

## Электронная библиотека “Либрус” ( <http://librus.ru> )

Научно-техническая библиотека электронных книг. Первоначально задуманная как хранилище компьютерной литературы, в настоящий момент библиотека содержит книжные издания по различным областям знания (медицинские науки, техника, гуманитарные науки, домашнее хозяйство, учебная литература и т.д.). Серьезность научно-технических **e-book'ов** разбавляет раздел развлекательной литературы (эротика, комиксы, задачи и головоломки).

Основной целью проекта является ознакомление читателей с многообразием книгопечатной продукции и помощь в выборе действительно стоящей книги для приобретения у законных издателей, их представителей или в соответствующих организациях торговли. Для покупки через Internet мы рекомендуем воспользоваться услугами интернет-магазина “[Озон](#)”.

### **ВНИМАНИЕ!**

*Данный файл представлен исключительно в ознакомительных целях!*

*После ознакомления с данной книгой Вы обязаны удалить ее с Вашего компьютера.*

*В случае несоблюдения данного обязательства, Вы нарушите закон "Об авторском праве и смежных правах".*

*Все авторские права сохраняются за правообладателем. По его требованию доступ к данному электронному документу будет перекрыт. Однако, таким образом, тысячи потенциальных покупателей так и не узнают о, возможно, нужной и полезной книге.*

### **Авторам и издательствам**

Если Вы заинтересованы в рекламе и продвижении Ваших книг на бескрайних сетевых просторах мы с удовольствием включим их в наш каталог.





# Buying & Selling

## Music, Instruments, and Music Collectibles



on

eBay®

Mark Abdelnour

# Buying & Selling Music, Instruments, and Music Collectibles on EBay®

---

Mark Abdelnour

**THOMSON**  
—★—™  
**COURSE TECHNOLOGY**  
Professional ■ Trade ■ Reference

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

© 2004 by Thomson Course Technology PTR. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system without written permission from Thomson Course Technology PTR, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

The Thomson Course Technology PTR logo and related trade dress are trademarks of Thomson Course Technology PTR and may not be used without written permission.

eBay is a registered trademark of eBay, Inc. PayPal is a registered trademark of eBay, Inc.

All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

*Important:* Thomson Course Technology PTR cannot provide software support. Please contact the appropriate software manufacturer's technical support line or Web site for assistance.

Thomson Course Technology PTR and the author have attempted throughout this book to distinguish proprietary trademarks from descriptive terms by following the capitalization style used by the manufacturer.

Information contained in this book has been obtained by Thomson Course Technology PTR from sources believed to be reliable. However, because of the possibility of human or mechanical error by our sources, Thomson Course Technology PTR, or others, the Publisher does not guarantee the accuracy, adequacy, or completeness of any information and is not responsible for any errors or omissions or the results obtained from use of such information. Readers should be particularly aware of the fact that the Internet is an ever-changing entity. Some facts may have changed since this book went to press.

Educational facilities, companies, and organizations interested in multiple copies or licensing of this book should contact the publisher for quantity discount information. Training manuals, CD-ROMs, and portions of this book are also available individually or can be tailored for specific needs.

ISBN: 1-59200-500-4

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2004106455

Printed in the United States of America

04 05 06 07 08 BH 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**THOMSON**  
★  
**COURSE TECHNOLOGY**  
Professional ■ Trade ■ Reference

Thomson Course Technology PTR,  
a division of Thomson Course Technology  
25 Thomson Place  
Boston, MA 02210  
<http://www.courseptr.com>

**SVP, Thomson Course  
Technology PTR:**  
Andy Shafran

**Publisher:**  
Stacy L. Hiquet

**Senior Marketing Manager:**  
Sarah O'Donnell

**Marketing Manager:**  
Heather Hurlley

**Manager of Editorial Services:**  
Heather Talbot

**Associate Acquisitions Editor:**  
Megan Belanger

**Senior Editor:**  
Mark Garvey

**Associate Marketing Managers:**  
Kristin Eisenzopf and  
Sarah Dubois

**Project Editor:**  
Jenny Davidson

**Technical Reviewer:**  
Eric Grebler

**Thomson Course Technology  
PTR Market Coordinator:**  
Amanda Weaver

**Interior Layout Tech:**  
Shawn Morningstar

**Cover Designers:**  
Joel Sadagursky and  
Mike Tanamachi

**Indexer:**  
Sharon Shock

**Proofreader:**  
Gene Redding

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



*This book is dedicated to my loving wife, Heather Archibald,  
the miracle that is our newborn daughter, Katie Bronwyn,  
and my incredible family. Thanks to all of you for always  
being there to support me.*

# Acknowledgments

---

This book would not have been possible without the support of the following people.

Heather Archibald, thanks for your love and patience. Nothing I do would be possible without you.

Heidi and George, my parents, for being the perfect role models and the best parents anyone could possibly have. You are an inspiration to your family.

Katie Bronwyn, my daughter, for making Heather and I the happiest and luckiest people on earth.

Eric Grebler, my technical editor and friend, for your graciousness and support over the years. You are a good friend.

Jenny Davidson, for your hard work, dedication, and attention to detail.

Jordy Nicholas and Mark Swift, for their massive contributions to this book.

Phat Matt Hately and Solace for their mind-blowing rock'n'roll.

Visit the rock band Solace at <http://www.solacerocks.com/>

# About the Author

---

MARK ABDELNOUR has been involved in the music scene since the age of 10—from piano and guitar lessons to creating his own musical scores using computers. In 2000 Abdelnour began using eBay and instantly fell in love with it. He has been searching for, buying, and selling items—many of which are music related—for several years.

Abdelnour has developed extensive amounts of curriculum and learning tools across a wide range of technical and non-technical topics. He has recently worked on several books with topics covering operating systems, music editors, image-editing software, and hardware. Abdelnour currently resides in Ottawa, Ontario.

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> . . . . .	<b>xii</b>
-------------------------------	------------

<b>PART 1</b>	<b>Introducing eBay</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
---------------	-----------------------------------	----------

<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>Music on eBay? Like What?</b> . . . . .	<b>3</b>
	Concert/Musicals/Opera Tickets . . . . .	4
	Concert Memorabilia (Ticket Stubs, Concert Shirts, Pins, and So On) . .	6
	Music Collectibles . . . . .	8
	Music CDs . . . . .	8
	Music 8-Tracks . . . . .	10
	Music Cassettes . . . . .	12
	Albums/Vinyl . . . . .	12
	DVD/VHS Videos/Concerts . . . . .	15
	Musicals on TV and Film . . . . .	15
	Music Figures/Toys (KISS Figures, Alice Cooper Figures, Metallica Figures, and So On) . .	16
	Musical Instruments (Trumpets, Guitars, Pianos, Xylophones, and So On) . . . . .	19
	Music/Audio Accessories (Headphones, Stands, Straps, Humidifiers, Tools, and So On) . . . . .	20
	Audio Electronics (DJ Equipment, Stereos, MP3 Players, Amps, Speakers, and So On) . .	20
	Autographs from Music Celebrities . . . . .	22
	Music Software . . . . .	24
	Music-related Books/Magazines . . . . .	26
	Posters/Photos . . . . .	27
	Sheet Music . . . . .	28
	Instructional Music Videos/CD/DVDs . . . . .	30

<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>Flattening the Learning Curve</b> . . . . .	<b>33</b>
	Introducing the eBay Crew . . . . .	33
	What Is eBay? . . . . .	34

	Exploring the Front Page . . . . .	35
	Getting Help . . . . .	46
	Communities . . . . .	50
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>Getting Started . . . . .</b>	<b>57</b>
	Registering . . . . .	57
	PayPal . . . . .	66
	Understanding Feedback . . . . .	69
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Seek and You Shall Find. . . . .</b>	<b>73</b>
	Introducing—The Music CD Junkie . . . . .	73
	What Are You Looking For? . . . . .	74
	Searching Using Find Items . . . . .	78
	Search Items by Seller . . . . .	86
	Search Items by Bidder . . . . .	87
	Search Items in Stores . . . . .	87
	Search Modifiers . . . . .	88
	Just Browsing, Thanks . . . . .	91
	eBay Search Toolbar . . . . .	92
	My Favorite Searches . . . . .	93
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Found It! Now What? . . . . .</b>	<b>95</b>
	Exploring the Search Results Page . . . . .	95
<b>PART 2</b>	<b>Buying the Sounds . . . . .</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>Understanding the Item Page View . . . . .</b>	<b>117</b>
	Exploring the Item Page . . . . .	117
	Item Details . . . . .	122
	Describing the Description . . . . .	127
	Shipping and Payment Details . . . . .	131
	Accepted Payment Methods . . . . .	132
	Ready to Bid? . . . . .	133

<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>Before You Bid . . . . .</b>	<b>135</b>
	Introducing—The Rock Star . . . . .	135
	Know Thy Item . . . . .	135
	Ask Seller a Question. . . . .	139
	Check and Read Feedback. . . . .	140
	Visit the Backstage Lounge . . . . .	149
	Giving Works—Charity . . . . .	151
	MissionFish. . . . .	152
<b>Chapter 8</b>	<b>Bid to Win . . . . .</b>	<b>155</b>
	Are You Ready to Bid? . . . . .	155
	Vanilla Bidding Explained . . . . .	156
	Nudge Bidding . . . . .	160
	Sniping . . . . .	160
	Odd Man in Technique. . . . .	166
	The Last-Minute Shopper—AKA Vulture Techniques . . . . .	166
	A Bitter Skill . . . . .	168
<b>Chapter 9</b>	<b>After the Bid . . . . .</b>	<b>171</b>
	Checking Your Activity. . . . .	171
	Notifications . . . . .	171
	Using the eBay Toolbar to Monitor Your Activity . . . . .	182
	Stick to Your Guns . . . . .	186
	Did You Lose the Auction? . . . . .	186
	Did You Win the Auction? . . . . .	188
<b>Chapter 10</b>	<b>My eBay Explained . . . . .</b>	<b>191</b>
	Accessing My eBay . . . . .	191
	All Buying . . . . .	192
	All Selling . . . . .	198
	All Favorites . . . . .	199
	My Account. . . . .	203
	Feedback . . . . .	206
	Seller Account . . . . .	206
	PayPal Account. . . . .	206

<b>Chapter 11</b>	<b>The Half Zone on eBay . . . . .</b>	<b>209</b>
	Buying on the Half Zone . . . . .	209
	Selling on the Half Zone . . . . .	217
	Introducing Half.com . . . . .	222
<b>Chapter 12</b>	<b>Avoid the Scam—Music Tips from the Experts . .</b>	<b>229</b>
	Who Came Before You? . . . . .	229
	Serial Numbers . . . . .	230
	Check Out Discussion Rooms (Outside of eBay, Too) . . . . .	231
	Find an Expert . . . . .	232
	Check Repair Costs . . . . .	233
	Quiz the Seller . . . . .	233
	Refund/Warranty . . . . .	235
	BBB: Better Business Bureau . . . . .	236
	Are You Ready for Your Close-Up? . . . . .	236
	Completed Items Strikes Again . . . . .	237
	Go to Trial . . . . .	237
	It's All About Me . . . . .	239
	Google It . . . . .	243
	How Will You Be Paying for That? . . . . .	243
	Is Feedback Alone Good Enough? . . . . .	244
<b>PART 3</b>	<b>Selling the Music . . . . .</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>Chapter 13</b>	<b>Before You Sell . . . . .</b>	<b>247</b>
	Introducing the Music Collector . . . . .	247
	Be Organized . . . . .	248
	Surfs Are Up . . . . .	248
	Feed the Feedback Meter . . . . .	254
	About Who? . . . . .	254
	Talk to Your Neighbor . . . . .	255
	Talk to Experts . . . . .	255
	Google—Again? . . . . .	256
	Collectibles, Tradeshows, and Conferences . . . . .	256

	Pass the Spelling Bee .....	256
	Bonus Goodies .....	257
	Is It Still Fee-sible? .....	257
<b>Chapter 14</b>	<b>Kicking Off the Selling Process .....</b>	<b>259</b>
	What Can I Sell on eBay? .....	259
	Pre-Steps .....	261
	Starting the Selling Process .....	261
	Choosing a Selling Format .....	262
	Categorically Speaking .....	265
	On to the Next Step .....	271
<b>Chapter 15</b>	<b>Titles and Descriptions .....</b>	<b>273</b>
	The Unimportant Item Title .....	273
	Item Descriptions .....	282
<b>Chapter 16</b>	<b>Auction Details Defined .....</b>	<b>291</b>
	Price It .....	291
	Hot Ticket Items .....	292
	Pricing Strategies .....	292
	Duration Choices .....	296
	Start Me Up .....	297
	Private Rooms .....	300
	A Lot of Quantity .....	300
	Item Location .....	301
<b>Chapter 17</b>	<b>Pix &amp; Trix—Getting Your Listing to Stand Out ..</b>	<b>303</b>
	Is a Picture Necessary? .....	303
	Cams and Scans .....	303
	The Right Kinds of Photographs .....	304
	Using Photo-Editing Software .....	308
	Inserting Pictures into Your Listing .....	310
	Picture Options .....	312
	Hire a Listing Designer .....	313
	Increase Your Item’s Visibility .....	315
	Counters .....	318



<b>Chapter 18</b>	<b>Payment, Shipping, Review, and Submit. . . . .</b>	<b>319</b>
	Seller-Accepted Payment Methods . . . . .	319
	Payment Preferences . . . . .	323
	Shipping Costs . . . . .	326
	Payment Instructions and Return Policy . . . . .	328
	Ship To Locations . . . . .	329
	Review and Submit . . . . .	330
	Fees . . . . .	330
	It’s Live! . . . . .	333
<b>Chapter 19</b>	<b>Post Go-Live Activity . . . . .</b>	<b>335</b>
	Checking Bid Activity . . . . .	335
	Item Sells! . . . . .	338
	Ship It Responsibly . . . . .	339
	Leaving Feedback . . . . .	345
	What Do You Owe? . . . . .	345
	Item Does not Sell! . . . . .	346
	<b>Index. . . . .</b>	<b>349</b>

# Introduction

---

Welcome to the eBay music superstore. This is the worldwide flea market. The biggest rock concert you've ever seen. The anything and everything of music sales online. eBay is your music destination. Enough already—I think you're getting the message.

This book is about eBay but with a twist. The focus is on buying and selling music-related items on eBay. We found a niche and it's all about music!

It's always fun to write about something you love. In this case, I'm truly blessed because I'm writing about two of my favorite things: eBay and music.

## Who Is This Book For?

---

So, you're a music lover and maybe a collector. Have you ever used eBay to buy or sell your musical wares?

Choose the appropriate response:

*“Do you think I'm crazy? I would never buy an instrument on eBay!”*

*“I don't trust it. I'll just get ripped off!”*

*“I didn't know you could even buy vinyl on eBay—cool!”*

*“It would take way too long to find what I'm looking for.”*

*“I'd do it but only for small ticket items.”*

*“I bet they don't sell the music I'm looking for. They only sell CDs.”*

*“eBay most likely takes a huge cut of my profits if I sell something.”*

*“Everything on eBay is used and I only buy new.”*

*“Anytime I bid on something, I always lose the auction. I've never won anything on eBay.”*

Wait a minute! What if I were to say that I address every one of those questions and then some in this book?

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

This book will help you:

- Feel more confident buying and selling music-related items on eBay.
- Win more auctions.
- Feel safe and secure in your eBay transactions.
- Truly understand what's available on eBay as it relates to music-related items.
- Find the items you want quickly and easily.

## Break It Down

---

This book is broken down into three parts: Introducing eBay, Buying the Sounds, and Selling the Music.

### Part 1: Introducing eBay

Yes, we had to start somewhere and what better place than at the beginning? In this part of the book, I introduce you to my panel of experts and explain the basics of eBay by taking you through the front page and user interface. We will look at eBay's extensive help features, online communities, and support groups. Learn how to register with both eBay and PayPal. In addition, I will introduce you to the different types of music-related items for sale on eBay and teach you how to find exactly what you are looking for.

### Part 2: Buying the Sounds

This is where I take you through the ins and outs of buying on eBay and show you how to avoid getting scammed by following tips from the pros. Then I'll show you how to prepare yourself before you bid. Take your pick from the different bidding strategies presented, and learn what's involved once you've won or lost an auction. You'll learn to use My eBay to monitor your auction activity, and last but not least, we'll visit the Half Zone on eBay.

### **Part 3: Selling the Music**

You haven't lived until you've sold something on eBay. This section deals primarily with creating an eBay listing for an item you want to sell. We will walk through the selling process from A to Z and provide all the expert advice you need to get your item sold. You'll learn about the fees involved, how to write effective titles and descriptions, and photo tips and tricks. We'll discuss the best payment methods, shipping options, and finally, what to do when a deal goes sour. After reading these chapters, confidence will be your middle name when it comes to selling on eBay.

Together, with my panel of distinguished experts, I will take you on a musical voyage, a magic carpet ride, through the cavernous halls of eBay.



# part 1

---

## Introducing eBay

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

Remember the days when yard sales were the best way to sell the junk you had in the garage? Other options included posting a for sale ad in the local newspaper. I even remember venturing out to the local flea markets and antique store with my mom in hopes of getting that awesome deal. Well, those things haven't changed much since then. What has changed though is the world around them. Welcome to the wonderful world of eBay, where anything and everything can be bought or sold. Since its inception, eBay has revolutionized the web and how we do business. Many sites have tried to copy, but none can truly match eBay's magnetism and popularity. eBay is a runaway hit with no slowdown in sight. In the following chapters, we will explore eBay and ensure you are comfortable with the lay of its land.

# chapter 1



## Music on eBay? Like What?

Can you really buy music and all things related to music on eBay? I am constantly surprised at the number of people I know who have absolutely no idea what is possible on eBay. eBay is a place where you can find, buy, or sell virtually anything. Did you know that you can buy a guitar on eBay—used or brand new? You can also bid on original music, old collector concert tickets, bootleg vinyl, and so much more.

So, in this first chapter, I've set out to try (and I do mean try) to identify most if not all the different types of music-related items that you can search for, sell, or buy on eBay. I think that you'll be surprised at the breadth of choices you have. Then, in Chapter 2, we'll jump right into the basics of how you can use eBay to browse, buy, or sell.

This book focuses on three different areas of music on eBay:

- audio music
  - CDs
  - cassettes
  - DVDs
- music collectibles
  - vinyl/records
  - figures
  - vintage concert materials
  - rock clothing

- musical instruments
  - guitars
  - drum sets
  - accessories

My goal was to keep the book under three million pages, and I think I did a good job meeting that target.

The following pages of listing examples from eBay will provide value in several different ways, including:

- Discovering new things you can sell
- Learning from the QuickTips for each
- Finding out about items you never knew you could buy on eBay
- Getting ideas about layout, style, and content from the different listings
- Discovering the perfect gift for friends and family
- Potential fodder for pick-up lines, ice breakers, conversation starters, and so on
- Satisfying your curiosity

Sit back, put your seatbelt on, and pop in your favorite CD. I am going to take you on a visual ride through the music department at eBay. Everything you are about to see is 100 percent real and selling on eBay.

## Concert/Musicals/Opera Tickets

Depending on who's playing at any given moment in time, you can always check in at eBay to see who has tickets for sale. eBay can be your own personal TicketMaster when it comes to buying tickets to any music event, including rock concerts, festivals, opera, and theater. From Madonna to Pavarotti to *Phantom of the Opera*, get yer tickets, get 'em while they're hot. Figure 1.1 shows a real-life example of Madonna tickets for sale on eBay.



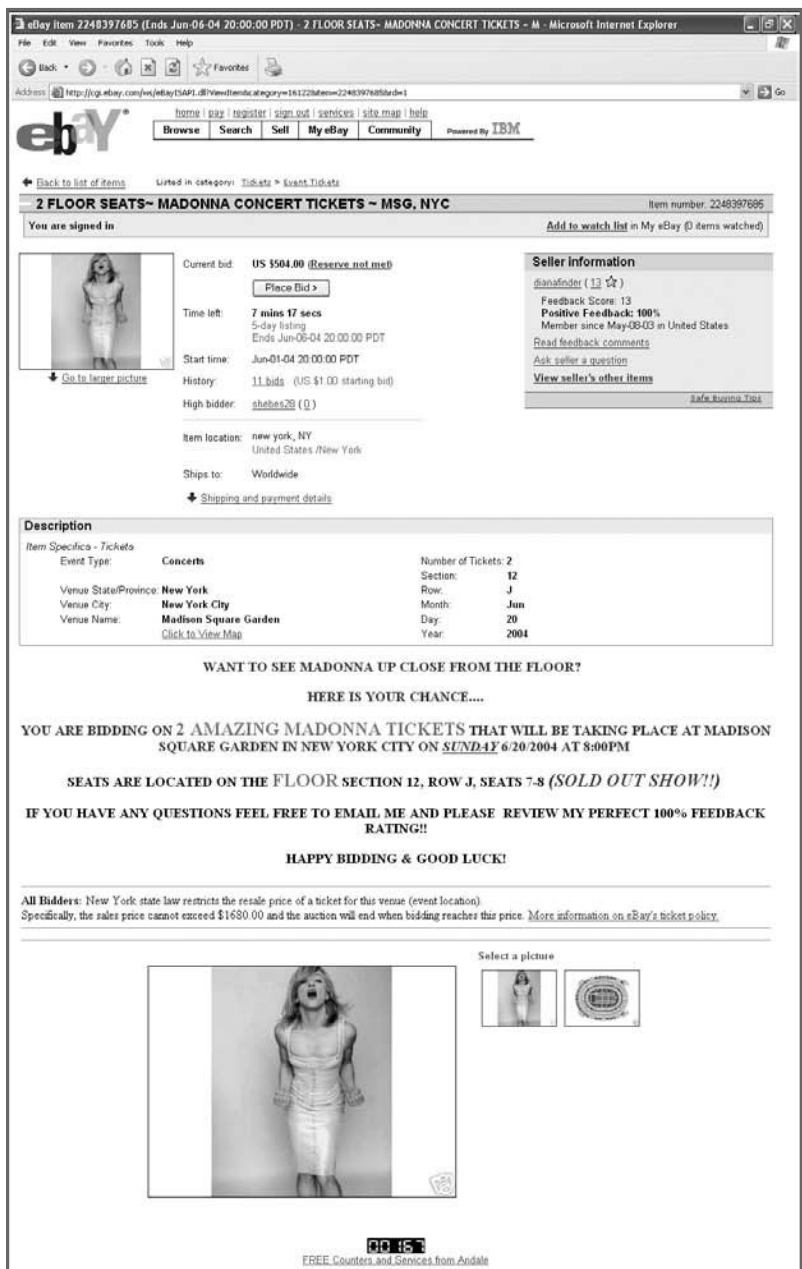


Figure 1.1  
Madonna concert tickets for sale on eBay.

**QuickTip**

---



Always check feedback on anyone selling tickets (more on this in later chapters). In most cases, the seller has done it before, and his feedback will always tell you if you are taking a risk or not. A fellow eBay user gave me a little trick to weeding out the scammers when buying tickets. Ask the seller to send you close-up pictures of the tickets, from different angles if possible. Although not foolproof, this should eliminate the scammers who have simply stolen a photo of a ticket from the web and really have nothing to sell.

Lastly, always check the dates on the ticket. Hopefully, the seller has provided you with a clear enough picture of the tickets so that you can see the dates listed. I know people who have bid and won tickets on eBay only to find out that the concert they were hoping to go to had already passed—5 years ago.

---

## **Concert Memorabilia (Ticket Stubs, Concert Shirts, Pins, and So On)**

---

This is where you are going to find that Beatles concert shirt you've been looking for. This is also the place where you'll finally track down the ZZ TOP keychain you bought during the *Eliminator* tour. You'll find everything from old Wham! concert tickets to pins, calendars, and sweats. Concert memorabilia is huge on eBay, and there is no shortage as to what you can find. Check out Figure 1.2 for the 1967 vintage Who concert tickets for sale on eBay, autographed by the band.

**QuickTip**

---



The easiest way to track down concert memorabilia for bands you love or loved, is to search for the band by name plus the word "concert" in the search string. For example: "Bob Dylan concert."

