



Making Everything Easier!™

UK Edition

3rd Edition

eBay.co.uk

FOR

DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Make serious money selling your wares
- Bid, win and buy the easy way
- Build and expand your eBay business
- Stay safe on eBay.co.uk

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Consumer journalist and eBay expert

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Technology journalist and author



eBay.co.uk For Dummies®

Visit www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/ebayuk
to view this book's cheat sheet.

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and Steve Hill**



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Introduction

Welcome to the third edition of *eBay.co.uk For Dummies!* Shopping and selling on eBay is more than just a smart way to make extra pocket money – it can also be loads of fun, as more than 15 million UK members can tell you. Whether you're just starting out on eBay, or you've done a bit of trading and fancy moving things up a notch, you've come to the right place to find out all you need to know.

Of course, eBay isn't only a UK site. eBay now has more than 250 million users worldwide – that's quite a community. It's a community of buyers who can purchase things they'd never find on the high street, and save serious money while they're at it; and of sellers who clear their attics or forage out wholesale bargains to sell online and gain a few quid. This makes eBay the new international marketplace, and the best part is that eBay is available to anyone who wants to take the time to find out how it works.

And eBay isn't just about fun and making a few extra pounds. How about taking the plunge and starting to build an e-commerce enterprise, using eBay as your starting point? Thousands of people in Britain already make a living, or a significant second income, by selling on eBay. Do you want to join them? This book can get you started.

eBay isn't hard to master, but just as with any tool, if you know the ins and outs, you're ahead of the game. You can get the bargains, and when you sell, you can make the most money. This book is designed to help you understand everything you need to know about buying and selling on eBay, the most successful person-to-person trading community website. You get all the tools you need to get moving at eBay, whether you're new to the Internet or a webaholic. You see how to turn your

everyday household clutter into cold, hard cash – and how to look for items that you can sell on eBay. If you're a collector (or you'd like to be), we show you how to work out how much you should spend, how to make clever bids and how to win the auctions. How much money you earn (or spend) depends entirely on how often and how well you conduct your eBay transactions. You decide how frequently you want to run auctions and place bids; we're here to help with the rest by sharing tips we've discovered along the way.

A website as complex as eBay has many nooks and crannies that may confuse the first-time user. Think of this book as a detailed road map that can help you navigate the site, getting as much or as little as you want from it. Just come back to the book whenever you need a question answered.

After you know the nuts and bolts of eBay, you can start buying and selling stuff. We've got a whole load of canny buying and selling strategies that help you get the most out of your auctions. With this book and a little elbow grease, you can join the ranks of the millions of people who use their home computers to make friends, become part of the eBay community and turn a profit.

About This Book

Remember those surprise tests that teachers sprang on you at school? Well, sometimes you may feel like eBay is setting you little tests while you're online. Think of *eBay.co.uk For Dummies* as your book of answers. You don't have to memorise anything – just keep this book handy to help you get through the confusing parts of eBay.

With that in mind, this book is divided into sections to help you find your answers fast. We show you how to:

- ✓ Get online and register to buy and sell on eBay.
- ✓ Find the bits of eBay where you can search for items for sale, set up listings for sale, monitor your transactions and babble on the discussion boards.
- ✓ Bid on and win eBay auctions, and master Buy It Now to make instant purchases.
- ✓ Choose an item to sell, pick the right time for your auction, market it so that loads of bidders see it and make a profit.
- ✓ Communicate well and close transactions without problems, whether you're a buyer or a seller.
- ✓ Become part of a great community of people who like to collect, buy and sell items of just about every type.

And finally . . . don't adjust your eyes. To protect the privacy of eBay users, some screen images (commonly called *screen shots*) in this book blur User IDs to protect the innocent.

Foolish Assumptions

You may have picked up this book because you heard that people are raking in cash by selling stuff on eBay, and you want a piece of the action. Or you heard about the bargains and bizarre items you can find in the world's largest marketplace. If so, this is the right book for you.

