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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sally Olson'.

www.SurvivingeBay.com

When I started selling from my home collections, I had no problems earning an extra \$200.00 a week. After 3 years of selling, I have devised a strategy for "newbies" who begin eBay selling. I hope this helps you to avoid some of the pitfalls I had when I first began selling on eBay.

For the purpose of this eBook – aim high, think smart. If you really enjoy selling on eBay and decide to open a store sometime, **you will need to add to your skill set.** I have put together a series of CD Video tutorials entitled **Surviving eBay, Learn to Design Listings for eBay and Photography for eBay.**

- [Check them out at my store.](#)
- [Check them out on my web site.](#)

Ten Tips For New eBay Sellers

1. Sell items you already own

That's right. Search your home for items to sell.

- Old newspapers
- coin collections
- stamp collections
- baseball cards
- clothing you haven't worn in 2-years.
- Shoes you bought but only wore once.
- China you have stored away because you have no place to put it out.
- Tools in your garage
- Autographed baseballs
- VHS tapes
- DVD's you're not going to watch again
- Knick Knacks

The list is endless. Every room in your house will have something you can sell on eBay.

Why sell items you already own?

There is no monetary investment on your part. Even if you only get \$5.00 for the item, the \$5.00 is yours. In other words, **it is cost effective**. The risk to you is minimal. If it doesn't sell or you don't have the fun you thought you would have – pay your eBay listing fees and stop. No big deal.

2. Photograph everything you want to sell before writing a listing and description.

Here's what you need to photograph for eBay:

- Digital Camera, Film Camera or a Scanner
- Photo Editing Software to adjust the size and colors in the photo.
- Tabletop with a white or colored drape to photograph your items on. ([see my Photography For eBay Videos Set for complete details](#))
- File Folder on your desktop for storing all your eBay photos

Why photograph your items first?

This is where you will see chips on china or tears on book covers. Photography forces you to look carefully at what you want to sell and decide if it is too damaged to sell or not worth the effort.

3. Use BRAND names found on your items where ever possible.

Practice writing good listing headers by typing it out first before you begin listing your item for sale on eBay.

Which of these 2-examples do you think YOU would buy?

Example 1: Black book bag which holds 40 lbs books – great

Example 2: Prada designer black book bag with Prada key chain – Gorgeous!

This is where you pay attention to what you are really selling. **Brand names are really important on eBay.**

4. Know about eBay listing rules.

I can't talk too much about the value of knowing and really understanding the eBay listing rules. The following example of a listing header is **Illegal on eBay**:

Black book bag which holds Apple iPod – Hot!

This listing title is referred by eBay as **"keyword spamming"** When people type in Apple iPod as a search phrase and they get 1,000 black book bags in their results – that's not what they were looking for. I know you want to get in the Apple iPod listing to increase exposure, but eBay will remove your listing and sooner or later expel you from their web site. So, don't do it.

Here is a link to eBay's tutorial on [Search and Browse "Keyword spamming"](#). Take this tutorial and follow the rules.

5. Practice writing "great" descriptions by reading other people's descriptions.

The rules in the description area of your listing are far more lenient. This is where you could say:

Up for bid is a gently used black back pack that you could put an Apple iPod in and carry it around all day.

Learning by Example should be a rule for you when you begin to sell on eBay. Spend lots of time finding out what others are selling that is similar to what you want to sell and then: **READ – don't copy THEIR DESCRIPTIONS.**

6. Develop a Pricing Strategy by Researching what similar items are selling for on eBay.

You need a good starting price. eBay is a very competitive environment. If you are a new seller with a low feedback score, people will be hesitant to buy from you. You have to give them good starting price.

Too many people begin their bids too low for the value of what they are selling. This is a big mistake.

For example, you are selling a sugar and creamer set :

Listing title: Royal Worcester Evesham Gold Sugar Bowl and Creamer

You know the value of this item is at least \$80.00

Auction Price Too Low

Open the auction at .99 cents

Although this could sell for \$80.00 if enough people bid on it, you are really offering it for .99 cents. People will watch this item and then in the final 30 seconds put in bids. It will probably sell for about \$20.00. eBay Buyers are sharp – they will get the lowest price they can.

Auction Price Just Right

Open the auction at \$74.95

People on eBay know the value of a product. It may take two weeks to sell, but you will get far more than what you would get if you start with a low-low price.

7. Communicate with customers

Communicate with customers, communicate with customers and then communicate with customers.