---

ebay item 3819132032 [Ends Jun-07-04 17:57:55 PDT] - The Who Vintage Signed Concert Ticket 11-2 - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/ebayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&category=29873&item=3819132032&rd=1&osPageName=WQVW

**ebay** [home](#) | [buy](#) | [register](#) | [sign out](#) | [services](#) | [site map](#) | [help](#)

[Browse](#) | [Search](#) | [Sell](#) | [My eBay](#) | [Community](#) | Powered By **IBM**

← [Back to list of items](#) | Listed in category: [Entertainment Memorabilia](#) > [Autographs](#) > [Music](#) > [Rock-n-Roll](#) > [Originals](#)

**The Who Vintage Signed Concert Ticket 11-29-1967 w/Moon** Item number: 3819132032

You are signed in [Add to watch list](#) in My eBay (0 items watched)

Current bid: **US \$431.44** (Reserve not met)

[Place Bid >](#)

Time left: **22 hours 1 mins**  
7-day listing  
Ends Jun-07-04 17:57:55 PDT  
[Add to Calendar](#)

Start time: May-31-04 17:57:55 PDT

History: 15 bids (US \$100.00 starting bid)

High bidder: [yankeesuck21](#) (76 ★)

Item location: Los Angeles, CA  
United States / Los Angeles

Ships to: Worldwide

↓ [Shipping and payment details](#)

**Seller information**

[auctionmode](#) (364 ★) [Power](#)

Feedback Score: 364  
**Positive Feedback: 98.7%**  
Member since May-08-99 in United States  
[Read feedback comments](#)

[Ask seller a question](#)  
[View seller's other items](#)

---

**PayPal Buyer Protection**  
Free coverage up to \$500  
[See eligibility](#)

**Description** (expand)

**AuctionMode**  
ebay's Premier Auctioneer of Collectibles & Memorabilia

Proudly Presents...

**THE WHO**  
IN CONCERT  
Plus  
**THE DECOYS**  
Wednesday, Nov. 29, 1967 - 8:00 p. m.  
UNION CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL  
100 MARTINE AVE. SCOTCH PLAINS, N. J.  
Donation \$2.50



**The Who Vintage Signed Concert Ticket**

*Extremely rare and desirable vintage signed concert ticket, 4" x 2.25", for a November 29, 1967 concert at Union Catholic High School in Scotch Plains, NY, signed on the reverse in blue ballpoint pen by all four original members: Keith Moon, Pete Townshend, Roger Daltrey and John Entwistle. Some minor vertical impressions across the left side of ticket, lightly intersecting Daltrey and Entwistle's signatures on the reverse, otherwise in fine condition. A choice specimen of early Who signatures.*

**Payment Options:** Check, Money Order, and all major credit cards via Paypal are happily accepted forms of payment.



**Shipping:** Shipping is \$4.50 via USPS Priority Mail with Delivery Confirmation. **Insurance is required for all purchases of \$200.00 or more.** International bidders will pay approximately \$10-\$20 for Global Priority Mail pending upon location (Global Express is also available). Please [email us](#) in advance for a quote.

[Any Questions?](#) Please feel free to email us at [AuctionMode@aol.com](mailto:AuctionMode@aol.com)

*Best of luck with your bids!*

**Figure 1.2**  
The Who vintage signed concert ticket, 11-29-1967.

## Music Collectibles

---

Here are some examples of what you can find in this category on eBay: Elvis Presley original Graceland fence piece, a lock of Mick Jagger's hair, one of Pete Townsend's guitar picks, rare '70s iron-ons, cardboard life-size figures of Robert Plant. Need I say more? This is a big industry on eBay, and you'll be hard pressed to not find what you are looking for. Figure 1.3 shows a listing for an Elvis Presley original Graceland fence piece for sale.

### QuickTip

---



If it seems too crazy and weird to be true, it probably is. Always check on the condition of any item you choose to bid on in this category. In most cases, the items will be quite old and used and may not be worth owning. Really take the time to ask the seller intelligent questions so that you end up with a good idea of what you'll be getting before it's too late.

---

## Music CDs

---

I used to go to CD stores all the time when I was younger. Not anymore. I always get my music CDs off eBay now. Why wouldn't I? Prices are great, and I can always find what I want. eBay is awesome for finding those rare, hard-to-find CDs, too. Figure 1.4 displays a listing for a mega-rare, withdrawn 1996 promo-only picture CD of David Bowie's *BBC Sessions*. Last I checked, it was going for \$200.

### QuickTip

---



Use eBay to find those hard-to-find CDs. Out of prints, imports, and concert CDs are great buys on eBay. Look and look often, and most of all, be patient. I can't tell you how many times I've searched for an item, given up, only to have it turn up less than a week later. There are over 45 million registered users on eBay. Relax. Take a couple of minutes to get yourself a drink. There, I bet someone has already posted what you're looking for.

---



Figure 1.3

Elvis Presley original Graceland fence piece.

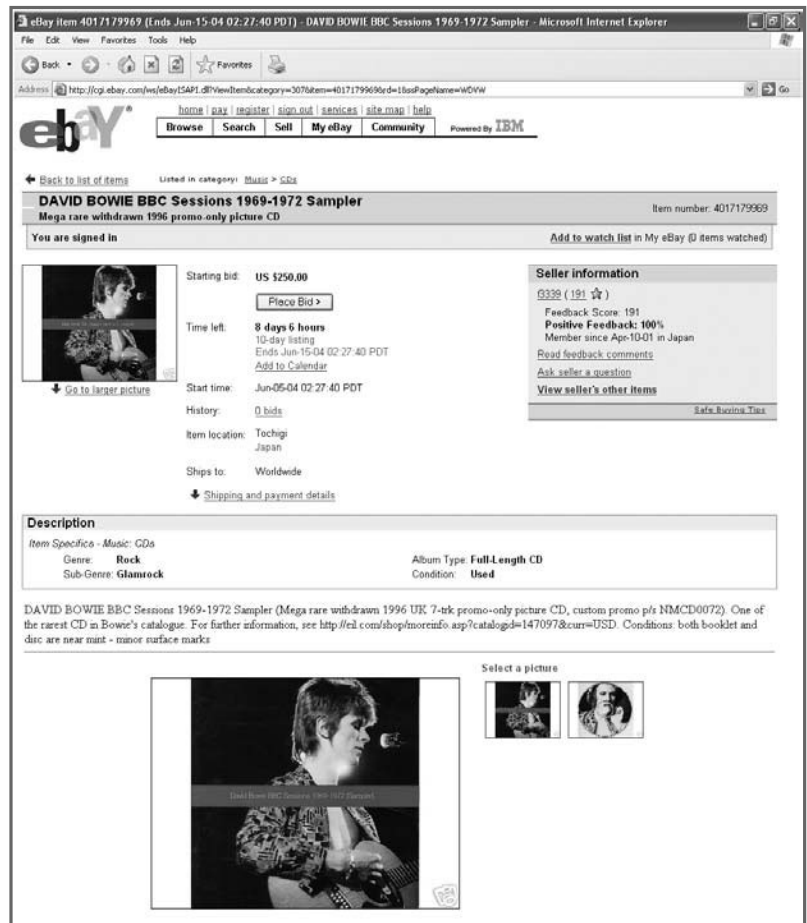


Figure 1.4

David Bowie's *BBC Sessions 1969-1972*.

## Music 8-Tracks

Remember those? I remember listening to them in the back of my parent's station wagon as we drove to my grandma's place back in the eighties. My parents had all the best stuff on 8-track: Paul Anka's *Greatest Hits*, Tom Jones, and ABBA. Those were the days. See Figure 1.5 for an eBay listing of the Eagles *Greatest Hits 1971-1975* on 8-track.



**Figure 1.5**  
The Eagles *Greatest Hits 1971–1975* on 8-track.

**Quick Tip**



If you're a Track Head, and you have 8-tracks littered all over your room, I strongly urge you to do a search on eBay for 8-track carrying cases, shelves, or boxes. Storage is the name of the game around here. There are some really funky retro cases and stands out there ready to be bid on.

## Music Cassettes

---

I hate to say it again, but, remember those? It seems like only yesterday that I was buying tapes because they were so much better than vinyl. What did I know? I was just a dumb kid. Like CDs and 8-tracks, if you're a collector, you will find whatever you need on eBay. Figure 1.6 is a great example of the types of cassettes you can buy on eBay.

### QuickTip

---



Cassettes, like VHS and BETA video tapes, have a short shelf-life. After multiple plays, the sound gets worse and worse. If it isn't new, then it may not be worth buying on eBay. Invest in a CD player. They're affordable and sound much better anyway.

---

## Albums/Vinyl

---

When I think vinyl, the *Sticky Fingers* album by the Rolling Stones always comes to mind. If you can find a copy on eBay where the zipper is still intact and functional, then you've got yourself a goldmine. If you have no idea what I'm talking about, just ignore me and move on. eBay's vinyl collectors and sellers are everywhere, and you are sure to find great deals, rare finds, and awesome sounds if you know how and where to look. Figure 1.7 shows a mint copy of the Rolling Stones' *Sticky Fingers* on vinyl with the zipper intact.

### QuickTip

---



If you're a seller, and you pride yourself on your collection of vinyl, make sure you know what each record is worth. There are several price guides available on the market, like the *Official Price Guide to Records* and the *Goldmine Guides*. A price guide is an essential tool when selling records on eBay, especially if your goal is to not get ripped off or leave wads of money on the table.

---





**Figure 1.6**

Elton John *To Be Continued...* cassette set—4 Tapes 1965–90.

ebay item 401622113 (ends Jun 07 04 11 21 09 PDT) The ROLLING STONES-Sticky Fingers - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: http://ca.ebay.com/.../item.html?categoryId=337&item=401622113&ref=

home | my | register | sign out | services | site map | help

Browse Search Sell My eBay Community Powered by IBM

Back to list of items Listed in category: Music > CDs

**The ROLLING STONES-Sticky Fingers** Item number: 401622113

You are signed in Add to watch list in My eBay (0 items watched)

 Starting bid: **US \$4.00**  Time left: **15 hours 18 mins** 5-day listing Ends Jun 07 04 11 21 09 PDT Add to Calendar

Start time: Jun 02 04 11 21 09 PDT History: [View](#) Item location: Modesto, CA United States / Sacramento Ships to: Worldwide [Shippers and payment details](#)

**Seller information**  
amostash (115)  **Feedback Score: 115**  
**Positive Feedback: 99.1%**  
Member since Nov 20 03 in United States  
[Read feedback comments](#)  
[Ask seller a question](#)  
[View seller's other items](#)

**PayPal Buyer Protection**  
Free coverage up to \$500. See details.

**Description**

Item Specifics - Music: CDs  
Genre: **Rock** Album Type: **Full Length CD**  
Sub-Genre: **Early Rock 'n Roll** Condition: **Used**

The ROLLING STONES-Sticky Fingers Good condition. (1)Brown Sugar (2)Sway (3)Wild Horses (4)Can't You Hear Me Knocking (5)You Gotta Move (6)Black (7) Got the Blues (8)Sister Mary Jane (9)Dead Flowers (10)Moonlight Mile

On Jun-04-04 at 21:46:41 PDT, seller added the following information:  
  
Use the REAL, reliable tools a million sellers do - Andale!

On Jun-04-04 at 21:46:49 PDT, seller added the following information:  
  
Use the REAL, reliable tools a million sellers do - Andale!



**Shipping and payment details**

Shipping and handling: Standard shipping service: US \$2.95 (minus United States)  
Shipping insurance: Not offered  
Will ship worldwide:

**Seller's payment instructions & return policy:**  
product satisfaction guaranteed 2.95 shipping in u.s

**Payment methods accepted**  
This seller, amostash, prefers PayPal  
-   
-   
-   
[Learn about payment methods](#)

**Ready to bid?** [Info](#)

The ROLLING STONES-Sticky Fingers  
Starting bid: US \$4.00  
Your maximum bid: US \$  (Enter US \$4.00 or more)  
 You will confirm in the next step.

eBay automatically bids on your behalf up to your maximum bid  
[Learn about bidding](#)

**What else can you do?**  
[Back to list of items](#) | [Ask seller a question](#) | [Email this item to a friend](#) | [Enter friendly page](#) | [Top of page](#)

Seller assumes all responsibility for listing this item.

[Announcements](#) | [Register](#) | [Security Center](#) | [Policies](#) | [Feedback Forum](#) | [About eBay](#)

Copyright © 1995-2004 eBay Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
Integrated trademarks and brands are the property of their respective owners.  
Use of the Real ID number is subject to the eBay ID, Acceptable Use and Privacy Policy.



Figure 1.7

Rolling Stones' *Sticky Fingers* on vinyl, with the zipper intact.

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

## DVD/VHS Videos/Concerts

Initially, I was never a big fan of music concert videos or DVDs. Nothing beats actually being there. Then one day recently, a friend of mine loaned me the Nine Inch Nails, *And All That Could Have Been Live* 2-DVD set. I watched about 15 minutes and was instantly hooked. It's all the sound and fury of a real rock concert, minus the crushed toes, cigarette burns, and mud fights. There are volumes of concert DVDs and VHSs selling each day on eBay. Give it a try if you haven't already. It's worth it. Figure 1.8 is a great example of a DVD concert for sale on eBay by the now defunct rock band INXS.

### QuickTip



For DVDs, always ask the seller if there are any scratches on the disc. Sometimes the listing will state that the DVD has only been viewed once and that it's in "like-new" condition. This does not answer the question. Be blunt and simply ask the seller via e-mail. Call it peace of mind.

Last but not least, always ask if the DVD/VHS being sold is a real version rather than a burned copy or a dub. A colleague of mine bid and won a *Devo Live in Concert* DVD. When it finally arrived in the mail, not only was it a burned copy of the original, but the case was missing. Remember to always ask the questions!

## Musicals on TV and Film

Examples that immediately come to mind are *The Sound of Music*, *Grease*, *Moulin Rouge*, and *American Idol*. All of these shows, among many others, are available on DVD and VHS on eBay. Figure 1.9 displays a listing for the *American Idol* series on DVD.

### QuickTip



See QuickTip for DVD/VHS videos/concerts.

The screenshot shows an eBay listing for "INXS - LIVE BABY LIVE - NEW DVD". The browser window title is "eBay Item 6300118666 [Ends Jun 07 04 14:08:40 PDT] INXS - LIVE BABY LIVE - NEW DVD - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL: "http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/ebaySAP1.dll?ViewItem&category=617&item=6300118666&rd=1".

The listing includes the following details:

- Item:** INXS - LIVE BABY LIVE - NEW DVD (Item number: 6300118666)
- Starting bid:** US \$17.99
- Time left:** 18 hours 4 mins (3-day listing, Ends Jun-07-04 14:08:40 PDT)
- Start time:** Jun-04-04 14:08:40 PDT
- Buy It Now Price:** US \$18.99
- Item location:** California, United States / Orange County
- Ships to:** United States, Australasia, Europe, Canada
- Seller information:** glacierbayhd (144937) with a Positive Feedback Score of 99.0%.
- Description:** INXS - Live Baby Live (DVD). Leading Role: INXS. Region Code: Region 1: US, CA. Genre: Concerts & Music. Release Date: Oct 07, 2003. UPC: 060768835092. Display Format: Full Screen. Condition: New.
- Shipping and payment details:** A "winner's checkout" section with instructions for completing the order, including a note that winners should use the checkout button to complete their order.

Figure 1.8

INXS *Live Baby Live* on DVD.

## Music Figures/Toys (KISS Figures, Alice Cooper Figures, Metallica Figures, and So On)

Some would say that I am too old to be playing with toys. These, my friends, are not toys. These are music figures, and I am an avid collector.

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !



**Figure 1.9**

TV series *American Idol* on DVD.

McFarlane toys is well known in this industry and is well represented on eBay. Look for figures of Ozzy and Joplin, as well as the boys from KISS. The detail on some of these figures is incredible, almost life-like, as shown in Figure 1.10.

**QuickTip**



If you're a collector, make sure to buy your figures new, still sealed in their original boxes. They are worth a lot more if they have not been opened. Look for the acronym MIB (Mint in Box) when searching for music figures on eBay.



Figure 1.10

The Doors Jim Morrison McFarlane Figure.

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

## Musical Instruments (Trumpets, Guitars, Pianos, Xylophones, and So On)

Are you one of those people who's always wished you could play the guitar? How about the harmonica or the lute? You'll be amazed at the sheer number of instruments available in this global community of buyers and sellers. An example of one of those instruments is shown in Figure 1.11.

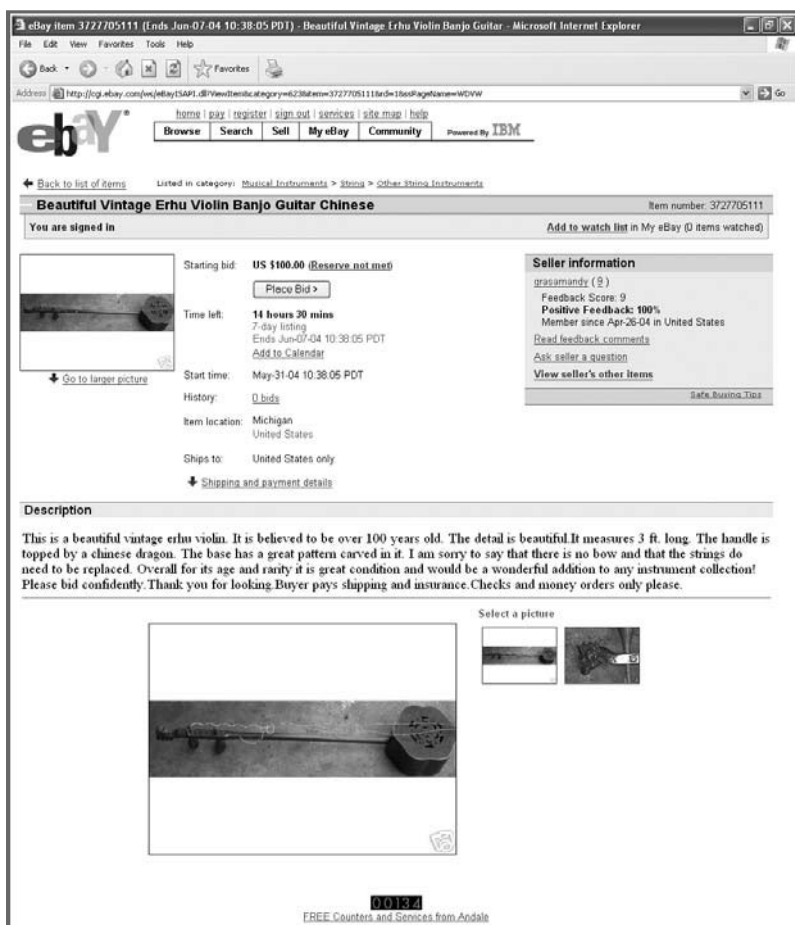


Figure 1.11  
Beautiful vintage Erhu violin.

**QuickTip**

Ask an expert. Buying a musical instrument isn't like buying a DVD. If you don't know what you're doing, talk to someone who does. Experts know what to look for, what questions to ask, and what pitfalls to avoid. I can't be any clearer than that.

**Music/Audio Accessories (Headphones, Stands, Straps, Humidifiers, Tools, and So On)**

Most people end up paying full dollar for these items once they purchase a musical instrument. How many times have you seen it? You're in a store, and someone buys a guitar and then leaves with a case, stand, strap, extra set of strings, picks, and some sheet music. All of those things are available on eBay—cheaper and with more variety to choose from. Take a look at an example of a listing from this category, shown in Figure 1.12.

**QuickTip**

Keep in mind that items like a guitar strap and strings may be cheaper on eBay, but when you factor in shipping costs, things get a little costlier. Always remember that shipping costs may take the worth out of worthwhile and warrant a quick jaunt down to the local music store instead.

**Audio Electronics (DJ Equipment, Stereos, MP3 Players, Amps, Speakers, and So On)**

I purchased an Apple iPod on eBay several months ago. Got it for a steal! Friends of mine buy and sell amplifiers, speakers, and DVD players on eBay all the time. If it's electronic and it plays music, it can be bought or sold on eBay, and depending on your luck and some savvy, you may get yourself a great deal. Figure 1.13 shows some DJ equipment for sale on eBay.



Music on eBay? Like What?

**ebay item 3727661259 (Ends Jun-07 04 06:19:51 PDT) - Ultimate GS100 Black GUITAR Stand \*Brand N - Microsoft Internet Explorer**

Address: <http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/ebayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&category=22671&item=3727661259&rd=1&osPageName=WDVW>

**Ultimate GS100 Black GUITAR Stand \*Brand New\*** Item number: 3727661259

You are signed in [Add to watch list](#) in My eBay (0 items watched)

**Starting bid:** US \$19.99 [Place Bid >](#)

**Time left:** 10 hours 11 mins  
7-day listing  
Ends Jun-07-04 06:19:51 PDT  
[Add to Calendar](#)

**Start time:** May-31-04 06:19:51 PDT

**History:** 0 bids

**Item location:** music123.com  
United States

**Ships to:** Worldwide  
[Shipping and payment details](#)

**Seller information**  
music123.com (11971)   
Feedback Score: 11971  
Positive Feedback: 98.6%  
Member since Mar-23-99 in United States  
[Read feedback comments](#)  
[Ask seller a question](#)  
[View seller's other items](#)  
**Visit this seller's eBay Store!**  
[Music123.com](#)

**PayPal Buyer Protection**  
Free coverage up to \$500.  
[See eligibility](#)

**Description**

**Music123**  
Unbelievable Selection, Unbeatable Prices  
SINCE 1928

**Bid With Confidence!!**  
Thousands of Satisfied eBay Winners!!  
45 Day Satisfaction Guarantee!! Full Manufacturer Warranty !!

*"Strong, Stable, Dependable"*

**ULTIMATE**

**Ultimate GS100 Black**  
Protect your guitar from the rest of your band - or the floor. Sturdy guitar stand with headstock cradle. Genesis-series guitar stands with built-in body cradle - no more losing cradle pieces, no more unbalanced stands. Holds guitar securely by head stock with a safety strap for extra protection. Height adjustment accommodates most guitars. Soft velvet pads protect guitar's finish. Folds to just 21" x 12".

**Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price: \$40.00**  
Item you are bidding on in this auction is Black.

**Brand New! Warranty!**

**Product Overview & Specifications**

**GENESIS 100 guitar stand**

**Features**

- All one piece! Nothing to assemble, no parts to lose.
- Genesis 100 is height adjustable to fit every shaped guitar, from the smallest acoustic to the largest bass! It just takes an easy flip of the lock lever. It is also great for odd shaped instruments as well.
- Web-cushioned with inset padding, no chemical emissions to mar your instruments lacquer finish.
- No protruding pieces to hang up your guitar strap or cable.
- Tripod base is extremely stable, even on uneven surfaces.
- Both the Genesis 100 & 200 fold to just 22" x 3 1/2" making it the most compact tube style guitar stand on the market!

Figure 1.12

GS100 black guitar stand.

## QuickTip



Now you're spending some real money. Audio electronics can be really expensive so you want to make sure that you pull all the stops when it comes to protecting yourself as a buyer. One rule of thumb (at least at this point in the book)—when buying audio electronics, avoid the word “refurbished.” In a nutshell, refurbished means that the audio device may have been broken at one point and then repaired. Don't take the chance that it may break again. Buy new when possible—especially when it comes to audio electronics.

The screenshot shows an eBay listing for a "Numark DJ Turntable with records". The listing is viewed in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The page includes the eBay logo, navigation links (home, play, register, sign out, services, site map, help), and a search bar. The listing details are as follows:

- Item number:** 3727631821
- Starting bid:** US \$300.00
- Time left:** 3 hours 40 mins (7-day listing, ends Jun-06-04 23:50:19 PDT)
- Start time:** May-30-04 23:50:19 PDT
- History:** 0 bids
- Buy It Now Price:** US \$350.00
- Item location:** Fairfield, ME (United States / Boston)
- Ships to:** United States only
- Shipping and payment details:** (collapsed)
- Description:** (collapsed)
- Seller information:** m\_debi (317) with a Feedback Score of 317 and a Positive Feedback of 99.7%. Member since Jan-23-02 in United States.
- Payment:** PayPal Buyer Protection (Free coverage up to \$500)

The description text is partially visible: "These are barely used,(10-20 hours of use) Numark turntables with 12 records and extra Microphone, there are a great starter kit or for that dj who needs to upgrade from the basics! this comes with both tables the mixer, the head phones, 12 records and a microphone! records are everything from rap to techno, with outkast, NWA, Raveon on Dope, Jay-z, Notorious B.I.G, crag David, Ruff Ryders and many more. This set retails for \$550, microphone for \$75, records for \$15-20 a piece ... A \$775 value for only \$350"

**Figure 1.13**

Numark DJ Turntable with records.