Here are some other foolish assumptions we've made about you:

- ✔ You have, or would like to have, access to a computer and an Internet connection so that you can do business on eBay.
- ✔ You have an interest in collecting stuff, selling stuff and buying stuff, and you want to find out more about doing those things online.
- ✔ You want tips and strategies that can save you money when you bid and make you money when you sell.
- ✔ You're concerned about maintaining your privacy and staying away from people who try to ruin everyone's good time with negligent (and sometimes illegal) activity.

If you think that the expression *surfing the Web* has something to do with spiders and wetsuits, this book can get you started, but you may want to browse through *The Internet For Dummies*, 10th Edition, by John R Levine, Margaret Levine Young and Carol Baroudi, for a crash course in Internet confidence. The book comes from Wiley, just like the one you're reading now. From time to time (and by astounding coincidence), we mention other titles in the *For Dummies* series that you may find helpful.

How This Book Is Organised

This book has five parts. The parts stand on their own, which means that you can read Chapter 5 after you read Chapter 10 or skip Chapter 3 altogether. Everything is up to you. But if you're new to eBay, at least dip into Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 to get an overview on what eBay is all about and find out how to become a registered user.

If you're already buying and selling on eBay, feel free to jump ahead to get good tips on advanced strategies to win the bargains or make your items fly off the cyber-shelves.

Part I: Forget the Shops: Getting a Feel for eBay

In this part, we tell you what eBay is and how to use it. We take you through the registration process, help you organise your eBay sales and communication using the My eBay page, and get you comfortable finding your way around the site from the home page.

Part II: Are You Buying What They're Selling?

If you're pretty sure that you want to start making bids on items, this part fills you in on searching, grading an item's value, researching, bidding, winning auctions and buying instantly.

That old cliché 'Let the buyer beware' became a cliché because even today (maybe especially today) it's sound advice. Use our top tips to help you decide when to bid and when to pass.

Part III: Are You Selling What They're Buying?

This part gets you up to speed on how to sell your items on eBay. Think of it as an eBay course in marketing. Here you find important information on how to conduct your auctions, what to do after you sell an item, how to post the item and how to

keep track of all the money you make. The tax collectors are only too aware of eBay (they probably use it themselves!). Know the rules so that your friendly local tax officer doesn't invite you over for a sandwich and a little audit.

We also show you how to jazz up your auctions by adding pictures and how to use basic HTML to link your auctions to your own website if you have one. You can make your digital images look like high art with our tips, hints and strategies. We also explore the opportunity that exists for setting up an eBay business and potentially making serious money.

Part IV: Bells and Whistles: Special Features

Here you discover how to handle privacy issues relating to eBay and how you can resolve buying and selling issues with the help of the Safety Centre, eBay's problem-solving HQ. Also included are ways of having fun with the eBay community and using charity auctions to bid on unique items for a good cause. Plus we take a look at eBay Apps for your smartphone so you can buy and sell on the move with your iPhone or HTC Android.

Part V: The Part of Tens

In keeping with a long *For Dummies* tradition, this part is a compendium of short chapters that give you handy references and useful facts. We share more smart tips for buying and selling items, as well as descriptions of our favourite software programs that can help lighten your auction load.

Icons Used in This Book



These are facts that you're really going to want to know. Time is money on eBay. When you see this shortcut or time-saving tip, read the information and think about all the cash you just saved.



Think of this icon as a memo for your brain. If you forget one of these pearls of wisdom that we reveal to you, go back and read it again. If you *still* can't remember it, dog-ear the page, use a highlighter pen or draw a big black circle around it – we don't mind, honest.



Don't feel our pain. We've done things wrong on eBay before and want to save you from our mistakes. These warnings are big and bold so that you take notice and avoid a bad experience. Don't skip these warnings unless you're a masochist.



