

eBay Auction Tips

- **Read the seller's Feedback.** The feedback profile will give you an idea of how an individual does business. Do items ship in a timely manner? Is the object exactly as described? Would previous buyers do business with this seller again? These are questions that can influence your decision to bid.
- **Use eBay's Watch This Item feature to track items you want to buy.** This feature allows you to select items of interest and monitor the auction's progress.
- **Sign up for a PayPal account.** Whether you're buying or selling, electronic payment services like PayPal help you complete the transaction much more quickly. Visit www.paypal.com to sign up for a free account.
- **Don't bid unless you intend to buy.** If you make the highest bid, you have to buy the item. eBay uses its feedback system to track deadbeats, and bidding without paying can result in permanent removal from eBay.
- **Ask questions before bidding.** Email the seller of an item if you have any questions. Most sellers are accommodating and will send additional photos if requested, as well as any other information you might need about the item.
- **Know your limits.** Have a maximum buying price in mind when bidding on an item. A bidding frenzy at the last moment can increase the selling price above and beyond what you'd like to pay.
- **Bid late.** It's best to start bidding on an item when there is less than one day left in the auction. If you begin your bidding late in the game, you'll avoid prematurely driving up the selling price.
- **Be aware of shipping and insurance charges.** Shipping charges are added on to the winning bid for an item. If these charges are too high, your winnings will seem less of a bargain. On the other hand, if you've won an auction for a fragile or expensive item, ask the seller to add insurance to the shipping costs.
- **Learn to love the United States Postal Service Web site.** If you are selling items, you will need to calculate shipping costs in advance. The U.S. Postal Service Web site (www.usps.gov) includes calculators that can help you determine domestic and international shipping, as well as any added services like delivery confirmation and insurance.



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