## Autographs from Music Celebrities

Is the Boss one of your favorites? Do you wish you had an autographed guitar that he once owned? How about an autographed poster of Vanilla Ice (true story)? You name it, and it's probably been autographed by a music star you know and love. Figure 1.14 shows a listing on eBay for an electric guitar autographed by Metallica, starting at \$399.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

The screenshot shows an eBay listing for a "METALLICA Group Signed Electric Guitar wCOA". The listing includes a starting bid of US \$399.99, a time left of 1 day 21 hours, and a current price of US \$599.11. The seller is "samplthbest2u" with a feedback score of 369 and a positive feedback percentage of 99.8%. The item description features a photo of the band Metallica and a photo of the guitar. The text in the description reads: "THIS IS A GREAT LOOKING SIGNED METALLIC RED DRIVE BRAND NEW STRAT STYLE ELECTRIC GUITAR, HAND SIGNED BY THEN ENTIRE BAND INCLUDING EX BASS PLAYER JASON NEWSTED, JAMES HETFIELD, LARS ULRICH, & KIRK HAMMETT. ALL HAVE SIGNED THE PICK GUARD WITH A SHARPIE PEN." Below this, it states: "BUYER ADDS \$34.95 INSURED USA S&H. NON-USA BIDDERS WELCOME BUT RATES WILL VARY. JETPLANE COMPANY COA PROVIDED. WE ONLY SELL WHAT WE KNOW TO BE AUTHENTIC!!! THANKS FOR LOOKING. HOPE YOU WIN!!" and "NON-USA BIDDERS PLEASE EMAIL TO INQUIRE ON ADDITIONAL SHIPPING RATES IF INTERESTED."

Figure 1.14

Electric guitar autographed by Metallica.

## QuickTip



Make sure it's real. Do you know how easy it is to pull out a marker, scribble on a photo of John Lennon, and say that it's really his signature? Always look for 100% money-back satisfaction guarantees and make sure it comes with a Certificate of Authenticity.

## Music Software

Nowadays, you don't have to know anything about music to actually be considered a musician. With all the computer software out there on the market, you can easily put together your own songs, play any instrument in the world, and distribute your creations all over the web. Take a look at the different types of music software available on eBay, and happy hunting Mozart. (Figure 1.15 displays a piece of music software listed for sale on eBay.)

The screenshot shows an eBay listing for 'APPLE SOUNDTRACK SOFTWARE \*BRAND NEW IN BOX-NEVER USED\*'. The listing includes a starting bid of US \$99.00, a time left of 1 day 15 hours, and a seller information section. The description states: 'Soundtrack makes it incredibly easy to produce music for videos, DVDs, websites, presentations, or your own recording projects. It includes thousands of professionally recorded, royalty free instrument loops and sound effects, which you can combine to build original music compositions in record time. The smart user interface in Soundtrack makes it easy for anyone to create sophisticated music. With its advanced search engine, you can instantly find sounds based on instrument, genre, or mood. And by letting you develop your musical scores in real time, Soundtrack gives you the freedom to experiment until you find the perfect mix.'

Figure 1.15

Apple Soundtrack software.

- audio editors
- audio players
- audio recording
- audio restoration
- CD burners
- CD players
- collecting and cataloging
- computer-aided music
- drums and percussion
- ear training
- effects
- format converters
- guitar software
- jukebox and multi-format
- karaoke
- label printing
- metronomes
- MIDI players and utilities
- MIDI sequencers
- mod trackers and players
- MP3 players
- multitrack recording
- music calculators
- music tuition
- notation
- oscilloscopes
- patch editors and librarians

- plug-ins
- radio production
- re-mixing and DJ
- software samplers
- software synthesizers
- sound cards–device drivers
- sound fonts
- spectrum analyzers
- streaming audio–media
- tuners
- video and multimedia
- wavetable emulators

---

### QuickTip



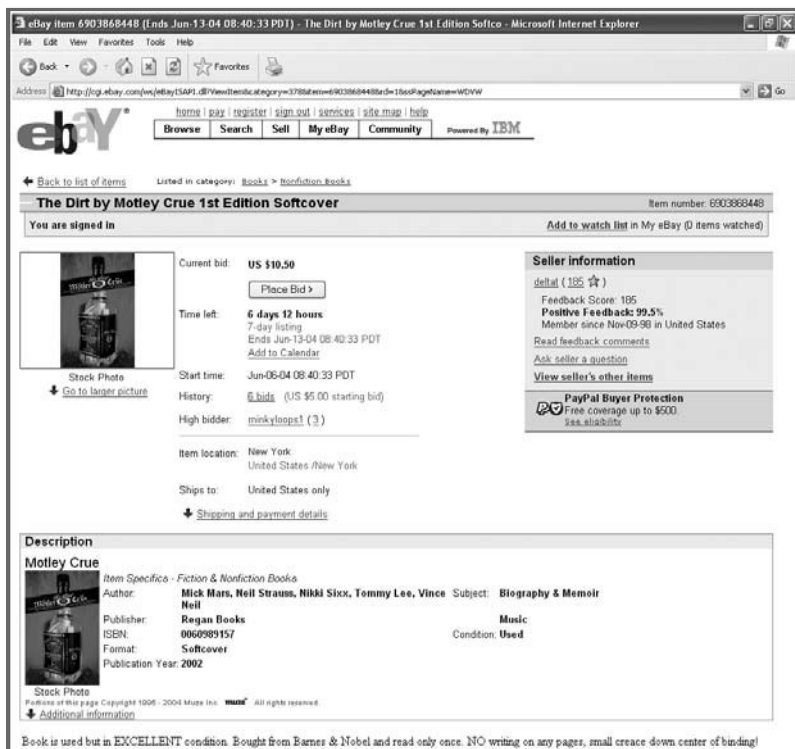
Buy shrink-wrapped software when possible. If you must buy opened software, ensure the software comes with a license. It's also important to ask the seller if the software has ever been registered. If it has, you may have trouble getting the proper support and updates from that software vendor. Get everything in writing prior to bidding so that there are no surprises when the software gets to your door.

---

## Music-Related Books/Magazines

---

There are so many different music-related books and magazines available on eBay that to cover them all in this one book would be nearly impossible. A friend of mine recently bid and won the following book on eBay: *The Dirt: Confessions of the World's Most Notorious Rock Band: Motley Crue* (see Figure 1.16). What a read, he tells me. You'll find everything from back issues of *Rolling Stone* magazine to biographies of Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers. Let eBay be your music book store online.



**Figure 1.16**  
*The Dirt: Confessions of the World's Most Notorious Rock Band: Motley Crue.*

**QuickTip**



When determining pricing on the books you sell, it always pays to take a look around eBay at similar books currently selling. Learn from those around you; you may be surprised at how much your book *Liberace: An American Boy* is worth online.

**Posters/Photos**

My room used to be plastered with rock and rap posters when I was a teenager in the '80s. Now I wish I had stopped my mom from tearing them off my wall and trashing them when I left for school. I had everything from Public Enemy posters to Bruce Springsteen photos gracing my walls, and my hope is to repurchase all of them for my basement one day—if my wife will allow it. I did a quick search on eBay and sure enough, there they

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

were—all of them, awesome prices and in great condition. You can even find many of them signed by the artist. See Figure 1.17 for a great example of an eBay listing for a rock poster.



**Figure 1.17**

Sex Pistols *Great Rock 'N' Roll Swindle* film poster

## QuickTip



Always ask how the poster or photos will be shipped and packaged before bidding. Try and imagine my rage when I finally received a poster I had won on eBay, and it was folded in its packaging rather than rolled. Creases don't make for a nice poster. Be specific. Ask how the photos or posters will be packaged and shipped. It's worth paying a little extra to ensure it gets to you minus bumps, creases, or bruises.

## Sheet Music

When I started learning to play the guitar, I couldn't believe the amount of sheet music available on eBay. Some of my favorite bands had, in some cases, their entire album collections put to sheet music, ready for me to pick up and strum to. You name the instrument, you better believe the sheet music is available. You will also find original sheet music from new and upcoming artists, too. Figure 1.18 gives you an example of sheet music for sale on eBay.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



## Music on eBay? Like What?

The screenshot shows an eBay listing for "Beatles Yellow Submarine Sheet Music 1966". The listing is viewed in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The page includes the eBay logo, navigation links, and a breadcrumb trail: "Home | eBay | Musical Instruments | Sheet Music, Song Books | Sheet Music | Popular by Decade | 1960s".

**Item Details:**  
 Item number: 3728459033  
 Starting bid: US \$9.95  
 Time left: 3 days 20 hours  
 Start time: Jun 03 04 16 41:17 PDT  
 History: 0 bids  
 Item location: Middle Village, NY, United States  
 Ships to: United States only

**Seller Information:**  
 Username: jmh1762 (730 stars)  
 Feedback Score: 738  
 Positive Feedback: 99.9%  
 Member since: Sep-26-90 in United States  
 Links: Ask seller a question, View seller's other items, PayPal Buyer Protection (Free coverage up to \$500)

**Description:**  
 Here we have a great old Yellow submarine sheet music! It is in used condition as you can see! There is some markings on the inside as shown. It has minor staining and is dirty. George's eyes look a little weird but it is from my estate. The original price was 75 cents! I think this was the first or one of the first Yellow submarine song sheets. Please look at my scans of the piece of history! It measures 11 x 8 1/2 inches. If the shipping is not non-need it is because I need your zip code. I pack my items well (read my feedbacks) but can not be responsible after they leave me. Insurance is optional. Never a handling fee! Thank you for looking! I am unable to answer emails Saturday to Monday. My shipping day is Monday Morning. Keep safe and have a great day!

**Shipping and payment details:**  
 Shipping and handling: Check item description and payment instructions or contact seller for details.  
 Will ship to: United States only.  
 Seller's payment instructions & return policy: I accept most payments including Paypal, checks & Money orders. If you have any questions please ask!

**Payment methods accepted:**  
 • PayPal (with credit cards)  
 • Personal check  
 • Money order/Cashiers check  
 • Other online payment services  
 • See item description for payment methods accepted  
 Learn about payment methods

**Ready to bid?**  
 Beatles Yellow Submarine Sheet Music 1966  
 Starting bid: US \$9.95  
 Your maximum bid: US \$ [input field] (Enter US \$9.95 or more)  
 [Place Bid] You will confirm in the next step.  
 eBay automatically bids on your behalf up to your maximum bid.  
 Learn about bidding

**What else can you do?**  
 Back to list of items | Ask seller a question | Email this item to a friend | Printer-friendly page | Top of page

Item description: [Learn about shipping methods](#)

Footer: [Announcements](#) | [Register](#) | [Security Center](#) | [Policies](#) | [Feedback Forum](#) | [About eBay](#)  
 Copyright © 1995-2004 eBay Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
 Unpaid item insurance and brands are the property of their respective owners.  
 Use of the eBay site constitutes acceptance of the eBay Site User Agreement and Privacy Policy.

Figure 1.18

Beatles original *Yellow Submarine* sheet music.

**QuickTip**

---



Two tips here. When selling sheet music, show more than just the cover. Budding musicians want to get an idea of the complexity of the music and cannot get a good enough idea from simply seeing the cover of the book. Secondly, prices do vary for sheet music, and it is sometimes difficult to understand why. Some sheet music is rare, extremely old, signed, or contains original cover artwork, which will sometimes bring the price up quite high. Do your research first before listing or buying sheet music on eBay. Who knows—you may get yourself a gem!

---

**Instructional Music Videos/CD/DVDs**

---

Want to learn to play the trumpet in seven days? How about chords in 24 hours? Pick your instrument, determine your timeline, and depending on your preference, choose the best medium and make your selection on eBay. You'll find these instructional tools in most popular formats, like VHS, DVD, and computer based. See Figure 1.19 for *Flea's Adventures in Spontaneous Jamming and Techniques*, listed on eBay.

**QuickTip**

---



Check the reviews of the product being sold. Do a search on Google for the title you're looking at to see other people's opinions on that item. Reviews of these types of learning tools can sometimes be quite subjective, but if enough people spew bile regarding a certain item, steer clear and move on.

---

Now that you have a better understanding of what's available on eBay, let's dig right into the basics and begin flattening the eBay learning curve.



Figure 1.19

Flea's instructional bass guitar DVD.

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 2



## Flattening the Learning Curve

---

If your head is still reeling from Chapter 1's musical assault on your senses, then sit back and relax because in this chapter, we are going to cool our jets and go head first into the basics.

### Introducing the eBay Crew

---

Readers, I would like to introduce you to some friends of mine. These three people are the eBay experts who helped me write this book and lent their expertise over the past several months. These are real people. Their names have not been changed. This is not based on a true story. These *are* real stories. Three people who share two things in common: their love for music and their need for eBay.

Introducing Jordy Nicholas—the stereotypical (forgive the pun) music CD junkie. Calling him a music junkie is almost too tame a description. One glimpse of his CD music collection and it will all become quite clear. He owes his life to eBay. His life mission is to find and collect all of the world's best music on CD. Let Jordy be your guide—your guide to searching and finding those musical gems on eBay.

Introducing Mark Swift—the quintessential collector. A musical packrat, if you will. He's into rock 'n' roll collectibles. From busts of Elvis to Beatles lunchboxes, this guy collects it all. To him though, collecting is only half the fun. As a side business, he sells these collectibles on eBay. Let's follow the **TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

leader as we watch him prep and sell his wares online with the grace and skill of an expert eBayian.

Introducing “Phat” Matt Hatelly—a bass player for the rock band Solace. This guy will rock you with his special blend of face-melting rock ‘n’ roll. Matt needs a new bass guitar, but he’s particular. He doesn’t want just any guitar; he wants the guitar of his dreams. Solace has on more than one occasion purchased their crazy musical instruments off eBay. From their drum set to their custom picks to the striped mike stand, these guys are no strangers to online shopping on eBay. Watch Matt as he patrols the annals of eBay, hunting and eventually finding his dream guitar.

Now that we’ve all been formally introduced, let’s allow Jordy the Swift and Phat Matt to take a load off and pass me the mic for a while. Together, we will dive right into the basics and attempt to flatten the eBay learning curve so that we can get to buying and selling music-related items on this online music mega-store called eBay.

## What Is eBay?

Besides being my home away from home, eBay is, quite simply, the world’s online market place. A place where you can find, buy, or sell virtually anything—old, used, or brand-spanking new, still wrapped in cellophane. I’m sure you read the press about the guy who tried to sell his kidney. You may have also read the story about the person selling locks of hair from famous celebrities. This web auction site can be a real crazy place. Imagine not having to go the local flea markets anymore. Forget about the swap meets, bazaars, and garage sales. This is the place where you can do it all—all from the comfort of your own home, smoking your favorite pipe, nude, in the dark, listening to Janis Joplin’s greatest hits on vinyl.

This is an online community. You will notice almost immediately just how great the people on eBay really are. They are people like you and me. They have something to sell or buy, and they want to perform these transactions in a friendly, safe, and secure environment. That’s eBay—a friendly, safe, and secure community where dreams do sometimes come true. Alright, alright, I know that may seem a little overdramatic, but when I managed to find and buy the first print Beatles *Revolver* on vinyl, my life changed forever.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Look around that apartment of yours. There are hidden goldmines everywhere. You just don't know it yet. Go into the garage and empty out those boxes of 8-tracks. Visit your parents and raid their vinyl collection. Peel that Duran Duran poster off your wall and dig up your old concert t-shirts. Trust me. If you feel you have nothing to sell, you aren't looking hard enough. Remember that old adage, one man's trash is another man's treasure? Well, it couldn't be more true than with eBay.

When you first heard of eBay, you probably thought—just like me—that eBay was out to sell you something. “What's the catch?” I would sometimes think. “Do I have to pay to sign up?” “Do I sign over my life to search for something?” “How much does eBay take off the top when I buy things?” “Does eBay take the lion's share when I sell?” The answers to those questions are as follows: There is none, no, it's free, nothing, and they do take a little. Confused? Don't be. The next several chapters will definitely bring the point home.

All you need to get started is a computer with an Internet connection. That's it. Type **www.eBay.com**, and you are off to the races, visiting the home of the going, going, gone; the world-wide flea market; and one of the web's biggest stars.

## Exploring the Front Page

Have you typed that website address into your browser yet? Go ahead. We have some music to find, and we won't get anywhere until you type that darn thing in. Looking for guidance? Follow these steps to get started, and I will take you on the royal tour of the eBay front page.

1. Launch your preferred Internet browser application.
2. Type **www.eBay.com** in the web address box.
3. Either press Enter on your keyboard or click on Go.

It's as easy as that. Welcome to eBay's front page!

At first glance, this website may seem a little daunting. There seems to be a lot going on. In reality, what's really going on is eBay's marketing machine working on overdrive. There are really only five areas of this homepage that deserve explanation at this point. Refer to Figure 2.1.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

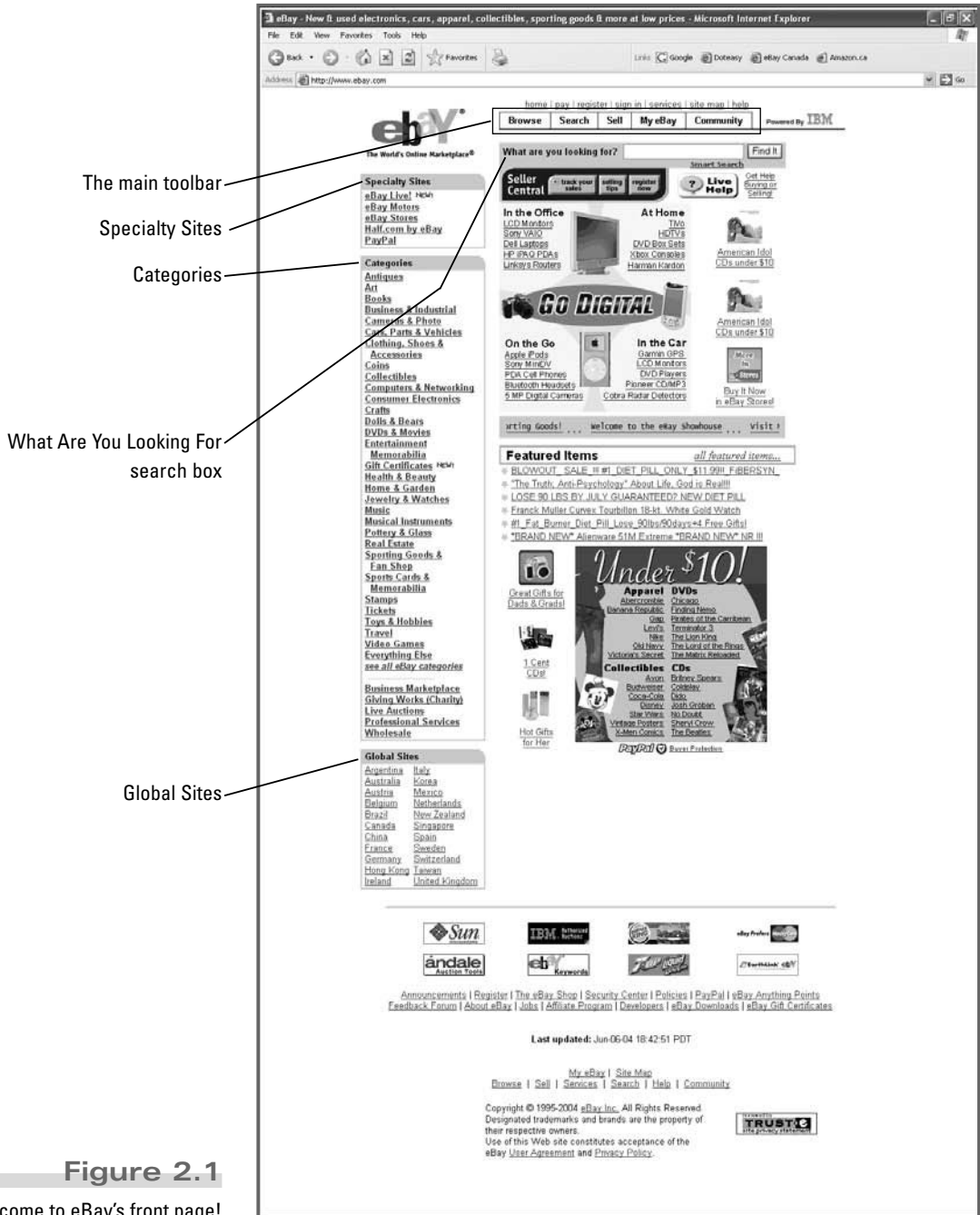


Figure 2.1

Welcome to eBay's front page!



**ALERT**

If your eBay website doesn't look anything like the one in this book, don't worry! What you are looking at is the lite version of eBay, designed for new, unregistered users. For the purpose of this book, we are going to work from the registered front page. Simply click on the eBay Members Click Here link in the top-right corner of the page to get there.

---

## The Main Toolbar

Let's begin with the main toolbar. This toolbar appears on almost every page you visit and will haunt you in your sleep. Almost anything and everything you will ever do on eBay will involve a link in the main toolbar.

- **Browse.** Although we will be tackling this link in a later chapter, it is safe to say that you will really get a good idea of what's for sale on eBay by viewing this page. Get comfortable, you may be here for a while. As you can see in Figure 2.2, browsing allows you to see all the different categories of available items on eBay. From there, you simply drill down through the categories until you find what it is you are looking for.
- **Search.** As shown in Figure 2.3, by clicking on the Search link, you are entering a world of hunting options. On this page you can perform various searches. We will explore the different search features in more detail in Chapter 4, "Seek and You Shall Find."
- **Sell.** Once you get past logging in, get ready for the ride of your life as you move through a step-by-step guide to getting your items up for sale on eBay. Figure 2.4 will show you the first step in the process. The chapters in Part III, "Selling the Music," will offer detailed descriptions of this process.

The screenshot shows the eBay homepage in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar displays the URL: <http://pages.ebay.com/buy/index.html?spageName=eh:cat:US>. The page features the eBay logo at the top left, with navigation links for home, buy, register, sign in, services, site map, and help. Below the logo are buttons for Browse, Search, Sell, My eBay, and Community, along with a 'Powered by IBM' logo.

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Search:** A search bar with a dropdown menu set to 'All Categories' and a 'Search' button. Below it are links for 'Advanced Search', 'Seller Search', and 'Store Search'.
- Categories:** A grid of category links including Antiques, Art, Books, Business & Industrial, Cameras & Photo, Cars, Parts & Other Vehicles, Clothing, Shoes & Accessories, Coins, Collectibles, Computers & Networking, Consumer Electronics, Crafts, Dolls & Bears, DVDs & Movies, Entertainment Memorabilia, Gift Certificates, Health & Beauty, Home & Garden, Jewelry & Watches, Music, Musical Instruments, Pottery & Glass, Real Estate, Sporting Goods & Fan Shop, Sports Cards & Memorabilia, Stamps, Tickets, Toys & Hobbies, Travel, Video Games, and Everything Else.
- eBay Stores:** A section titled 'Shop in the Stores of trusted eBay sellers!' listing various store categories like Total Campus, Micro Exchange, and SuperBidding Inc.
- Themes:** A section titled 'Choose a theme that reflects your special interests' with options like DVDs, Fashion, Fine Art, Gardening, Gifts for Children, and Gifts for Women.
- Regions:** A section titled 'Find big items close to home and possibly save on shipping!' listing regions like Austin, Chicago, Denver, Honolulu, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Seattle, and Washington D.C.
- Common Keywords:** A section titled 'See the common keywords run by eBay users' listing terms like Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Furniture, Coach, Jet, and Toy.

On the right side of the page, there is a 'Featured Items' section with a 'Learn more' link, and a 'Save Now Bulk Lots' advertisement featuring various items like clothing, health & beauty, sports, and movies.