When you see this icon, you're in for a war story (or a success story) from an eBay veteran. Their tales of brilliant buys, staggering sales and miscellaneous mishaps are a great real-life guide to eBay's fun and perils. You can skip over these anecdotes if you want to, but you may be missing out on some solid gold insight into what not to do on eBay.

What Now?

Like everything else in the world, eBay is evolving constantly. Some of the eBay screens in this book may look slightly different to the ones you see on your home computer monitor. That's just eBay tweaking and changing. Our job is to arm you with everything you need to know to join the eBay community and begin buying or selling or both. If you hit choppy waters, just look up the problem in the table of contents or index in this book. We either help you solve it or let you know where to go on the eBay website for some expert advice.

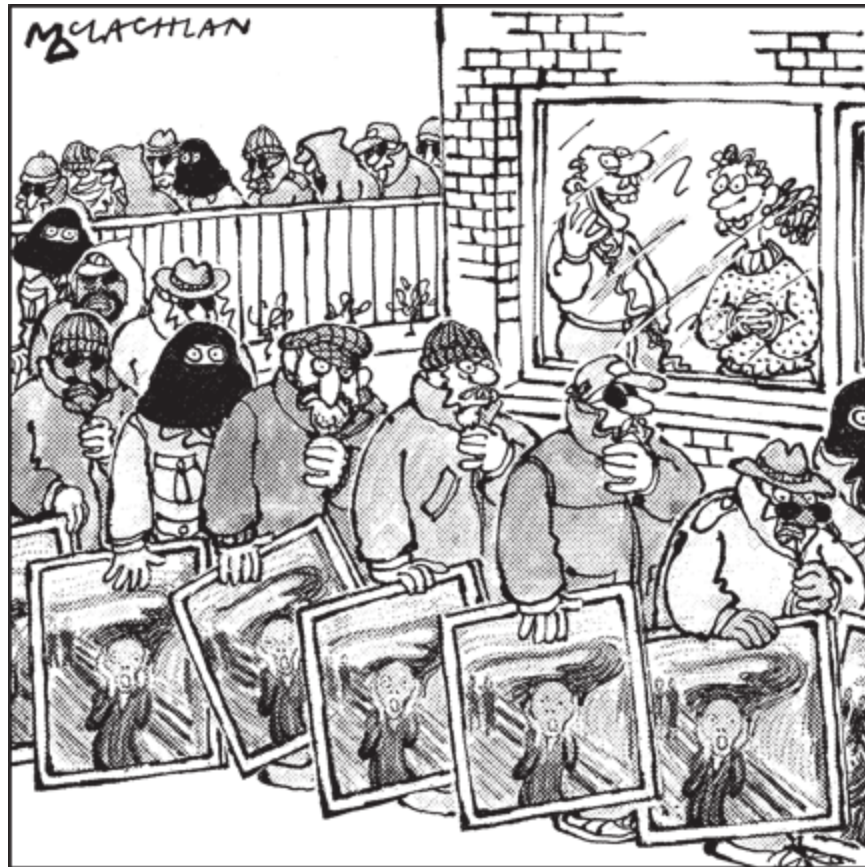
Although eBay makes its complex site as easy to navigate as possible, you may still need to refer back to this book for help. Don't get frustrated if you have to keep reviewing topics before you feel completely comfortable trading on eBay.

Feedback, Please

Communication makes the world go round, and we'd love to hear from you. Contact us at talk2marsha@coolebaytools.com and jane@janehoskyn.co.uk. We can't answer every email, but we do read them all. Marsha answers the best questions in her free monthly www.coolebaytools.com newsletter.

Part I

Forget the Shops: Getting a Feel for eBay



'We only started our eBay business, webuyoldmasters.co.uk, this morning and the response has been amazing.'

In this part . . .

New technology can be intimidating for anyone. You want to have a look at eBay, maybe buy something, but eBay feels huge