If you don't communicate "successfully" with your customers, you will receive negative feedback. Your feedback is your lifeline to success on eBay.

Always, always be kind and civil in your emails....no matter how rude the buyer is. Most buyers are upset when they email and many just don't know how to vent their problem. **[I have an entire video on this subject and just what to say in emails on my video set: "Surviving eBay"](#)**

8. Protect your feedback score

The **best way** to protect your feedback is to respond to customer emails.

The **smartest way** to protect your feedback score is to only give positive feedback once someone has given you positive feedback.

Always Leave Feedback After The Buyer Has Sent You Positive Feedback.

I started my selling by giving positive feedback when I shipped. The people had paid quickly and some had even emailed me cheerful notes. This feedback strategy was a BIG MISTAKE.

I sold a piece of jewelry, shipped, left positive feedback. 2-weeks later I got an email that stones were missing from the jewelry and one of the stones was yellow instead of white. They proceeded to send me back the brooch. I couldn't believe that 2- stones were missing and a yellow stone had replaced one of the white stones. Before I could respond, they filed a complaint with PayPal insisting on a full refund, including shipping.

I had negative feedback from someone I had already left positive feedback. PayPal gave a full refund to this woman and I had a black mark on my feedback. I had been scammed. Had I not left positive feedback, I would have had some bargaining with her by leaving negative feedback. I found out later that she has a beauty parlor where she sells expensive costume jewelry and hard to find loose stones. What a lesson I learned.

Please keep in mind that **PayPal is not a referee** to say you are right and they are wrong. They always air on the side of the buyer unless you have proof that the buyer was warned in your listing description. It's not their fault...they just can't referee 1,000 arguments a day about something that can't be proved or disproved.

Your feedback is your lifeline. Poor feedback, no one will buy from you.

9. Be Liberal with your refund policies

You have 3 choices with refund policies:

1. Don't Offer Refunds
2. Offer Refunds Within Reason
3. Always give a refund when someone wants one.

1. Don't offer refunds: Buyers typically stay away from sellers who do not offer refunds. Sellers who have been swamped with refund requests generally stop offering refunds. I stay away from a buyer that has NO refund policy.

2. Offer Refunds Within Reason:

Example #1: My first refund I gave was for a pair of shoes that the person wasn't happy with. I said I would issue the refund as soon as they sent back the shoes.

Problem: Too open ended. They waited 3-months to ship back the sandals and then wanted an immediate refund for something I couldn't sell in the middle of winter. Lesson learned: Set return date policies – Item has to be shipped back within 7 days of refund offer.

Example #2: I shipped and sent an email giving the buyer a tracking number. 3-weeks after shipping I got an email – where's my shoes? Have you shipped them? I looked at the tracking and it said the package couldn't be delivered because it would have had to be left outside their home, so it was taken back to the Post Office. A ticket was left with the buyer. The shoes were finally returned to me by the Post Office after 21 days. The buyer wanted a full refund including shipping. They did not want to pay to have the shoes re-shipped. I did not offer a refund.

3. Always give a refund when someone wants one. I know there are sellers who do this. I know it protects your feedback, but you are running a business.

Put your REFUND POLICIES in every item description. Be clear and yet reasonable. Always encourage the buyer to contact you.

10. Use Click 'N Ship offered by the US Post Office

The **USPS** gives you free boxes. You can package and ship your items from the comfort of your home. The post office will pick up the package. You can also take them to the post office and drop them off at the back door and avoid long waiting lines.

As a new seller, I made my own shipping labels, purchased shipping packages, and stood at line in the post office.

When I used Click 'N Ship, I saved time and money on shipping supplies. It's a good cost effective way to do business.

Scales

Shipping supplies

Free USPS Shipping Supplies

BONUS TIPS:

#1 - Selling items on eBay is “work”. Hopefully, fun work, but still “work”.

Most people who have sold on eBay stop selling after a few months. There are no get rich schemes without a lot of work and smart thinking. You will not make \$5,000 a week for the rest of your life by selling stuff out of your house – sooner or later you have to go out and buy things to sell. You can, however, make an easy \$200.00 a week.

#2 – Buy under-priced items on eBay and Resell them

If you enjoy selling items you have had around your house, but are running low, go to eBay and look at auctions that are under-priced and purchase these items and resell them on your auction. If you are an astute shopper, you should do very well buying on eBay and reselling these item in your eBay store.

#3 - Above all – Have fun

Please visit my website <http://www.survivingebay.com/> and see my free graphics, eBay free templates, videos galore and much, much more.