At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with links for Announcements, Register, The eBay Shop, Security Center, Policies, Feedback Forum, About eBay, Home, My eBay, Site Map, eBay Downloads, eBay Gift Certificates, Browse, Sell, Services, Search, Help, and Community. Copyright information for 1995-2004 eBay Inc. is also present, along with a 'TRUSTe' logo and a link to the site privacy statement.

Figure 2.2

You can easily get lost in all the categories available when browsing eBay's offerings.

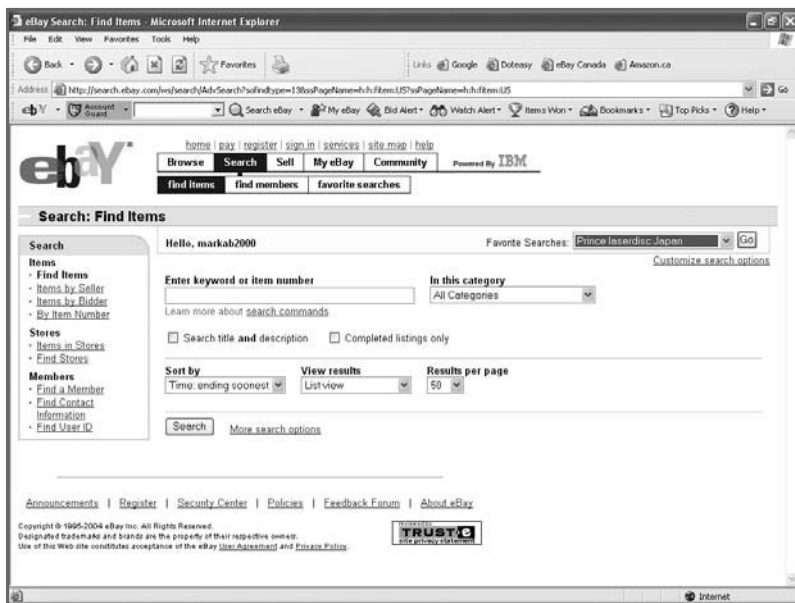


Figure 2.3

Seek and you shall find using eBay's myriad of search options.



Figure 2.4

Let the eBay sell wizard be your guide to posting items on eBay.

- **My eBay.** A personal favorite. In fact, you are probably going to get sick of me continuously saying that every feature is my personal favorite. There are so many awesome things to do and see on eBay that sometimes I can't contain myself. My eBay allows you to manage all your eBay activities in one handy dandy spot. As shown in Figure 2.5, this page will display items you are bidding on or have won or lost, items you are watching, and much, much more. It's like having your own eBay coordinator overseeing everything you do on the site.
- **Community.** Just when you thought the eBay environment couldn't get any friendlier, along comes the Community link. As shown in Figure 2.6, you can experience everything from discussion boards, chats, and groups to eBay-related events and news. The Community page has something for everybody. We will cover eBay's Community offerings in a lot more detail later in this chapter.

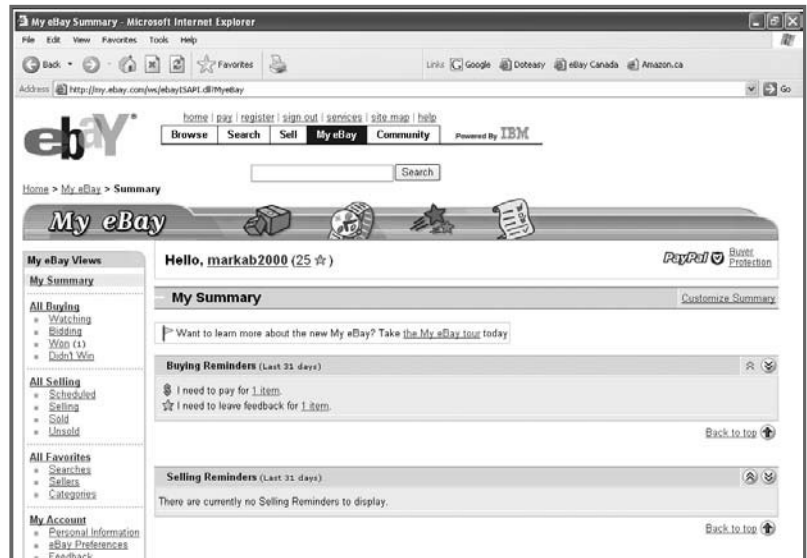


Figure 2.5

My eBay is like having your own personal assistant keeping an eye on everything you do.



**Figure 2.6**

Make friends, seek advice, or just plain chat—eBay communities have something for everyone.

### Specialty Sites

Wait a minute! More sites? What happened to eBay? Leaving so soon? Don't worry. These sites are related and offer different ways of shopping, bidding, and buying. Let's take a look at each, one by one:

- **eBay Live!** If it's live and it's related to eBay, you'll find it here in the eBay Live! Section of the website. eBay conferences are happening all over the world. At these conferences, you will have the chance to meet with eBayers, attend seminars, and talk shop with people who share your passion. As shown in Figure 2.7, the site will provide all the information you need to get registered and participating at the show.

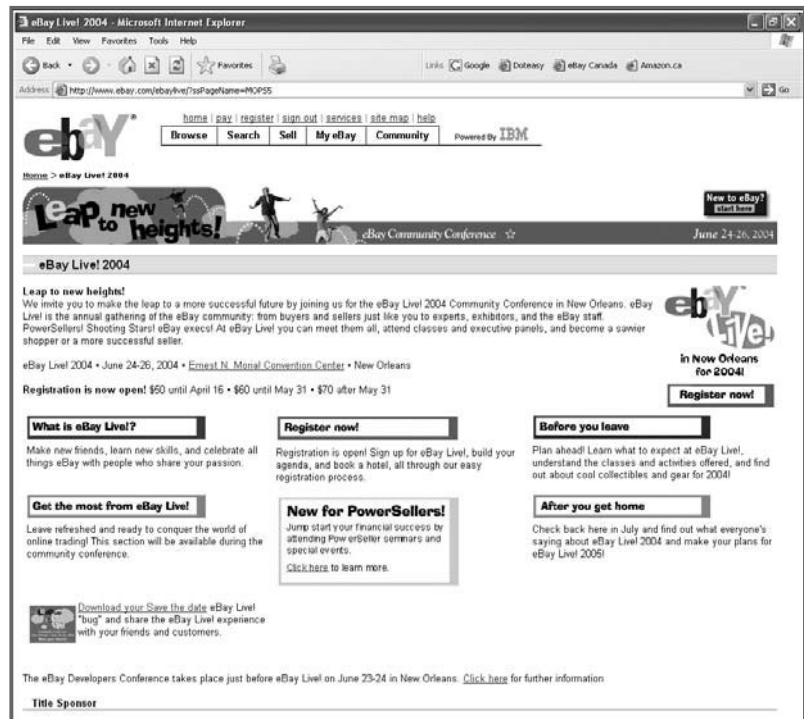


Figure 2.7

Come one, come all, to an eBay Live! conference near you.

- **eBay Motors.** In the market for a concert tour bus? Look no further—this is the site dedicated to buying and selling vehicles on eBay.
- **eBay Stores.** Say goodbye to brick and mortar and say hello to eBay stores online. These stores are typically hosted by experienced, high-volume eBay sellers and offer a whole range of benefits over bidding and buying the eBay conventional way. To satisfy your curiosity, Figure 2.8 displays some of eBay’s music-related store.
- **Half.com by eBay.** Too cool. I always venture to Half.com when I’m having trouble hunting something down on eBay. I recommend you do the same. Half.com is great for outright purchases of items you want without having to go through the bidding process. The prices are great, and you can trust them—Half.com is run by eBay. As shown in Figure 2.9, Half.com is a lot like the other e-stores you see on the web. I get a real “Amazon” feel when I visit this site.



Figure 2.8

Forget driving to a store to get your music fix, try an eBay Store instead.



Figure 2.9

Buy your items outright without having to bid, using Half.com run by eBay.

- **PayPal.** Without PayPal, you might as well give up. Seriously, in my humble opinion PayPal is an absolute necessity—especially if you plan on being a seller as well. PayPal allows you to quickly pay someone, or better yet, get paid, online by e-mail. It’s a safe and secure environment that eBay fully endorses (eBay owns it). Many buyers won’t even bid on an item that doesn’t support PayPal payments. Figure 2.10 displays PayPal’s front page. In Chapter 3, “Getting Started,” we will go through the process of registering a basic account on PayPal.



**Figure 2.10**

PayPal is a great way to pay for items as well as get paid on eBay.

## Categories

This section of the homepage is fairly self-explanatory. For all the millions of items for sale on eBay, categories act as their logical groupings. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve just darted to the Music link and checked out the top 10. Go ahead and give it a try. I just did and believe it or not, Bow Wow’s music CD is at the top of the list! What’s happened to people’s taste out there?



## What Are You Looking For?

Talk about self-explanatory. This one takes the guitar. By far the most popular area of the eBay front page, the What Are You Looking For search box allows you to type in and ultimately find items on eBay. Using this method, you bypass searching through categories, visiting other sites, or performing general searches—at least initially. You'll get a chance to do all those things once the initial search results come through. Keep your dance shoes on—we're getting there!

## Global Sites

Last but definitely not least is the Global Sites area of the eBay front page. Here you can visit your country's eBay website and buy and sell with your next door neighbor. Being Canadian, I shop at eBay.ca all the time, as displayed in Figure 2.11. There, I get all prices in Canadian dollars, enjoy lower rates on shipping, and avoid the nasty customs charges!



Figure 2.11

eBay.ca is an example of one of eBay's global sites, eh!

## Getting Help

We all get stuck sometimes. You're going to need answers, and you don't always have time to call your mom, a friend, or a doctor. Here's where eBay comes to the rescue. eBay's help features are really effective, with several choices to pick from.

### The Help Hub

I love that name—the Help Hub. What is it about the word “hub” that is so cool? The Help Hub is where it all begins when it comes to getting the assistance you need, when you need it. Here you can simply type in what you need help with, look at context-specific top questions being asked, or select another help option all together. Let's go ahead and explore the Help Hub features.

We'll begin by clicking on the Help link just above the main toolbar on eBay's front page. As shown in Figure 2.12, type **PayPal** in the Search Help text field box and click on Search Help. From there, simply click on the appropriate link in the list to view the help related to that topic.

To demonstrate the context-sensitive help features, click on the My eBay link. Log in and then click on the Help link. You will see in Figure 2.13 that the help is context sensitive in that it now displays the top questions related to the My eBay page. What a great time saver!

### Learning Center

The Learning Center really rocks the house down to the ground. Personally, I learn a whole lot better when I can hear and see something rather than reading boring instructions. From eBay's front page, click on the Help link and then visit the Learning Center to watch and listen to an audio tour on a topic of your choice.

To do this, click on the Learning Center link in the Related Links section. If you are a new user and want to learn how to buy on eBay, click on How to Buy and then the Audio Tour link, as shown in Figure 2.14. Sit back and enjoy the show.



Figure 2.12

Get the help you need on eBay.

## eBay University

Wouldn't it be great if college was really like this? Check out the different classes being offered across the country, or better yet, purchase an interactive CD-ROM and learn in the comfort of your own home. These classes aren't taught by Joe Nobody off the street, they are taught by eBay pros and experts who have a lot of wisdom to share. Attend classes or get information on how to get started on eBay, selling basics, and enhancing your listings.

To get more details, click on the eBay University link. Click on Online Courses to view the outline for the CD-ROM and to potentially purchase this learning tool. If the CD is not the route you want to take, click on the Attend Classes link. From there, click on the Choose Your City drop-down menu and select the city of your choice. Information regarding that class will be displayed, giving you a session outline, dates, and pricing.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

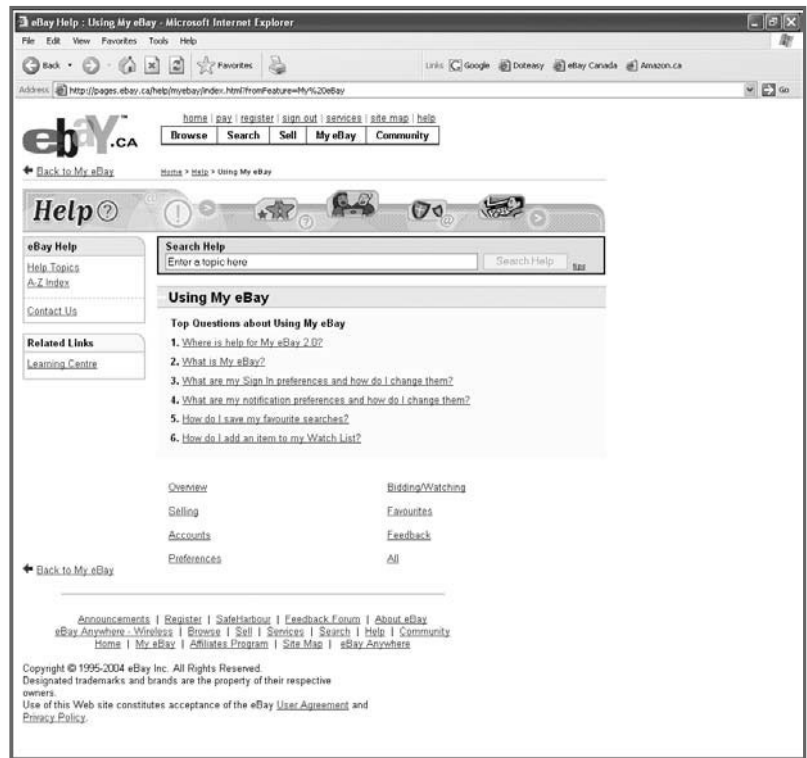


Figure 2.13

eBay's help features are context sensitive, almost stalking you as you work.

## eBay Security Center

Now this sounds like a safe place. I don't think I could say it much better than they do: The Security Center is designed to be your single source for direct, actionable information about safety and security in the eBay marketplace. I strongly recommend reading these pages prior to conducting any activity related to selling or buying on eBay. I can honestly say that the information on these pages has saved me on a number of occasions from scammers, deadbeats, and the ever-popular truth benders. Don't say you weren't warned.

I'm not completely unreasonable though. I understand that you may not have all the time in the world to go through link after link of information. For that reason, I've included the links you must read—the really important ones. Take a look. I think you'll get the message.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

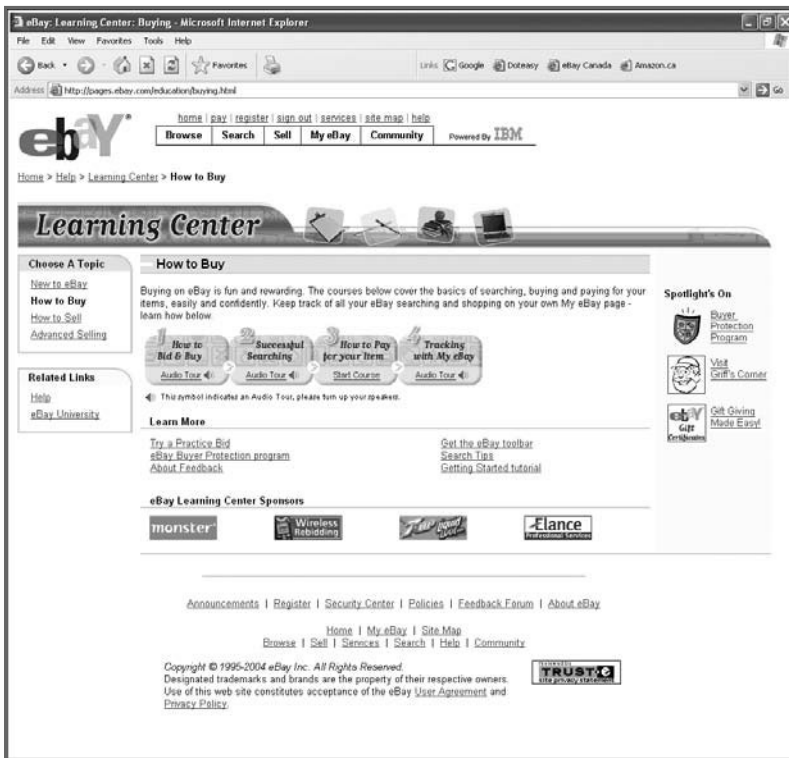


Figure 2.14

Watch audio/video tutorials to get a better understanding of how eBay works in eBay's Learning Center.

Begin by clicking on the Security Center link. Then click and read through all the following links:

- Spotting a spoof (fake) e-mail
- Protecting your eBay account
- Buying safely
- Selling safely
- Paying safely
- Law enforcement & other resources

Fooled you! I got you to read through all of them, didn't I? Don't you feel safer and more secure now?

## Communities

---

Everyone wants to feel like they belong. People on eBay are no different. There are so many different community options available it will make your head spin. From a music perspective, you can really gain a lot of insights, get great advice, and find some awesome buys by patrolling the communities that exist on these pages.

The main Community page is broken up into four distinct areas: Talk, News, Events, and People. Let's look at each in more detail.

To begin, click on the Community link on eBay's front page.

### Talk

Now here's something I'm not afraid to do—talk. Imagine an area where you can speak your mind, ask questions, or just plain gab with people just like you—insane. No seriously, people just like you—music-minded folk, music lovers, and the like.

### Discussion Boards

You've probably used these before, and if you haven't, you have no idea what you are missing. Discussion boards on eBay are a great way to get to know people and above all, get answers to nagging questions you may have. There are discussion boards on nearly every topic, including music and musicians, as shown in Figure 2.15. Let's take a look.

Begin by clicking on the Discussion Boards link. Then, click on Music & Musicians. There, you'll be asked to read the Board Usage Policies. You can also click on the Click Here for a Quick Tutorial link to view a tutorial on the topic of discussion boards.

As you can see in Figure 2.16, you've entered the discussion room now so feel free to peruse the list of displayed topics.

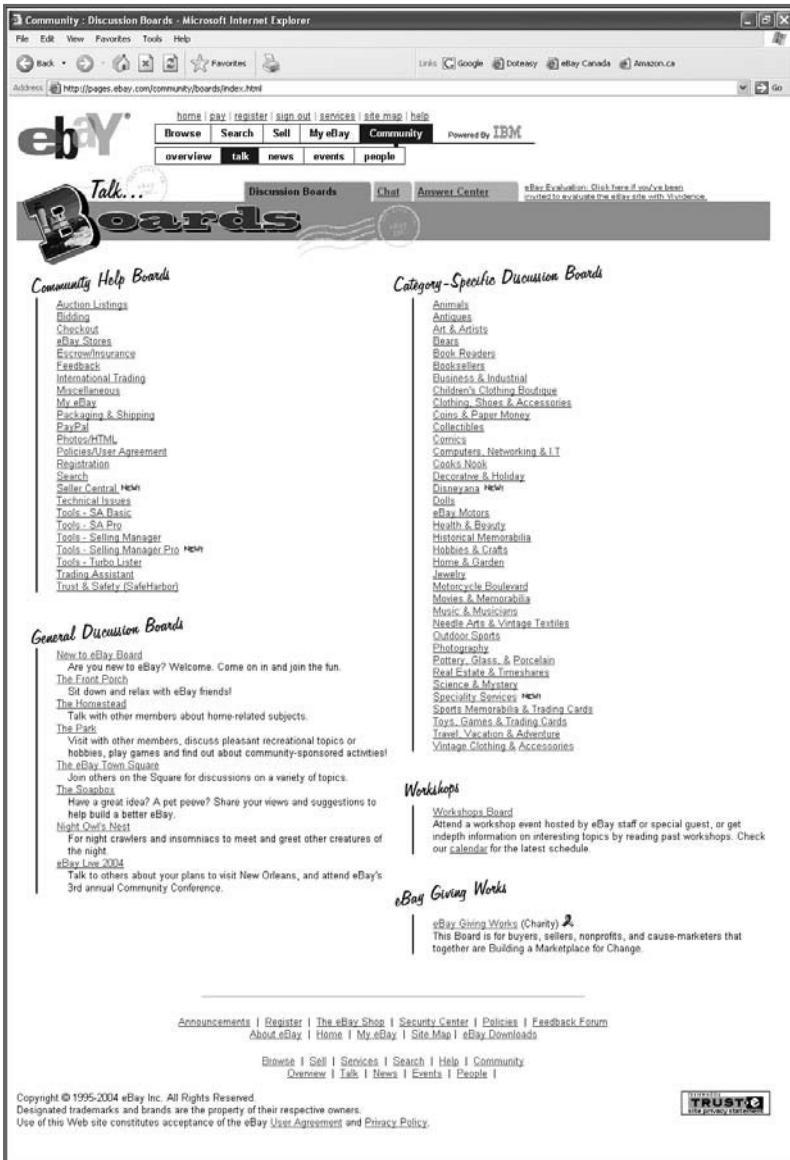


Figure 2.15

Check out the Music & Musicians discussion board and talk to people just like you.

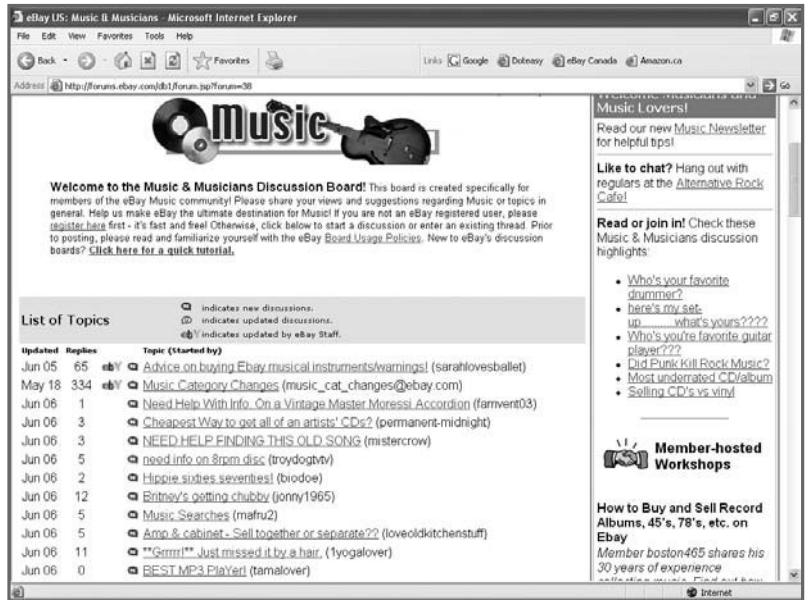


Figure 2.16

Jump into a thread and join the music discussion fray!

## Chat

Similar to the discussion boards but a little chattier, the chat rooms on eBay provide a spot where collectors can talk to each other about all sorts of topics. When I visited the Music chat room, it seemed that no one was actually talking about music. I'm not a huge fan of the music-specific chat room because I can't seem to get in on any meaningful conversations about music. Stick to the discussion boards. That's where all the music action is.

