a false address to Pay Pal and pays using Pay Pal. They then pick the item up from the seller. The scammer then challenges the sale through Pay Pal and receives a refund by claiming they did not receive the item. The way to not be conned by this is to only accept cash on pick up of the item.

These are some of the ways to protect yourself from fraud when using sites such as EBay:

* Always wait for funds to clear before sending an item
* Be suspicious of buyers offering you more than the item is worth
* Be suspicious of buyers that claim to have sent you a false cheque for more than the amount and then ask for the item and a refund for the added money
* Never send an item based on a buyer emailing you a receipt or "money transfer number (MTN)"
* When a buyer chooses to pay on pick up don’t accept international cheques or money orders. eBay recommends cash or bank cheque
* Sellers must offer at least one safer payment method (PayPal, Paymate and/or Merchant credit card) on listings
* Never trade outside of the EBay site, always be suspicious of people who ask you to.
* Always check the sellers/buyers feedback to check whether anyone has had any issues with them previously.
* Don’t believe a seller who says that eBay is holding goods at its warehouse. We never take possession of items from sellers or hold money from buyers
* Carefully read item descriptions and the seller’s terms
* Be wary of fake Second Chance Offers. Always check your messages in My eBay for genuine Second Chance Offers
* Never use Western Union, MoneyGram or other instant wire transfer services which are prohibited on eBay
* Be aware that when you buy from an international seller, you may not be covered by Australian laws.
* Find out as much as possible about the auction rules and the responsibilities of buyers and sellers before you bid
* Use registered mail for tracking your parcel.
* Make sure the site is secure and look for the tiny icon of a padlock or other evidence of security and encryption when you are submitting credit card details.
* Do not send confidential personal or financial information by email.
* Contact the [Australian Competition and Consumer Commission](http://www.accc.gov.au) if you think you have been the subject of misleading or deceptive conduct.

**Remember: If an offer sounds too good to be true – it probably is.**

**References:**<http://help.ebay.com.au/Help/Security/Avoiding_scams/Online_fraud>  
http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?document\_id=21537