## Answer Center

I wonder what's available in the Answer Center. My first guess is—answers. If you guessed the same thing then you're right, too! The Answer Center is a forum where eBay members can talk to each other about eBay-related topics. As displayed in Figure 2.17, the topics can range from Registration to Feedback to shipping-related questions. Don't expect an employee from eBay to respond, though. This is strictly member-to-member questions and answers. I've posted quite a few questions to the Answer Center and believe me, it really lives up to its name. On the flipside, you can search the boards

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



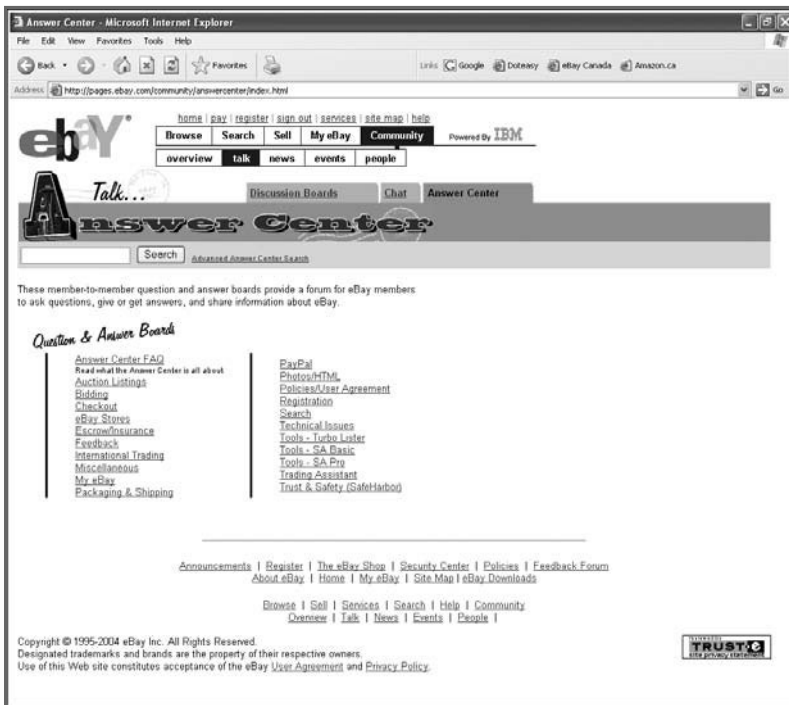
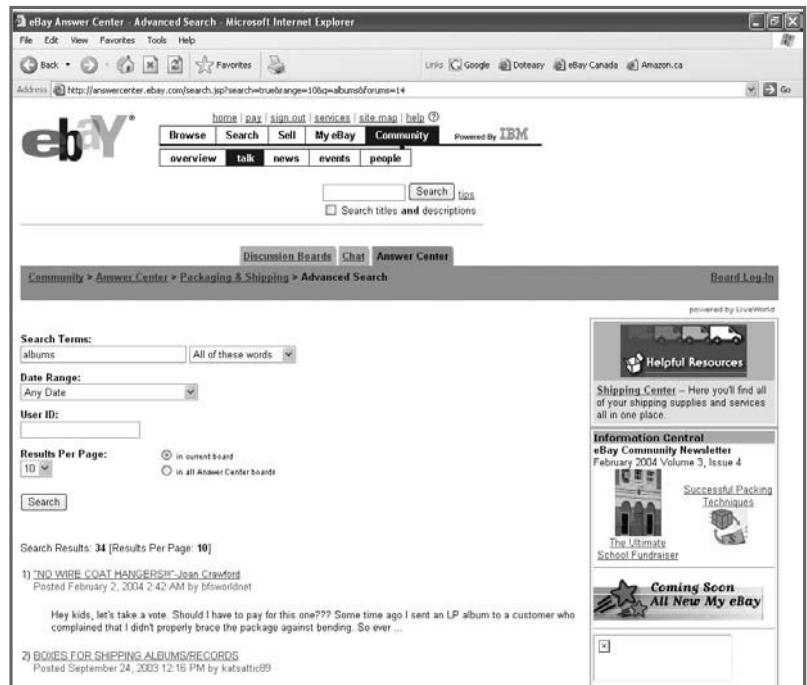


Figure 2.17

Get the answers you need in eBay's Answer Center.

for questions that may already have been asked and answered, saving you time! Let's take a look.

1. From the eBay front page, click on the Communities button in the main toolbar.
2. Click on the Answer Center link.
3. As an example, click on Packaging & Shipping as your board topic choice.
4. In the Search the Answer Center text field box, type **albums** and click on Search. A whole slew of album-related questions and answer topics will be displayed, as shown in Figure 1.18.
5. Scroll down through the results list until you come across one titled "Packaging & Shipping for old Record Albums." Click on this link. The question and multiple answers will be displayed—all provided by people like you and me.



**Figure 2.18**

Here are some of the examples you will find related to albums in the Answer Center.

## News

Extra, extra, read all about it! This is the section of the Community page where you're going to get the latest and greatest news about eBay and everything that is eBay. There isn't anything necessarily music related on these pages, but you will find general announcements, informing you of the most current eBay news; system announcements, explaining why certain things aren't working when you click on them; and finally The Chatter, a monthly eBay newsletter that's all about us, the eBay community.

## Events

Stay in tune with what's going on by accessing eBay's online calendar of events. There, you will see workshops, university courses, and other eBay-related events, all in one centralized place. From the Events page, you will also see a link for eBay's charity pages. Donations are backed by MissionFish,

so you have nothing to worry about. Don't worry, we'll be covering Mission-Fish and charities a little later on when Phat Matt, the bassist from Solace, gives us some tips on buying guitars.

## People

Don't you love people? Well, around here, we love people who like music. On the People page you'll see options for groups, eBay values, and spotlights.

## Groups

By visiting the People section of the Communities page, you can join or create a group where music-minded folks like us can congregate, converse, and critique one another's taste. You'll find everything from Japanese music groups to Iron Maiden to '80s music and Hank Williams. Who knows, you may feel the need to join one of these groups and throw your two cents and a pick into the pile.

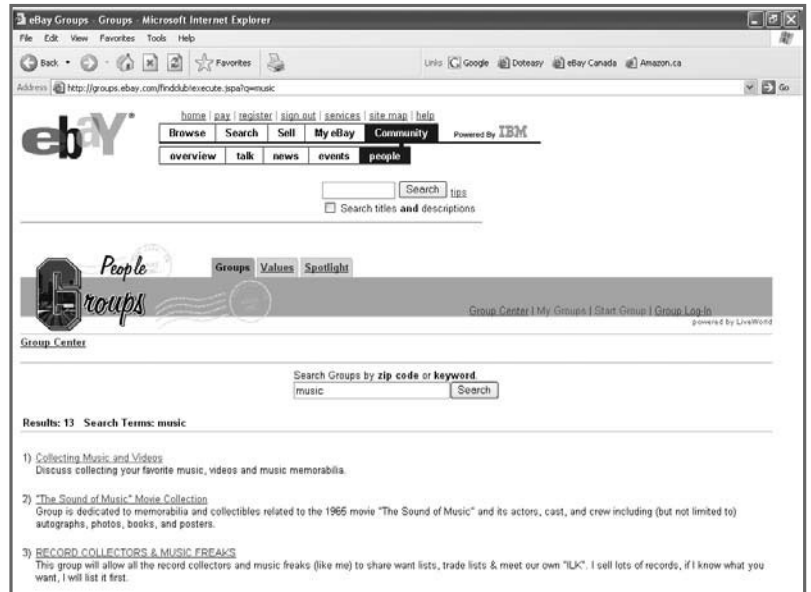
To see all the available groups that are related to music in one way or another, try the following: Begin by clicking on the eBay Groups link. In the Search Groups by Zip Code or Keyword text field box, type **music**; then hit the Search button. As shown in Figure 2.19, over ten different groups with the word "music" listed in their description currently exist.

Try other music-related keywords and you'll see that there's no shortage of groups out there for you to join. If, by chance, you can't find what you are looking for, by all means, start your own music group on eBay.

## eBay Community Values and the Member Spotlight

Click on the eBay Community Values link and give them a read. They are words to live by, not only on eBay, but in your everyday life. Sorry, I began preaching there. Take them to heart and try to remember them when you are selling, buying, or just plain chatting with other members.

Speaking of members, take the time to click on the Member's Spotlight link. You must have over 100 transactions before they will consider you. This is a great way to get to know other members and see how they use eBay in



**Figure 2.19**

Get in on the music group action by joining or creating your own on eBay.

their everyday lives. If you have over 100 transactions and are over the age of 18, go ahead and begin the process. Who knows? You may just get the 15 minutes of fame you've been waiting on.

I can see it now. The learning curve is flattening out right before my eyes. Let's get started by moving into the next chapter and looking at registration on both eBay and PayPal, as well as understanding the power of feedback.

# chapter 3



## Getting Started

---

Now that we've covered eBay introductions, a tour of the front page, and how to get help, you are now ready to get started using eBay to search, buy, and sell musical items.

Unfortunately though, I've lied yet again. We aren't ready to search, buy, or sell just yet, but we are getting closer. There are several things you still should know before we jump right in. Registering is a no-brainer, but understanding feedback and PayPal are instrumental to your every day use of this site. Let's get started!

## Registering

---

Are you getting sick of registering on everybody and their dog's websites? I certainly am. Why don't you go ahead and skip this section and bypass registering all together? Imagine the time you would save. Understand one thing. If you don't register, you can't buy or sell. You can search, though. I think you are getting the picture. If your game is to sell and buy, which is typically the case for most people visiting the eBay site, then give up the five minutes it will take to register. It's worth it.

When you arrive at the eBay website, you will notice a link at the top of the page entitled "register." That's pretty obvious, but just in case you miss it, there is another link which will take you to the exact same place nestled in a small grouping of buttons called "register now." The Register Now button is located along side two other buttons in the Welcome New Users section of the eBay

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

front page. Click on that button so we can get this registration process out of the way, get you your license to drive, and move on to the fun stuff.

## Getting Your eBay License to Drive

Go ahead and fill in your personal information. As displayed in Figure 3.1, you'll see that they are asking for pretty much everything except your first born. No worries. Feel secure that this information will be kept confidential, and that you are safe in your dealings with eBay. Once you've entered your contact information, you will also need to enter an e-mail address. Make sure you enter an e-mail address that you can then go and check immediately. eBay will send you an e-mail containing information that is required to continue with the registration process. If you are a free e-mail user (such as Hotmail and Yahoo), for added security, eBay will request credit card or debit information. Just another step eBay has implemented to ensure us nice guys don't get ripped off.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "eBay Canada - Registration: Enter Information - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL: <https://cgi.ebay.ca/ies/eBayISAP1.dll?RegisterEnterInfoUsage=0&partnertrackingid=0&partneropt=1&dsq=met&osall=0&ir=showme&urdy&osrvname=Mchules&address1=441>. The page content includes the eBay logo, a progress bar with three steps: "1 Enter Information", "2 Agree to Terms", and "3 Confirm Your Registration". The "Enter Information" step is active. The form fields are as follows:

- First name:**
- Last name:**
- Street address:**
- City:**
- Province:**
- Postal code:**
- Country:**  Change country
- Primary telephone:**  est.
- Secondary telephone:**  est.

Below the form, there is an important note: "Important: To complete registration, enter a valid email address that you can check immediately." This is followed by two email address fields: "Email address" and "Re-enter email address".

**Figure 3.1**

Surrender your information to register on eBay!

## The eBay User ID

As shown in Figure 3.2, it is now time to enter an eBay user ID. This is the moment you've been waiting for. This will be your identity for the rest of your life on eBay. What does this mean? People will see you under this name. When you sell, that will be your name. When you buy, that will be your name. When you log in each day, that will be your name. When people want to contact you, that will be your name. If you're still not clear on what I am trying to say, let me put it to you straight. This will be the name people use to identify you. Believe it or not, sometimes a name can decide if someone buys from you. Be smart when making your selection. ScamLiar666 may seem like a real cool user ID, but would you buy an expensive MusicMan StingRay bass guitar off this guy? Probably not. Think before you type.

## Password and Secrets

You've finally decided on an ID that you like. Figure 3.2 shows that the next step is to enter a password. Use something that you'll remember and others won't be able to guess. The following is a list of passwords you should never use:

- Your phone number
- Your pet's name
- Your partner's name
- Your birthdate
- Your name

Scammers will try those first. Come on. You can be more original than that anyway. Try for something unique and somewhat challenging. By the way, using the same password for all your accounts on the web is never a good idea. Most people, especially scammers, realize that most people do this. Once they figure out your password on one website, they can just as easily crack through the rest. Try and mix it up a little, even if it means adding numbers at the end of the password.

Now that I've cajoled you into entering an original password, you've probably already forgotten it. Not to worry. The next step in the registration process is to enter a secret question. Again, be careful here. A friend of mine

had his Hotmail account hijacked because his secret question was so easy. All it takes is for someone to know your eBay ID, which is public information, and to then claim he forgot his password. An e-mail is sent with the secret question. If the hijacker knows the answer to the secret question, he's just stolen your identity and is free to wreak havoc on the web—under your name. Enter a secret question that is indeed secret. Something you and only those who love you may know the answer to.

The screenshot shows the eBay Canada registration page in Microsoft Internet Explorer. The browser title is "eBay Canada - Registration: Enter Information - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL: "https://cgi.ebay.ca/inv/eBayISAP1.dll?engine=EnterInfoUsage=0&partnr=ackng&0=partnr=reg&1=1&spass=notnull=0&str=JordyNicholas2004&str1=141". The page content includes the following fields and instructions:

- Re-enter email address:** A text input field.
- Create your eBay User ID:** A text input field containing "JordyNicholas2004". Below it, an example "rose739" is shown with the note "(Don't use your email address). Your User ID identifies you to other eBay users."
- Create password:** A text input field with "\*\*\*\*\*" and a note "6 characters minimum". Below it, a tip says "Enter a password that's easy for you to remember, but hard for others to guess. See tips."
- Re-enter password:** A text input field with "\*\*\*\*\*".
- Secret question:** A dropdown menu with "What is your pet's name?" selected. To its right is a text input field for the "Secret answer" containing "Fiona". Below it, a note says "You will be asked for the answer to your secret question if you forget your password."
- Date of birth:** Three dropdown menus for "Day" (21), "Month" (June), and "Year" (1970).
- A "Continue >" button is located at the bottom of the form.

At the bottom of the page, there is a copyright notice: "Copyright © 1995-2004 eBay Inc. All Rights Reserved. Designated trademarks and brands are the property of their respective owners. Use of this Web site constitutes acceptance of the eBay User Agreement and Privacy Policy." A "TRUSTe" logo is also visible.

**Figure 3.2**

Keep scammers at bay, not eBay. Be smart when selecting usernames, passwords, and secret questions.

## Birthday Wishes from eBay?

Next, enter your birthday information. Don't hold your breath waiting for eBay to send you a birthday cake or anything. They won't. I've been waiting for several years now, and not even a card has come my way. Oh, well.

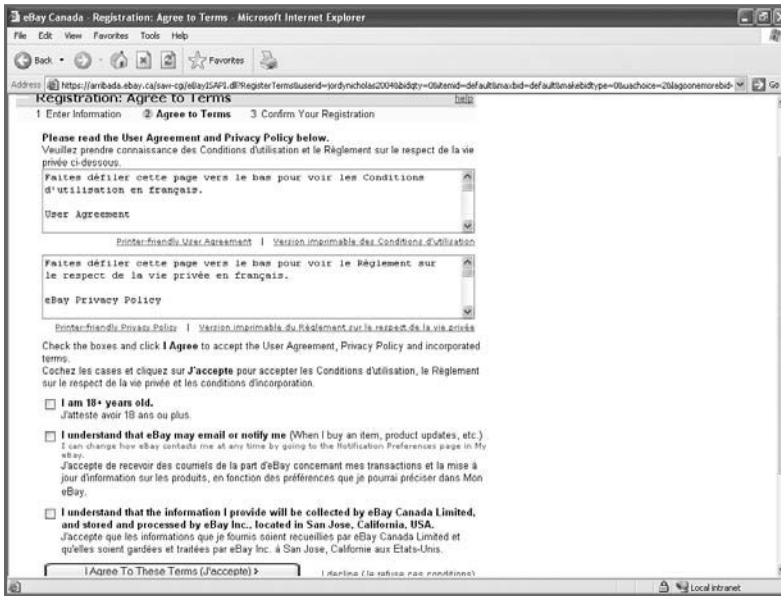
## Agreement, Policy, and Check Boxes

Click Continue to move on. As shown in Figure 3.3, the User Agreement and Privacy Policy page will follow. Here, you will most likely perish as you scroll through endless text involving legalese, rules, and liability coverage.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



Just when you thought you were done, you're hit with a privacy policy which seems just as long. Don't worry, you'll make it. Whew. You're done. Next, it will politely ask you to check some boxes and click I Agree to accept the User Agreement, Privacy Policy, and the associated terms.

**Figure 3.3**

Read through eBay's User Agreement and Privacy Policy.

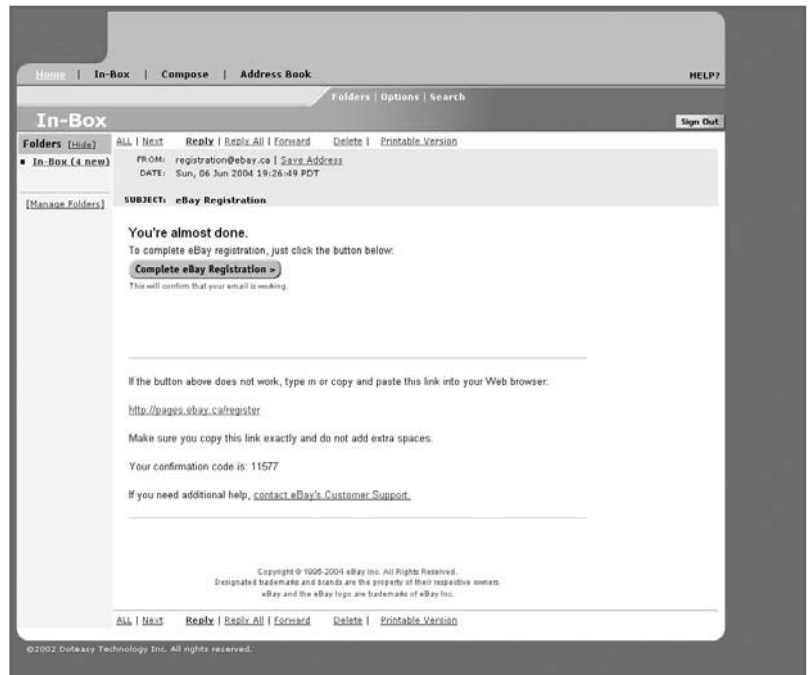
One of those check boxes includes verification that you are over the age of 18 years—unless accompanied by an adult. You must also check off that you are alright with eBay e-mailing and notifying you when you purchase items, win or lose bids, for product updates, and so on. Although you have the option to later disable many of these notifications, I really like some of them. It's a great way to stay in the game, especially if you're too lazy to keep checking back on one of your bids, for example.

Lastly, you need to agree to the fact that eBay will be collecting and processing all the information you enter. I'm not exactly clear on what "processing" means in this case, but I can tell you that I've never received any unwanted, unsolicited, and downright annoying spams due to the information I've entered on eBay. Feel secure. This is a quality, trustworthy, and secure site. Enter your info, check those boxes, and breathe easy. Click on the I Agree to These Terms button to move on.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Final Steps

Go check your e-mails. There should be something waiting for you there from your friends over at **registration@ebay.com**. As shown in Figure 3.4, the e-mail will include text stating, “You’re almost done.” All you have to do is click on the Complete eBay Registration button and you are off to the auctions.



**Figure 3.4**

Here’s the e-mail eBay will send to confirm you are who you say you are when registering.

Congratulations! You are a registered, soon-to-be crazed fanatic, running the halls of eBay with a mission. A mission to search, buy, and sell everything and anything music related. I extend to you all sorts of kudos and accolades... Enough praise. Next?

## Getting Your eBay License to Sell

There was a while there when I thought life was just perfect on eBay. I was doing a lot of searching and a lot of buying, but I wasn’t selling anything. I think I felt a little intimidated. What if I posted something and no one even

bid, let alone bought it? Would people really want to buy my ABBA 8-track collection or my knitted Twisted Sister cardigan? I would never find out because I was too scared to sell. One day, long ago, I finally worked up the guts, but not before I signed up for my eBay license to sell: The seller's account.

## Setting Up Your Seller's Account

If you noticed during the regular registration process, on the Congratulations page, a link was presented near the bottom of the page asking you if you wanted to create a seller's account on eBay. If you didn't see it, don't sweat it. There are other ways of getting there, and I'm just the guy to point you in the right direction. Follow these steps:

1. From the eBay homepage, click on Sell in the main toolbar.
2. As shown in Figure 3.5, in the New to Selling section, click on the Create a Seller's Account link.
3. On the page that appears, you are asked to enter your regular eBay user ID and your password. Proudly do so, and click on the Secure Sign In button to continue. Are you who you say you are? Of course you are. Confirm your account information and make any changes if required.
4. Click on Continue.

## Credit and Checking—Oh My!

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! Credit card information is being asked for here? You never told me that I would have to enter my credit card information! May-day, Mayday, help, help, call 911, we have an emergency! Who needs the stress, you might ask? Although I can't promise you that nothing will happen to your credit card information and that it won't fall into the wrong hands, I can tell you that from my experience and that of my colleagues, we have never had any problems. With all that said, though, make sure to check with your credit card company to see if they offer any online protection for fraudulent usage. Better to be safe than furious, I always say. Figure 3.6 displays what this page in the registration process looks like.

Figure 3.5

Get your seller's account—it's your license to sell on eBay.

Figure 3.6

If you plan to sell, be prepared to answer some sensitive questions.

Just when you thought submitting sensitive information was over, in rolls bank account information. You've come this far, you might as well continue. Enter your bank account information if you are presented with this request. To make the ride a little smoother in this area of the seller's registration process, make sure to have a check on hand to reference. It sure makes entering the information in this section a little easier.

## Paying the Piper

Now you are ready to choose how you'd like to pay eBay for all the seller fees. I never told you that selling was free, did I? I'm pretty sure I didn't. Well, if I forgot, here I go: It isn't free to sell items on eBay. There are various seller fees depending on specific criteria. For now, suffice to say, you have to tell the piper how he's going to get paid. Figure 3.7 displays two choices: allowing eBay to dip into your checking account and pull the necessary funds or by credit card. Make your choice based on what you are comfortable with. Go ahead, you've got my support. Click on Continue.

"You are now ready to sell your items at eBay!" screams the eBay web page shown in Figure 3.8. Not so fast, speedy, we still have some learning to do.

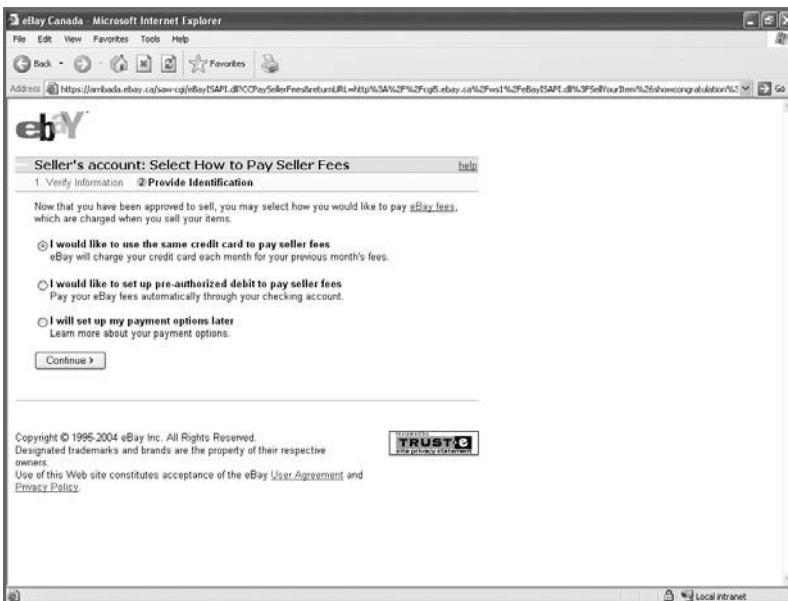


Figure 3.7

The choice is yours:  
debit or charge?



**Figure 3.8**

Congratulations! You are now ready to sell your items at eBay! Almost.

You are now a registered eBay superstar. I am now going to introduce you to one of my friends and soon to be yours: PayPal. Go ahead and shake hands and be merry. The two of you will be friends for many years to come.

## PayPal

We briefly discussed PayPal in Chapter 2, when we were taking the royal tour of the eBay front page. Purchased by eBay in October 2002, PayPal payments are truly integrated into both buying and selling activity. What makes this online payment center so special anyway? Let's find out.

### What Is PayPal?

This is a very popular question. Believe it or not, it is an integral part of being a buyer or seller on eBay. In some cases, people won't even consider your item if you don't accept PayPal payments. Why, you ask? Look at it this way. Simply put, PayPal is a website where you can send and receive money via e-mail. Now, translate that into language that makes sense to someone

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

using eBay: When you buy something on eBay, you can pay someone immediately by simply sending them an e-mail via PayPal. That's it. On the flip-side, if you are selling something on eBay, people can pay you almost instantly by sending you an e-mail. In all cases, everyone comes out the winner. The buyers get their items faster, and the sellers get their money faster. It's a win-win situation.

Now that I've sold you on PayPal, I'll show you how to sign up for a basic account. You can typically complete the registration process in less than three minutes, and best of all, it's free.

## Setting Up a Basic Account

In the Specialty Sites area of the eBay homepage, click on the PayPal link to get to the site. You could also simply type **www.paypal.com** into the address bar of your browser.

Once you arrive at the PayPal page, in the Welcome box, click on the Sign Up button located below the question, New user?

Figure 3.9 displays the page showing that you have two choices to pick from: a personal account or a business account. In both account types, payments can be sent or received by anyone with an e-mail address. The business account differs by also accepting credit card payments. Once you've decided on the account type, select your country from the drop-down list.

As shown in Figure 3.10, like your eBay account, you are now asked to enter your personal information again. Same rules apply. For PayPal, there are two security questions as opposed to one secret question. In addition, your e-mail address is your login name. Passwords are case sensitive, and you are encouraged to go for something unique.

Go through the User Agreement and Privacy Policy, check the appropriate options, enter what you see in the Security Measure section, and you are almost done setting up your account.

The next step involves confirming your e-mail address, so make sure you give a valid one! Once you've clicked the link within the e-mail that PayPal has sent you, you will be zinged back to the PayPal site, and you are finished.



Figure 3.9

Choose your account type:  
personal or business?



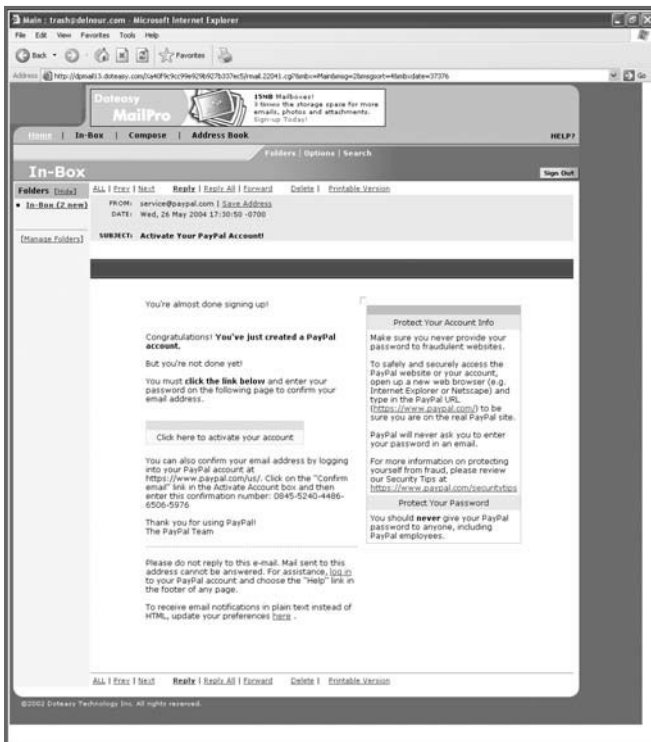
Figure 3.10

Registering on PayPal is similar  
to registering on eBay.

Figure 3.11 shows the content of the e-mail you will receive from PayPal to confirm your registration information.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**





**Figure 3.11**

Prove to PayPal you are who you say you are.

You've just set yourself up to be able to send and receive payments using your new PayPal account. All you need to do is remember your login name (which is your e-mail address) and your password. The rest is easy.

I would love to spend more time in the PayPal arena but this is a book on eBay. Let's groove on back to the reason you bought this book—to learn how to search, buy, and sell musical items on eBay. Next stop—Understanding Feedback.

## Understanding Feedback

What's truly scary about eBay is that at its foundation, it is a system that is based on honesty. Remember that word? Honesty? Try and imagine a system, that's currently working, based on the honor system. Let me put it in perspective for you.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Scenario One: The “Non-Paying” Buyer

You see an item you like on eBay. You bid on it. You begin to battle with someone else online for this item. Bid after bid, the fight continues, driving the price sky high. Then, the smoke clears and you come out the victor. What is stopping you from simply not sending your money through to the seller? What is stopping you from simply disappearing and leaving the seller high and dry? Nothing really, except your feedback.

## Scenario Two: The “Non-Sending” Seller

You bid and win a beautiful \$800 drum set. You send your dollars through to the seller using PayPal. Days go by and no drum set. Days become weeks, and you are still drumless. The seller skipped town, this time leaving you high and dry with lint in your pockets. What’s stopping a seller from simply not sending an item to its rightful buyer? Nothing really, except feedback.

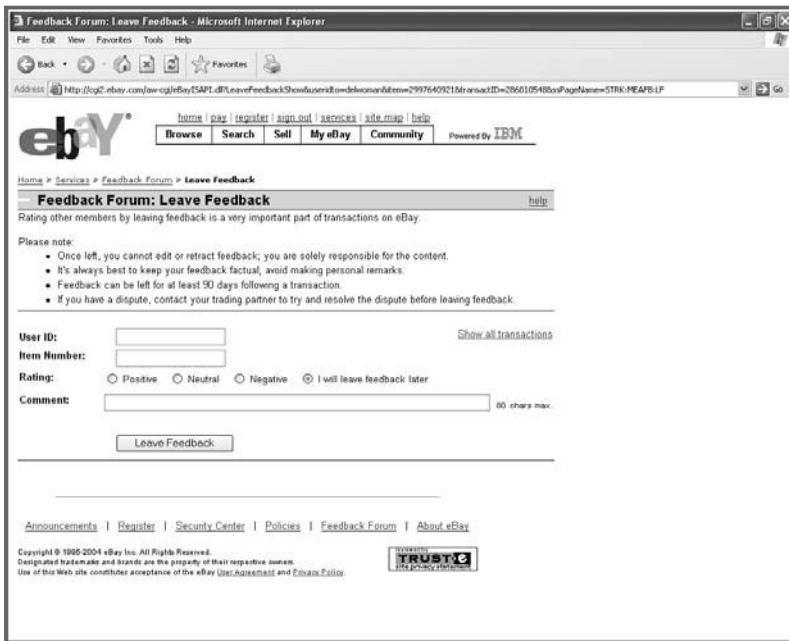
Feedback is really the badge you wear that states you are a credible, reliable, and professional buyer or seller. Word of mouth travels quickly on eBay. I was in the discussion groups this morning, and I counted at least four different user IDs being trashed. People were being warned left and right about certain sellers and buyers to avoid. Keep your nose clean and make sure your feedback is positive.

How do you get feedback? How do you leave feedback?

## Feedback for the Seller

Anytime you bid on and win an item, you are able to leave feedback for the seller. Typically, you will hold off on leaving feedback until the entire transaction is complete (item is paid for, delivered, and received). eBay will remind you left and right about remembering to leave feedback. As shown in Figure 3.12, you are limited to a certain number of characters when leaving feedback and you are given four choices as to the type of feedback you can leave: Positive, Neutral, Negative, or I Will Leave Feedback Later. Be careful. Keep in mind that many sellers use eBay as their sole source of income. It is sometimes their only job. Before leaving anyone negative feedback, always

exhaust all other means of resolving a conflict or problem. When all else fails though, make sure the rest of the eBay community knows by leaving negative feedback for the seller.



**Figure 3.12**

Leave feedback—it's our only defense against the scammers!

## Feedback for the Buyer

On the other side of the coin, the seller can leave feedback for the buyer as well. Same rules apply. As long as you pay, and pay in a timely manner, you won't have any problems.

Feedback is extremely powerful on eBay. Do your best to rack up the feedback points by always being professional, courteous, and honest when selling and buying.

The basics are now behind us. See, that didn't hurt, did it? Look at what you've accomplished in one short chapter! You're registered on both eBay and PayPal as well as becoming a true connoisseur of the feedback system. You are ready to roll on to the next chapter where searching is the name of the game.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 4



## Seek and You Shall Find

---

Typically, the first thing you do when you come to eBay is look for something. Most people just punch in the name of the item they are looking for and the search is over. The problem with that method is that you sometimes may miss out on great deals and rare finds because you aren't searching properly. In this chapter, we will look at the different search tools and techniques available on eBay.

### Introducing—The Music CD Junkie

---

For this chapter, I solicited the expertise of a friend of mine—the music CD junkie, Jordy Nicholas. A self-proclaimed CD junkie, Jordy searches eBay and other online sites for those hard-to-find CDs, imports, out of prints, and promo copies.

Let's tap into Jordy's mind and let him guide us through the different search techniques available on eBay. Every great bid and purchase on eBay begins with an effective search. This chapter will guide you through the many ways that eBay allows you to find just what you are looking for. For those of you who are already familiar with eBay's search tools, you may feel the need to skip this chapter. However, I think that most of you will learn something new in this chapter. I will try and keep it interesting by inserting tricks of the trade along the way, provided by both myself and Jordy, our music CD junkie.

## What Are You Looking For?

I love it! Could it be any more straightforward than that? When you first type in that magic web address in your browser, **www.ebay.com**, and press Enter on the keyboard, you will be greeted by those very words on eBay's front page: What are you looking for? So, all you have to do is type in your desired search item, click on Search, and you're off to the auctions, right? Well, yes, but there's a better way to do it.

### Research, Research, Did I Say Research?

To help you with your search on eBay—for not only musical items but any items—it is important to do your research—beforehand. If you just jumped in and searched using keywords that instantly come to mind, such as “Pearl Jam CD,” you will without a doubt find what you are looking for. Will this return the best search results though? We don't think so. By understanding what you are looking for, getting into the head of the seller, and doing your homework, you will yield the highest and most qualified search results.

Let's use an example of searching for a specific music CD on eBay. Before doing a search, here are some questions you should research about the CD in question:

1. Year of manufacture?
  2. Are there different editions available, re-issues, reprints, different covers, special editions, live, and so on?
  3. Complete band name and name of CD?
  4. Country of origin?
  5. Artist nicknames or acronyms?
  6. What is it worth—especially if it's rare?
  7. Common misspellings for band name/CD name?
  8. Any key descriptors for the CD, like double-CD, number of tracks, cardboard sleeve, includes stickers, foldout picture booklet, and so on?
  9. CD format—is it a CD single, DVD-audio, etc.?
  10. Most popular tracks on CD?
- TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Jordy tells me that one of the big finds for him recently was an ultra-rare CD single by Michael Jackson entitled “Smile.” After doing his research, Jordy came up with the following information regarding this item:

1. Year of manufacture? **1997**
2. Are there different editions available? **Yes—there are bootlegs floating around, and a one-track promo-only CD, which was released in Europe only—it has a white cover (not the one I want).**
3. Complete band name? **Michael Jackson**, Complete name of CD: **“Smile”**
4. Country of origin? **Austria**
5. Artist nicknames or acronyms? **Michael Jackson is commonly known as MJ, or Jacko**
6. What is it worth—especially if it’s rare? **I’ve seen it go as high as \$1,200 USD**
7. Common misspellings for band name, CD name? **none**
8. Any key descriptors for the CD? **Charlie Chaplin picture sleeve, five tracks, Smile remixes,**
9. CD Format? **CD single**
10. Most popular track on CD? **“Is it Scary?”**

With this information in hand, Jordy’s search went a lot better than planned. When he initially searched for this CD, he had simply typed in **Michael Jackson CD** in the What Are You Looking For search box. Rookie move. Over 300 search results ensued, causing his system to overload and crash, as shown in Figure 4.1. Alright, I’m exaggerating, but that is no way to do a search. You can see by the results that he was getting everything that had Michael plus Jackson plus CD in the item title. That’s no way to zero in on a rare CD.

His next move was to be a little more specific by typing in **Michael Jackson Smile CD**. That would do it! He was sure this would refine the search sufficiently enough to find this hidden gem in this proverbial haystack.

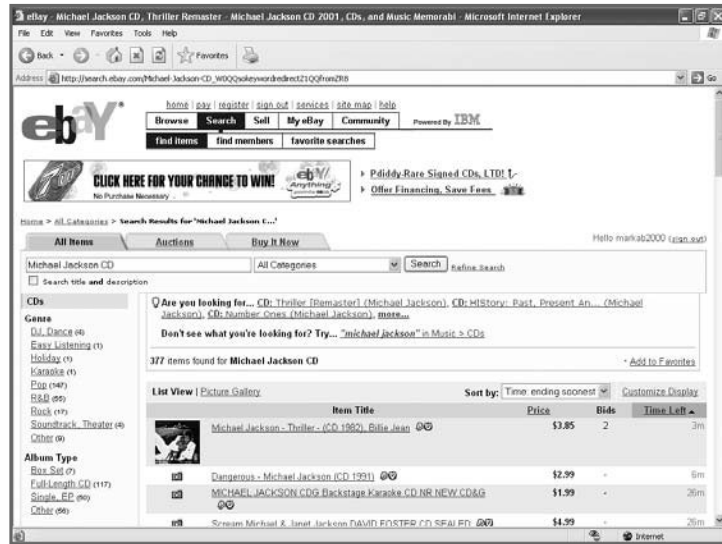


Figure 4.1

Too vague? Too many results!

Sadly, only three results were returned, as shown in Figure 4.2. One result was from the auctions and two were from some stores. Based on his research, though, these versions for sale were the very ones he didn't want—the one-track promo with the white cover. Did Jordy give up? You better believe he didn't. He dug deeper into his arsenal of search techniques and came up with a beautiful move: Search Title and Description.

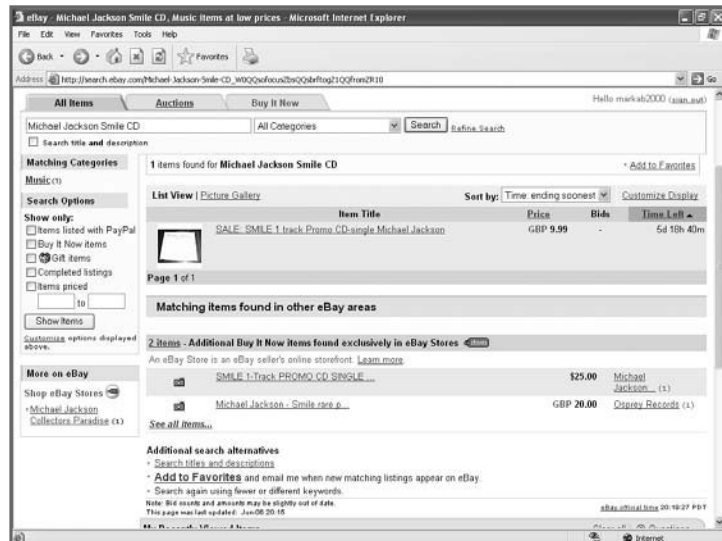


Figure 4.2

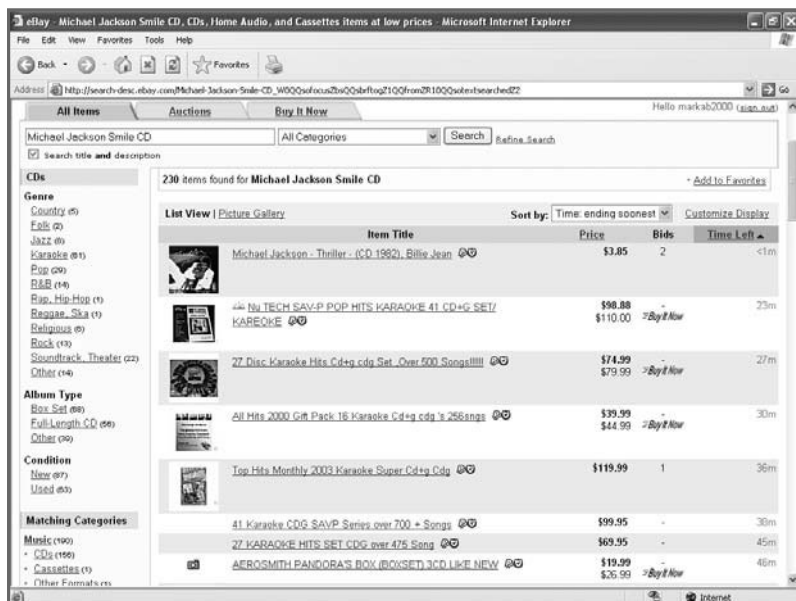
Not what he was looking for based on his research.



## Searching Titles and Descriptions

By enabling this feature when performing a search, eBay will not only search within the actual item title for the keywords you assign, but the description text too. This opens up the game tremendously!

Jordy enabled this feature on the Search Results page. It is located just below the Search box on the All Items tab. After placing a check in the checkbox, he clicked on Search yet again. BOOM! Not again! Over 200 items poured down his screen, as shown in Figure 4.3. Will he ever win? Little did he know that his research was about to pay off.



**Figure 4.3**

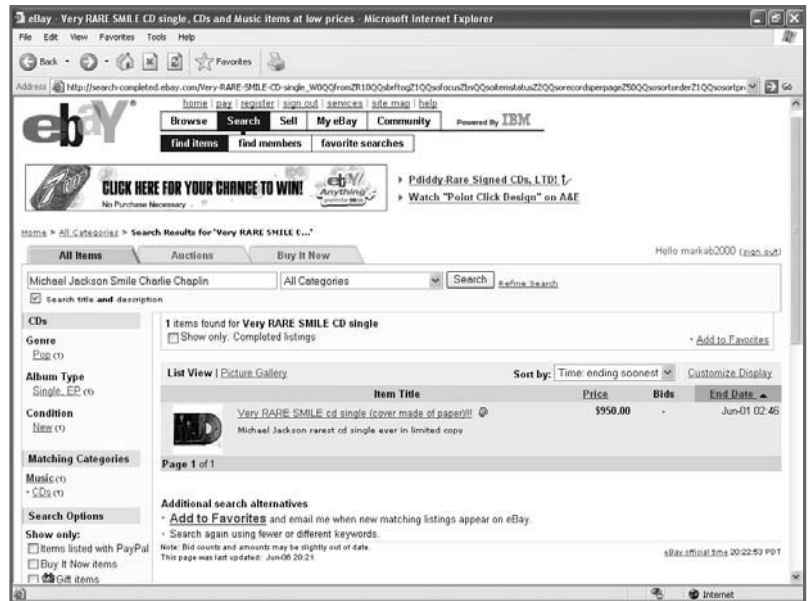
The Search Title and Description option can be a powerful tool when used properly.

The Search Title and Description feature can be a very powerful aid when searching, but you must use it with caution. Always ensure that your keywords are not so general that the results returned will be overwhelming. Look within your research to see if there are any unique keywords that will help refine the search results.

In the case of the Michael Jackson “Smile” CD, there were some unique keywords Jordy could and did eventually use. Based on the research, he used

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

these keywords: **Michael Jackson Smile Charlie Chaplin**. He knew that this rare edition had an image of Charlie Chaplin on the back cover. With the Search Title and Description feature still enabled, he nervously clicked on the Search button. Jackpot! Only two results were returned, but one of them was the goldmine. This seller had posted the CD with the following title: “Very RARE SMILE CD single (cover made of paper!!!” Although there was a subtitle, when performing a General search (without the Search Title and Description feature enabled), eBay does not search within it. This seller’s subtitle stated the following: “Michael Jackson rarest CD single ever in limited copy” (shown in Figure 4.4).



**Figure 4.4**

Success! Research pays off for Jordy.

Within the text of the description for this item were the words: “Michael Jackson dressed as Charlie Chaplin and the back cover shows MJ and a child.”

## Searching Using Find Items

In the previous example, Jordy performed a General search from the front page, where he was able to conduct a What Are You Looking For query and

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST and GENUINE !**

then review the results. Simple enough, right? Well, in this section we will look at the Find Items search option and the different features you can use to find what you are looking for.

To begin a Find Items search, you must first click on the Search button in the main toolbar. Next, you will notice several links along the left side of the page, as shown in Figure 4.5. Each link will present you with different ways of searching through eBay's volumes of items for sale. To begin with, we will look at the Find Items search function and then proceed through some of the other search options available. I encourage you to explore the different search features I am not able to cover in this chapter. There are many new and powerful tools available to help make your eBay search expedition a success.

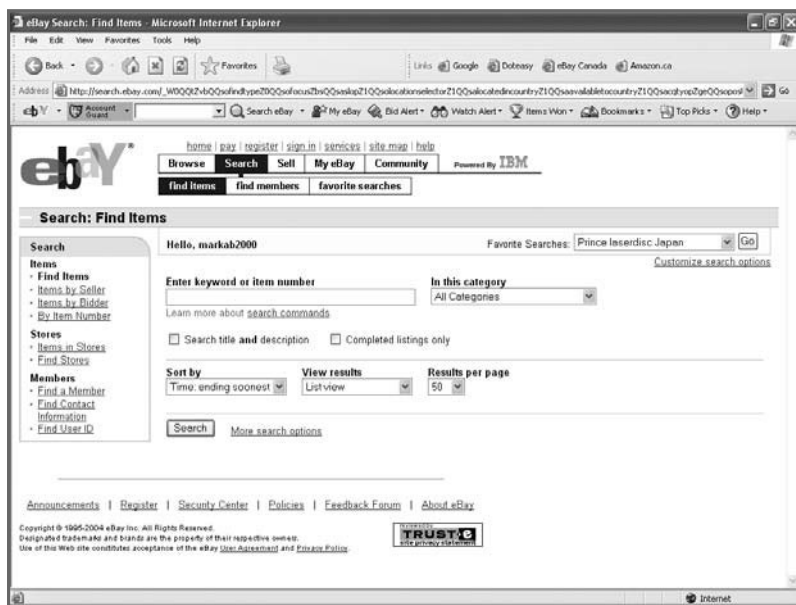


Figure 4.5

eBay's myriad search options.

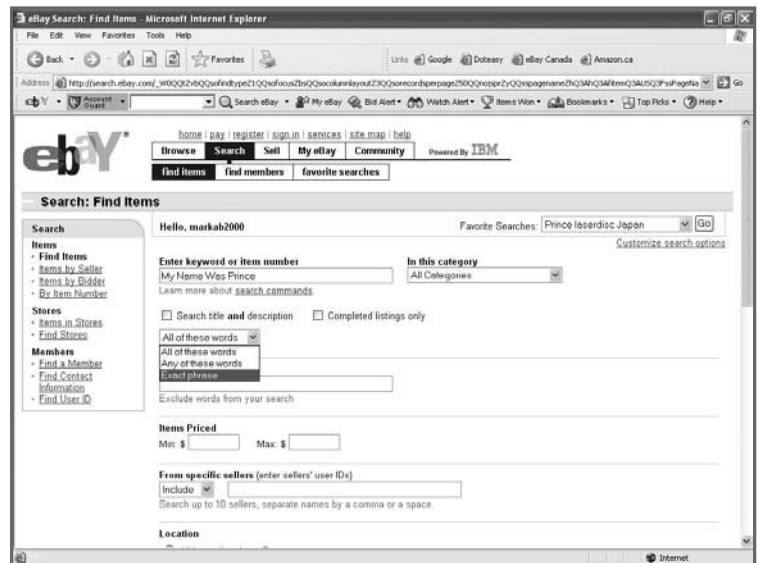
A Find Items search is much like the General search covered previously, except you are presented with many more options. Before we go any further, though, it is important that you click on the More Search Options link. This will open up a whole new world of search tools for you to use.

First and foremost, in the required section of the page, you are asked to enter keywords or an item number. Nothing too crazy here, except that

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

there is a drop-down menu available just below this text box under the Search Title and Description option. This drop-down menu gives you some flexibility with the words you enter in the Search text box.

Jordy is also looking for a rare CD by Prince entitled *My Name Was Prince*. This 1993 Japanese 12-track CD is extremely hard to find and Jordy's been keeping his eyes open in hopes that one day it will become available on eBay. In the Search box, Jordy types **My Name Was Prince**. Using the drop-down menu located below the Search box, Jordy selects the Exact Phrase option, as shown in Figure 4.6. This ensures that all results returned will include not only the words "my name was prince," but exactly in that order as well.



**Figure 4.6**

Using the Exact Phrase search option.

When he tried the search using this technique, he, at first glance, thought he was successful. He was wrong. It had nothing to do with the search per se, but rather the results. All the results that were returned were for CD singles of this song by Prince, but not the 12-track Japanese version he wanted. He would need to become more ruthless with his search techniques.

Continuing to use the Find Items search functions, Jordy could also use one or more of the following search aids to further refine his search results.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Search in Categories

If, by chance, some of the results include t-shirts, posters, and other non-CD related items, Jordy could select the Music category in the drop-down menu. The drop-down menu for categories is located just to the right of the main search text box and by default is listed as All Categories. If Jordy selects the Music category, he would reduce the number of hits and save a lot of time.

## Completed Listings Only

Located just below the main search box on this page, under Show Only, there's a small, inconspicuous checkbox called Completed Listings. Why would you ever want to search through completed listings for something you are hoping to find and eventually buy on eBay? Out of guesses? How about to see what people have been willing to spend on a specific item? For example, in the case of Jordy's search for the rare Radiohead CD single called "Drill," he wanted a better idea of how high bidding could possibly go for this item. Using the Completed Listings feature, he was able to see that in the worst case (for him), a buyer was willing to pay nearly \$200 USD for this rare CD. An example of a completed listing is displayed in Figure 4.7.

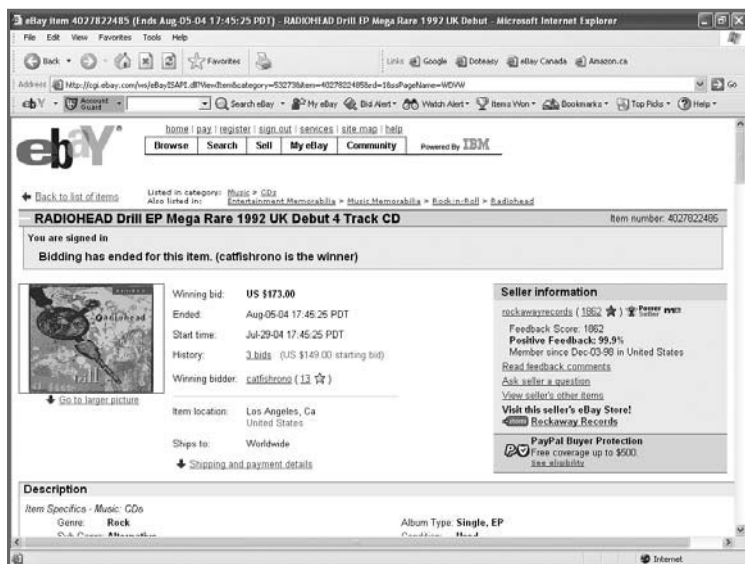


Figure 4.7

Using the search options.

## Exclude These Words

In the Exclude These Words text box, Jordy could enter words that he sees in the current search results that just aren't what he's looking for.

## Items Priced

Jordy can also define the price range he is willing to pay using the Items Priced section of this page. He isn't willing to pay more than \$250 for this CD if he finds it, so this section may come in handy if he wishes to refine his search further.

## From Specific Sellers

In the From Specific Sellers section of this page, you can tell eBay to only show the results from up to 10 sellers' names that you specify. This is an excellent feature for those searchers who have preferred sellers whom they like to deal with.

## Location

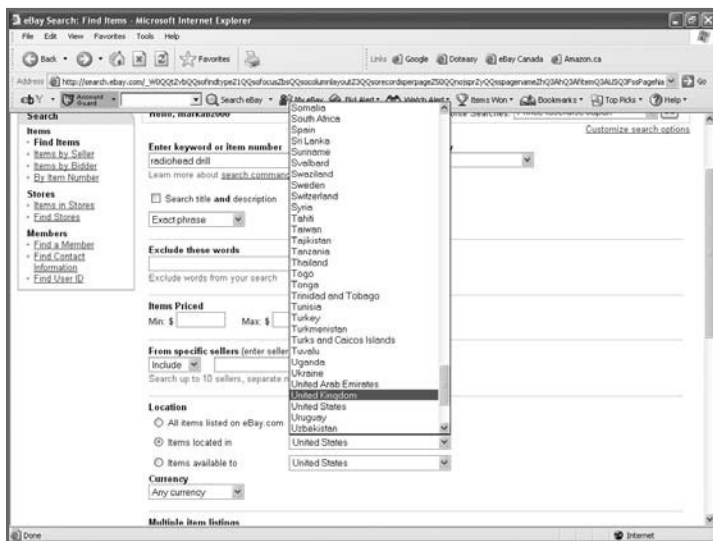
In the Location section, you will find some great options as well: Items Located In, Items Available To, and Currency.

## Items Located In

As shown in Figure 4.8, from this drop-down menu, you have the ability to select a seller location as a search refinement option. For example, if your preference is to get the Radiohead CD from the UK because you know that's where it originated, then you can select United Kingdom from this drop-down menu, and only those selling from this location will be displayed in the results.

## Items Available To

If you need to get specific, you can actually pinpoint the country where you are from or potentially traveling to, and select it from this drop-down menu.



**Figure 4.8**  
Search for only those items that are located in a specified country.

With this search option selected, only items that a seller is willing to ship to your location will be displayed. If you are located outside of the United States, it is a good idea to use this option and zero in on those sellers who are willing to ship worldwide.

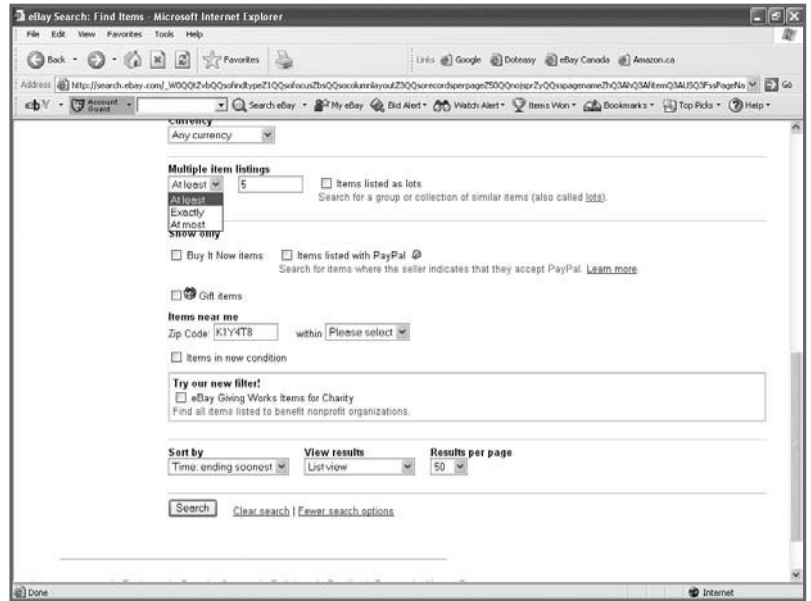
### Currency

If your preference is to deal with only certain currencies, you can control the types of results you will see by selecting from the drop-down menu provided. If, for example, you were to select Canadian as your currency choice, only items selling in Canadian dollars would be displayed. This should not be mistaken with a currency converter.

### Multiple Item Listings

In the Multiple Item Listings section, you have three options within a drop-down menu that allow you to select how many units of a certain item you are looking for. For example, if you were to select the At Least option from the drop-down menu and enter 5 in the text box to the right, you would be

telling eBay to only return results where there are at least 5 units of the desired item available for sale. You can choose from At Least, At Most, and Exactly when determining the number of units desired, as shown in Figure 4.9. To the right of these features, you can also enable the Items Listed as Lots option, which will give you those results where a member is selling a collection or group of similar items, such as music CD or 8-tracks.



**Figure 4.9**

Determine how many units of a specific item you are searching for.

## Show Only

In the Show Only section, you will find several options from which to choose:

- Buy It Now Items Only
- Items Listed with PayPal
- Gift Items
- Items Near Me
- eBay Giving Works Items for Charity

These are some of my personal favorites when I'm searching for items on eBay.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



## Buy It Now Items Only

Now here's a concept you may not be familiar with yet. Buy It Now items are items you can buy outright, like in a store, without having to bid at all. Many of the items on eBay now have this option available for those people who either want the items right away or just have an aversion to bidding in general. This feature, nestled warmly within the Find Items page, allows users to only seek out those sellers who provide this option.

## Items Listed with PayPal

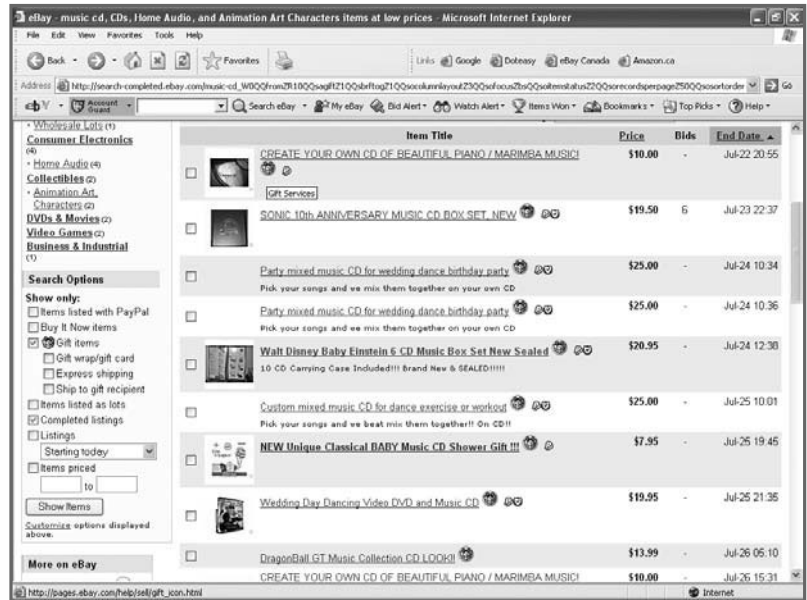
This is fairly self-explanatory. If you recall, PayPal is an online service provided by eBay that allows you to send and receive payments through e-mail for eBay's online auctions. With this option enabled, you'll be searching for items where the seller indicates that they accept PayPal. Never will you come across an item again where the seller only accepts money orders and checks. This is an excellent time-saving feature for those PayPal fanatics out there—like me!

## Gift Items

How novel! Some items on eBay have a small gift icon placed next to their item title, as shown in Figure 4.10. This gift icon lets buyers know that the seller of this item feels that it is a great gift idea. Over and above this assessment, this could also mean the seller offers gift services, such as gift-wrap/gift card, express shipping, and ship to gift recipient options.

## Items Near Me

In the Items Near Me section, you have two fields to fill in. The first asks you to enter your Zip Code. The second option gives you the ability to select a specific distance, measured in miles. The purpose of this feature is to allow you to search for items located a specified distance from where you live. If shipping costs are a concern for you, I strongly recommend the use of this search option.



**Figure 4.10**

Some items have gift icons next to them. This means that the seller offers gift services (such as wrapping and expedited shipping) along with this item.

## eBay Giving Works Items for Charity

With this option enabled, only listings that support and benefit nonprofit organizations will appear in your search results. Visit the eBay Giving Works page where you can see all the supported non-profits.

## Search Items by Seller

On the left side of the page, you will see an Items by Seller link. The Items by Seller page allows users to search by a particular seller's user ID, as shown in Figure 4.11. Once you've typed it in, you will see all the items that that seller is selling on eBay. You also have the option of seeing the seller's completed listings as well. This is a great way to get to know a seller prior to bidding. Using this feature, you can check to see if a seller has sold the item you want before and at what price it sold. You can also see if this seller sells any other items you may want, which could potentially be grouped for lower shipping charges. Last but not least, if you feel more secure dealing with specific sellers, you can stay on top of their comings and goings by searching using this function.

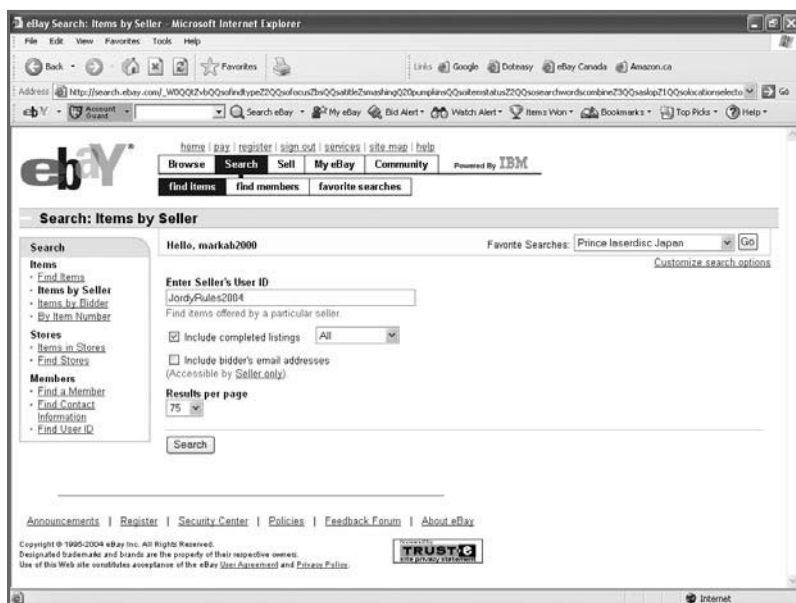


Figure 4.11

The Items by Seller search page.

## Search Items by Bidder

Using this feature, you can punch in a bidder's user ID and see her previous bids, as displayed in Figure 4.12. This is a great way to see what you're up against when you've entered into a bidding war with another buyer. You are able to see what kinds of items the bidder typically bids on and how high the bidder is willing to go. Learn more about your competition by using this tool.

## Search Items in Stores

Using this search option, you are able to search through stores on eBay, as shown in Figure 4.13. If you recall, stores on eBay are similar to stores you may shop in when you're on your lunch break downtown. In most cases, these eBay stores offer fixed prices or Buy It Now options on their items, and they are typically PowerSellers on eBay. Many bidders feel more secure buying from stores and will use this search technique instead of the more conventional search techniques available. This search page presents the searcher with all sorts of different options from which to choose.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

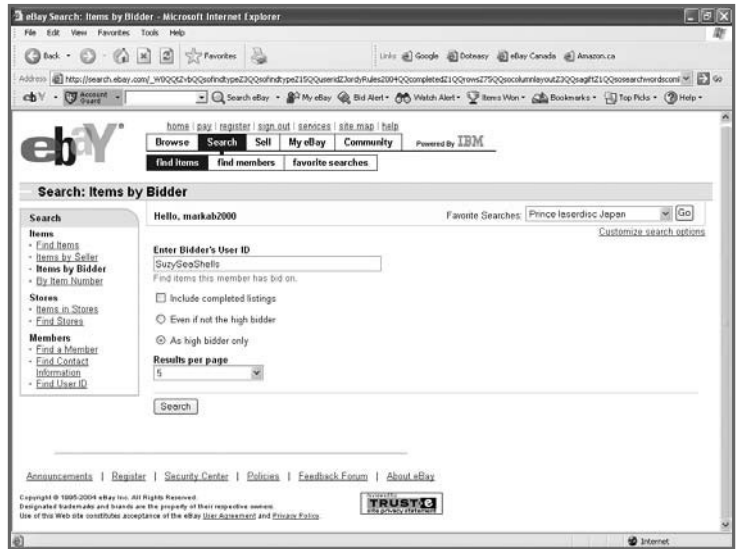


Figure 4.12

See what other bidders have been up to using the Items by Bidder search option.

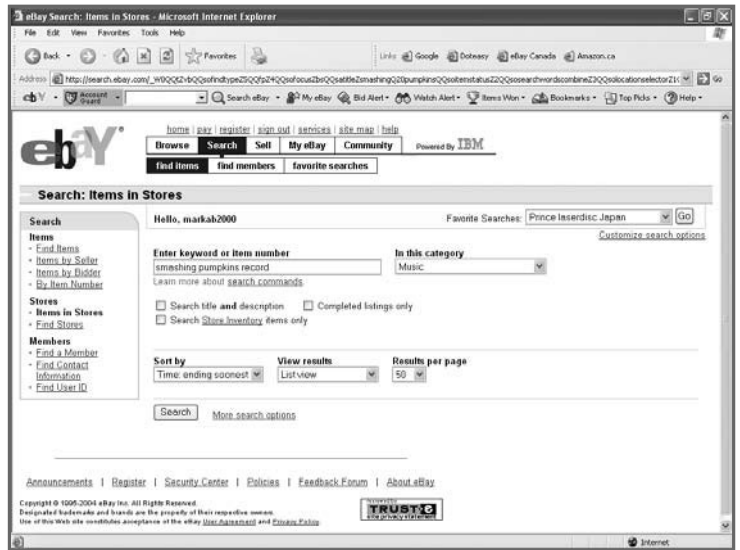


Figure 4.13

Search for items found in stores—only!

## Search Modifiers

If you want to act like a real eBay pro, you can use modifiers when searching on eBay. What is a modifier you ask? Think of modifiers as character

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

commands, similar to what you may already be using with search engines, which allow you to further refine your searches. Let's take a look at a few using an example.

The Rocker, Phat Matt Hately is looking to buy a bass guitar on eBay. He knows that he wants a Fender Jazz or a MusicMan StingRay bass guitar. Let's use modifiers to aid our search so that he finds what he's looking for.

## Case Sensitivity

Quiz question! Are searches case sensitive on eBay? Will I receive different results if I type in **Fender Jazz** versus **fender jazz**? Can I type it as **FENDER JAZZ** or **fenDer jaZZ**? Will it make a difference in my search? The answer is no. Searches on eBay are not case sensitive so feel free to leave your Shift key at home. It won't be needed here.

## Being Exact

By enclosing your search words in parentheses, you are telling eBay to only return results that have those words in that exact order or sequence. Sound familiar? It should. This feature was also available as a drop-down option in the Find Items search page. In Matt's search for a bass guitar, he typed (**fender bass guitar**). He received 22 hits. Not bad. What about his search for a MusicMan StingRay? For this search, he typed (**musicman stingray bass guitar**), but he only received one hit. So far, he has 23 items to look at. We can do better I'm sure.

## Being Exclusionary

After reviewing the results of his searches, he noticed that some of the hits were actually for Fender bass guitar cases rather than the guitar itself. Not needing a case, Matt wanted to go further and refine his search to exclude certain words from the results. To do this, he simply added the modifier **-case**. (No spaces required after the minus sign.) This time, Matt typed: (**fender bass guitar**) **-case**. Eighteen items were displayed. We are getting closer, but still no cigar—yet.

## Being Really Exclusionary

Although 18 items is manageable, to make my point and to ensure this example stays alive, let's further refine the search Matt is attempting by looking at excluding more words, but this time as a group. After reviewing the 18 items displayed, Matt again noticed that there were items he didn't want in the list. Of the items displayed, all of them had the words "fender bass guitar," but some also had the words "badges, t-shirts, books, and bags." He wanted those items weeded out of his search. Using modifiers, we will look at excluding groups of words to save time. Matt typed: **(fender bass guitar) -(case,badge,book,t-shirt,bag)** and tried his search again. (Remember, do not include spaces between the commas.) This time only 12 items were displayed and Matt seemed happy—momentarily.

## This OR That

Now Matt is really throwing a monkey into the wrench. The kicker is that he wants to search for both a Fender bass guitar and a MusicMan StingRay bass guitar at the same time. Modifiers to the rescue! This time around, Matt types **(Fender,MusicMan)**. For some reason, he feels more comfortable using caps, even though we told him repeatedly that searches on eBay are not case sensitive. Oh well. Again, a space is not required after the comma. Matt almost fell off his computer chair when he saw over 13,000 search results smack him hard in the face. He saw everything in his search results, from car fenders to CDs to stereo systems. This wasn't what he wanted. He could have then used the exclusion modifiers, but that would take way too long. There must be a way to help poor old Matt out with his problem.

## This OR That PLUS This

Now we're talking. This is my favorite modifier and soon to be yours. Similar to the last example but with a lot less unwanted results, Matt still typed both guitar brands in parentheses, but he also added a keyword or two that would be shared between them both. This will make a whole lot more sense when you see what he ended up typing. In fact, Matt insisted on throwing every modifier he had learned into this example, and it looks like it may have worked for him in the end. Matt typed **(Fender,MusicMan) +(bass guitar) -(case,badge,book,t-shirt,bag)**. By adding the plus sign and the keywords, "bass guitar," Matt has **TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

instructed eBay to send him results that include “bass guitar,” either “Fender or MusicMan,” excluding any items that have the words “case, badge, book, t-shirt, or bag.” This was by far the best search of the day. With over 120 choices to pick from, Matt had his cake and was able to eat it too.

## The Wildcard Modifier

There will come a time when you just aren't sure how to spell a certain item you are looking for. In Matt's case, it happened recently when he was searching for a Billy Sheehan autographed guitar. He couldn't remember the proper spelling of Billy's last name, so instead he used the wildcard modifier to help him out. He typed **(Billy Shee\*)**. He inserted an asterisk directly after Shee in the Search box. All item titles that contained the word Billy and were followed by Shee were displayed. The asterisk took the place of the remaining letters in Billy's last name and the results displayed met Matt's search criteria.

## Just Browsing, Thanks

When you take all the things currently selling on eBay and try to organize them into different groupings, you will come up with eBay's category listings. With over 20,000 categories currently available, browsing through them is not for someone short on time. In Chapter 2, when we reviewed eBay's front page, I pointed out that the categories were built with the shop browser in mind. This is someone who isn't quite sure what he is looking for and prefers just to browse or look around. eBay categories to the rescue!

The perfect example of this in action would be Mark Swift's, never-ending search for music collectibles on eBay. Instead of searching for collectibles by keywords, he lingers and loiters in the music collectibles category. There, he comes across things he never knew existed. A great example of an item he found while browsing is the Graceland fence pieces shown in Chapter 1, “Music on eBay? Like What?” Who would have thought you could buy something like that? Only a browser would most likely come across a find like that—a browser like Swifty. He does have his favorite types of collectibles, like celebrity bobbleheads, which he combs through the following category path for:

Home > All Categories > Collectibles > Pinbacks, Noddors, Lunchboxes > Noddors > Modern (1970-Now) > Music. You can see the results in Figure 4.14.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

The advantages of rummaging through categories don't stop there though. If you plan on selling items on eBay, it's a good idea to take a look at the different categories that exist and see what makes sense for your item. Remember that as a seller, you choose what category your item will be listed under. Learn from others by browsing through the categories to see what choices they made for their items.

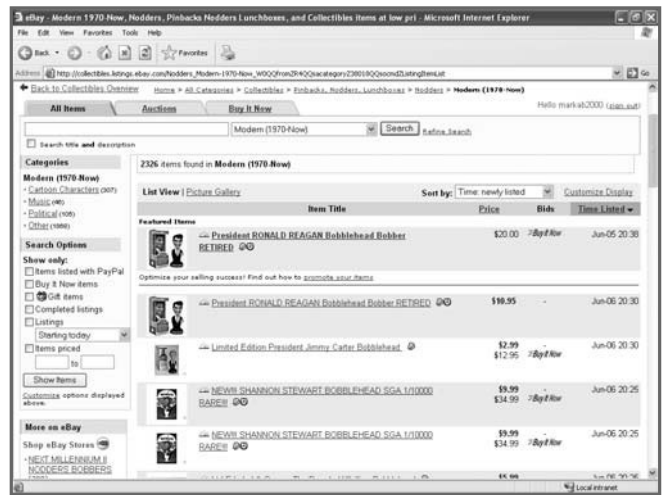


Figure 4.14

Using the Bobblehead or Nodders Category.

## eBay Search Toolbar

The eBay Search Toolbar is a free tool that you can download from eBay's site and install to your browser. It provides all sorts of functionality and is a great tool to have if you are serious about staying on top of your searches, bids, and purchases.

### Installing the Toolbar

Installing the Toolbar is extremely easy. First, click on the Services link on the main toolbar. Then, scroll halfway down the page and click on the Buyer Tools link. The Buyer Tools page will appear, and you will see the eBay Toolbar link. Click on this link and the next page that appears will display a Get eBay Toolbar Now button. Click on this button, as shown in Figure 4.15. The eBay Toolbar is now installed.

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !



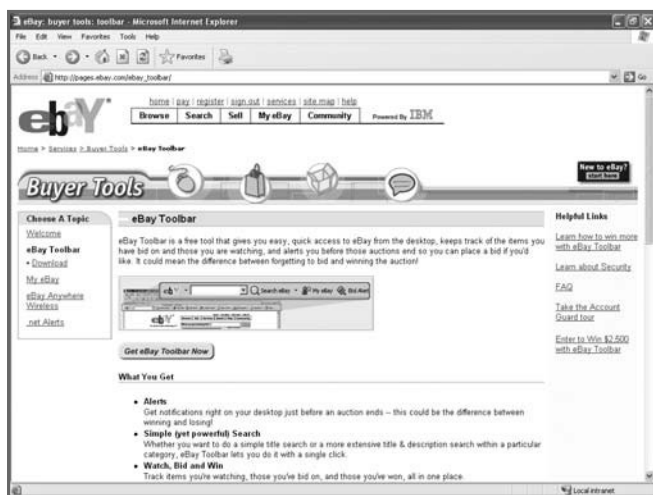


Figure 4.15

Installing the eBay Search Toolbar.

Read through the User Agreement and Privacy Policy and click the Agree button to continue installation of eBay Toolbar. Answer Yes to the security alert question. From there, you simply need to log in and the new toolbar will appear in your browser, as shown in Figure 4.16. If, by chance, the toolbar does not appear, close your Internet browser and re-open it.

## Benefits of the Toolbar

Designated as a buyer's tool, the eBay Search Toolbar will help you keep track of items you've bid on and those you are watching. Alerts will notify you when an auction is closing to remind you that you still have time to bid. You will be able to search for items faster by using the Search box in the toolbar as well as the drop-down list of available search options. Last but not least, look forward to added security using the new Account Guard, which protects your account and personal information.

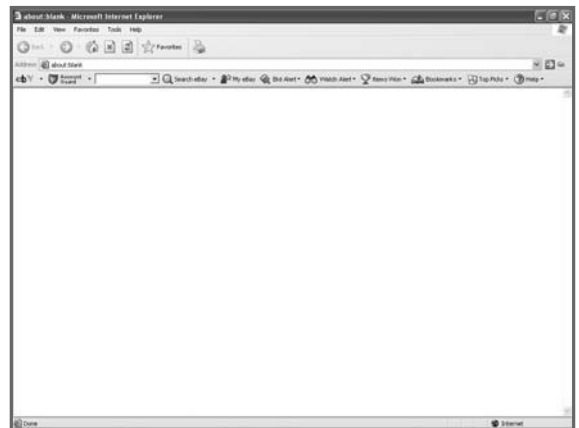
## My Favorite Searches

Here's your searching secret weapon. Jordy uses it religiously and now I do too. When you conduct a search on eBay, you may notice an Add to Favorites link on the Results page. This feature allows you to save the search criteria for that specific search to your My eBay page. Once saved there, you

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

can request that eBay send you an e-mail whenever an item matching the criteria is posted. You can have up to five saved favorite searches and they can be changed at any time, as shown in Figure 4.17. You can also quickly access your favorite searches from the main search page. Click on the Search button on the main toolbar, and you'll see a Favorite Searches drop-down menu in the top-right corner. I primarily use this feature for items I am having trouble finding on eBay.

So when Bono from U2 said, "I still haven't found what I'm looking for" he obviously hadn't read this chapter. Maybe I'll send him a copy of this book and who knows—I might even inspire a new song! On to the next chapter where we look at the fruits of your searches—the Results page.



**Figure 4.16**

See the new eBay Search Toolbar in action in your Internet browser.



**Figure 4.17**

Save up to five favorite searches to save your time.

# chapter 5



## Found It! Now What?

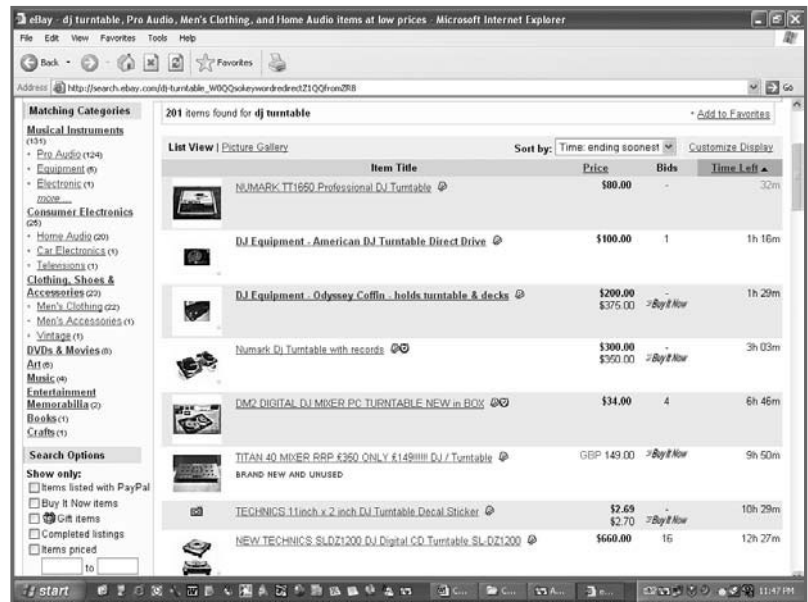
---

You are now the master seeker, the king of the search, and the savvy hunter. With Chapter 4's search techniques under your belt, nothing can stop you from finding the things you want on eBay. The only problem now is that sometimes your searches can be too successful. What do you do when you get all sorts of results based on your search criteria, each perfectly matching what you are looking for? To begin with, you must attain a better understanding of what it is you see on the Results page. You need to understand your surroundings so that you can navigate the page in the most effective way.

### Exploring the Search Results Page

---

Phat Matt, my rock star colleague and the resident eBay expert, has been trying to talk me into buying DJ equipment for the past couple of years. "To be cool like Matt, you have play like a cat." His quote, not mine. For those of you who aren't turntable savvy, cats scratch, which is what DJs do when they spin the wheels of steel in the clubs. Anyway, he recommends eBay as the perfect place to find what I need. So, I ran a search, incorporating what we learned in Chapter 4, and the results are shown in Figure 5.1. Now what? What does this symbol mean? What does that button do? These are all questions that will be answered in this section.



**Figure 5.1**

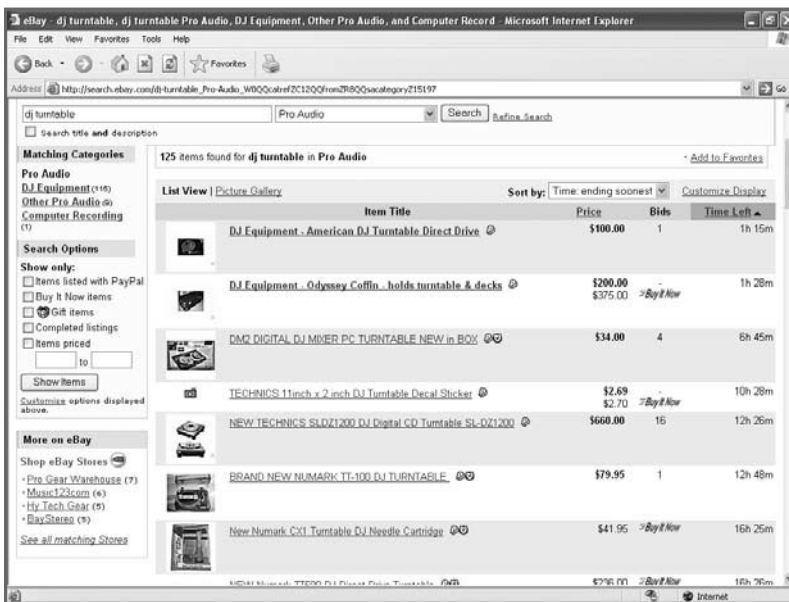
Exploring the Search Results page.

## Matching Categories

On the left side of the screen, you will notice a section called Matching Categories. Here, eBay shows the categories of items available that match up with the keywords used in the search.

Searching for “dj turntable” has resulted in the display of over 20 categories and 175 potential items that match those keywords. This tells me that my search was most likely too vague. (This is eBay’s way of trying to help, by the way.) By presenting me with all these categories, I am able to click on the appropriate one, and refine my results. Some of these categories are way off, such as DVDs and Movies and Art and Clothing. However, in this case, there are actually two categories that match what I am looking for: Musical Instruments and Consumer Electronics. Under each of these categories are subcategories that further reduce the number of items in the Results list. You can see how many items are included in each category by looking at the number in the parentheses next to the category name. Unfortunately, there isn’t a way to select more than one category at a time, but I’m sure that’s coming soon. (eBay—can you hear me out there?)

I click on the Pro Audio subcategory. Now we're down to 125 items to rifle through. Can we continue to drill down? You better believe it. In the Matching Categories section, under Pro Audio, I see more categories to choose from, as shown in Figure 5.2. I click on "DJ Equipment." Now I'm down to 102 items in my list. Again, the categories to the left have been broken down further. This time I see exactly what I am looking for: Turntables. By clicking on it, I am now down to 61 items. This sure is a fun way of finding items on eBay. What's the only problem with this method? What if the seller categorized the item in a weird, or unobvious way? It would slip right by us. Keep that in mind as we work through this example. Always exhaust all your search options and you'll never be disappointed.



**Figure 5.2**

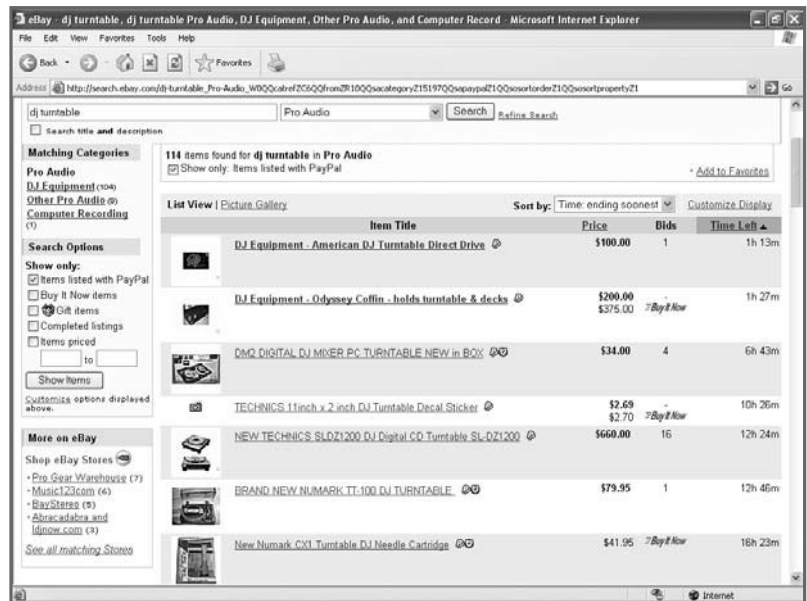
Drilling down in the results using Matching Categories.

Last but not least, the Matching Categories section displays brand names for DJ turntables. Phat Matt tells me to go with Technics, and I get a lucky 13 items to weed through. What an exercise. Before I select the one I want, let's get better acquainted with another area of the eBay Results page—the Search Options section.

## Search Options

The Search Options section is located just below Matching Categories and can be quite helpful when attempting to further refine your results. Using this feature, you can have eBay display only those items in your current Results list that are:

- **Items listed with PayPal.** Personally, I select this option a lot, especially if there are hundreds of items in my list. PayPal means I am going to get my item faster, and those are the sellers I like to deal with. Simply put, this option will display all those items where the seller accepts PayPal payments, as shown in Figure 5.3.



**Figure 5.3**

Using Search Options to display only those items that support PayPal payments. Note the PayPal icon to the right of each item description.

- **Buy It Now items.** If you aren't in the mood to bid, and you are looking for a quick purchase instead, this is the option to choose. With this option enabled, the only items that will be displayed are those that you could possibly buy at a fixed price, outright—bypassing the bidding process (as shown in Figure 5.4).

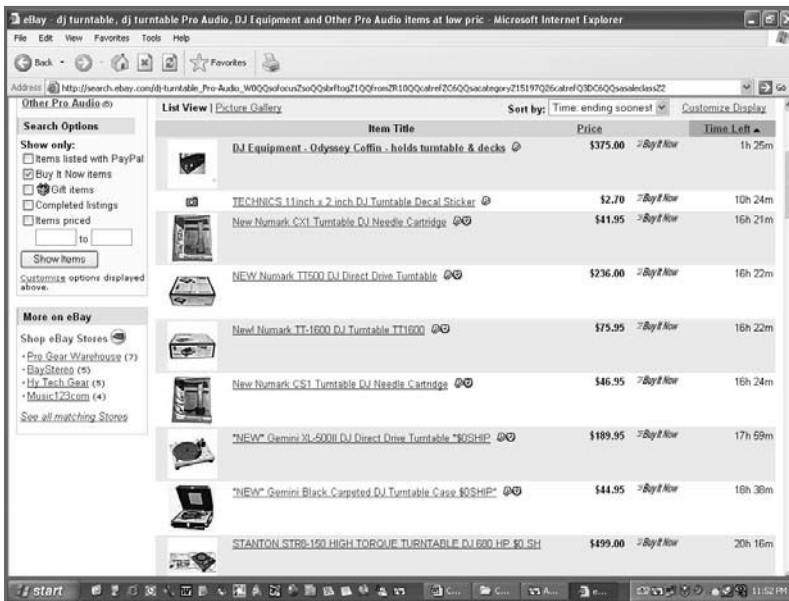


Figure 5.4

Using Search Options to display only those items that are Buy It Now.

- **Gift Items.** If you are interested in purchasing a gift for someone, you can select this option and only see those items that sellers have deemed as gifts, as shown in Figure 5.5. This could mean that the seller offers services that include gift cards, wrapping, expedited shipping, and so on.
- **Completed Listings.** Now, why would anyone want to see all the completed items in the Results list, as displayed in Figure 5.6? That means that the item has already been sold or its auction has expired. This is a great way to see what other turntables sold for. If you want to get a good idea of how much this may cost you once you enter a bidding fray, then select this option to see what other buyers like you had to shell out for their piece of the wheel (sorry, more DJ talk).
- **Items Priced.** With this option selected, you can punch in a price range that you are willing to pay and the results will be filtered to show only those items that meet your price criteria (see Figure 5.7). Keep in mind that this doesn't mean the item will never exceed the amount you enter. This is only referring to the price range of the item at the exact time you do your search. Once you start bidding, that price can go as high as it is driven.

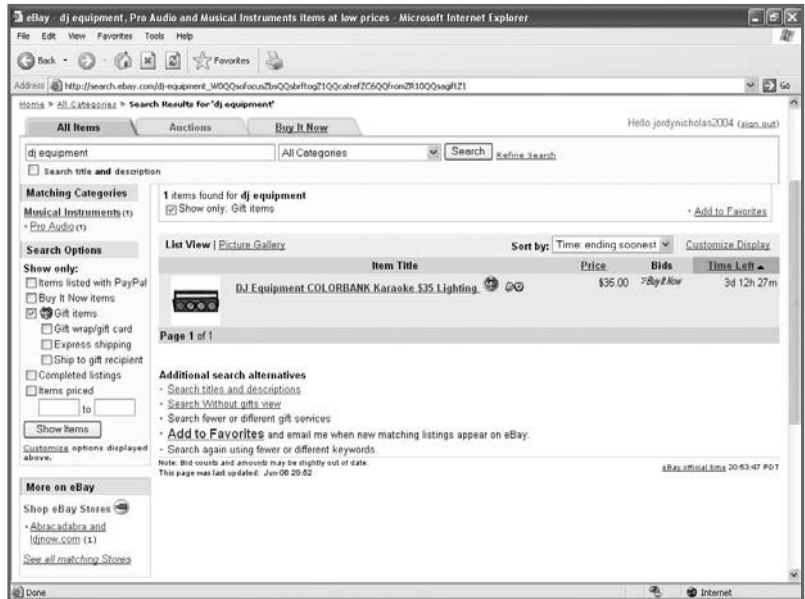


Figure 5.5

Using Search Options to display only those items that have gift services.

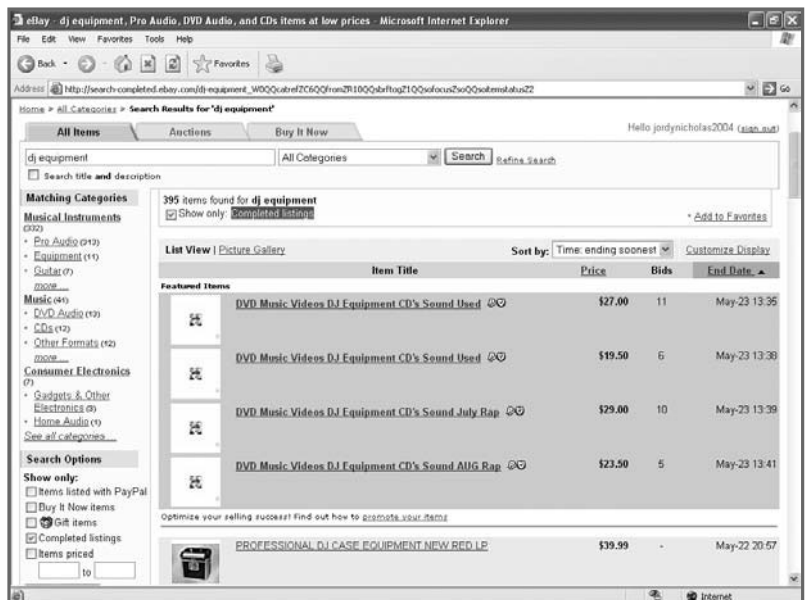


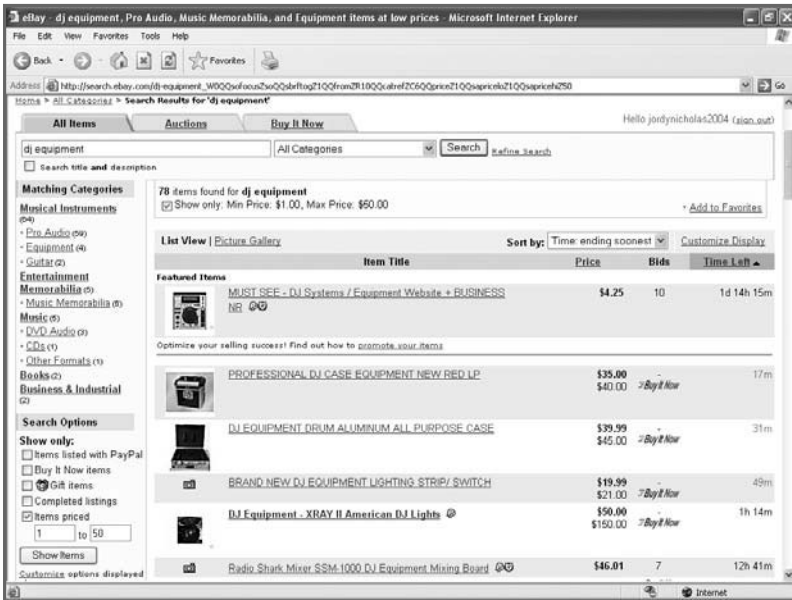
Figure 5.6

Using Search Options to display only those items that are completed auctions.

Once you've figured out what options you want to select, click on the Show Items button. Your results will be filtered and refined accordingly.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**





**Figure 5.7**

Using Search Options to display only those items that currently fall within a user-defined price range.

## More on eBay

Like we needed more results somewhere else, right? Don't scoff. Although this is a clever sales and marketing ploy, it has saved the day a number of times for me. The More on eBay section of the Results page brings you all the stores and popular searches that match up to your search criteria. The popular searches will not appear unless you've entered very general search words. For example, after punching in the letters DJ for my search, the Popular Searches area of the More on eBay section displayed the following, as shown in Figure 5.8: DJ mixer, American DJ, DJ speakers, and DJ shadow. By clicking on DJ mixer, eBay has saved me a lot of time by drilling down within the results to get me to where I want to go.

Just below the Popular Searches area are some links to eBay stores. Stores on eBay are typically run by eBay PowerSellers who have been selling on eBay for a long time. They are usually very experienced, and some people feel much more secure dealing with these stores rather than the average seller.

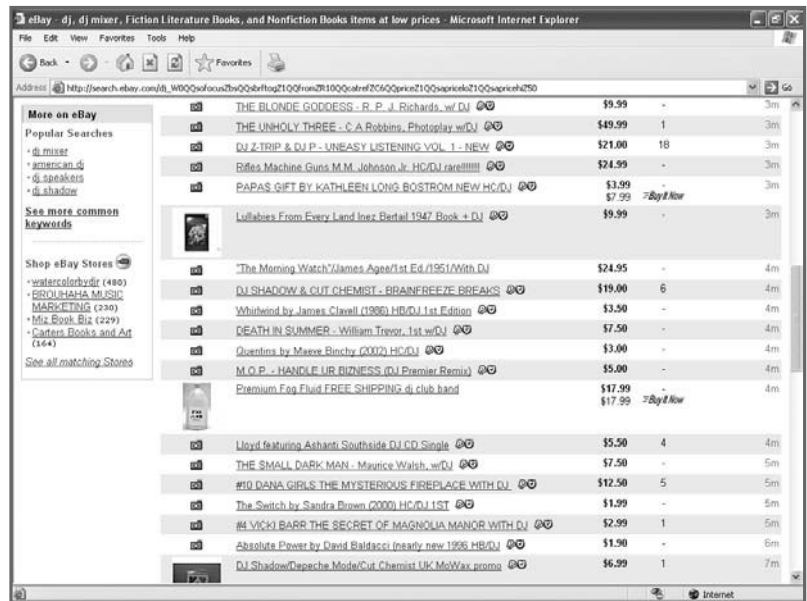


Figure 5.8

Let eBay do the work by providing Popular Searches for the items you are looking for.

You will also see a See all Matching Stores link. Click on this link. Waste of time alert! Good luck weeding through the hundreds of stores that are displayed. eBay is showing all the stores that have “DJ” or “mixer” associated with them. No wonder all sorts of kitchen stores showed up! This is easily fixed though. As shown in Figure 5.9, simply add quotation marks around the words “DJ mixer” in the Search for eBay Stores text field and click Search. By adding quotation marks, you are telling eBay to only show those stores that match up with both “DJ” and “mixer.” Your Results list should definitely come down some.

## The Results

Let’s now move to the Results section of the eBay Results page. This is the moment you’ve been waiting for. Now that we have a manageable list of results, let’s take a look at how we can sort through the items, identify the different symbols, and customize what we see.

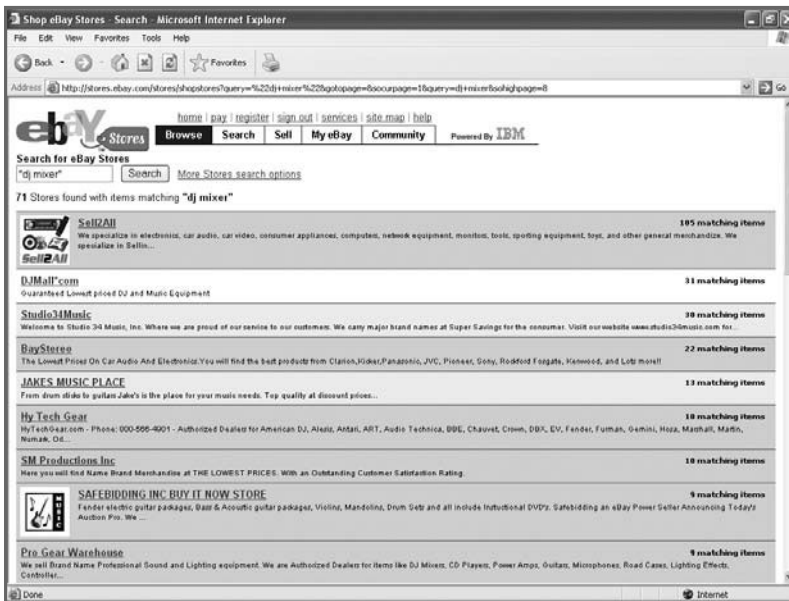


Figure 5.9

Using eBay stores to find "DJ mixer."

## All Items, Auctions, or Buy It Now

I couldn't think of a better title than that, unfortunately. Just above the Search box and the Category drop-down menu, you will see three tabs: All Items, Auctions, and Buy It Now. By default, the All Items tab is selected, and it will display all the items based on your search criteria, regardless of the auction type. If you select the Auctions tab, instead of seeing all the items that match your keyword search, you will see only those where bidding is possible. No fixed prices or Buy it Now auctions will be displayed in this view mode, as shown in Figure 5.10.

Finally, if you were to select the Buy It Now tab, the only items displayed would be those where fixed prices are possible and items can be purchased outright, bypassing the bidding process (see Figure 5.11).

## To List or Picture, That Is the View

Located just to the left of the title header in the Search Results area, you will see two choices of views: List view and Picture Gallery. The default List view is most likely what you're used to seeing when working in eBay. The Picture

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

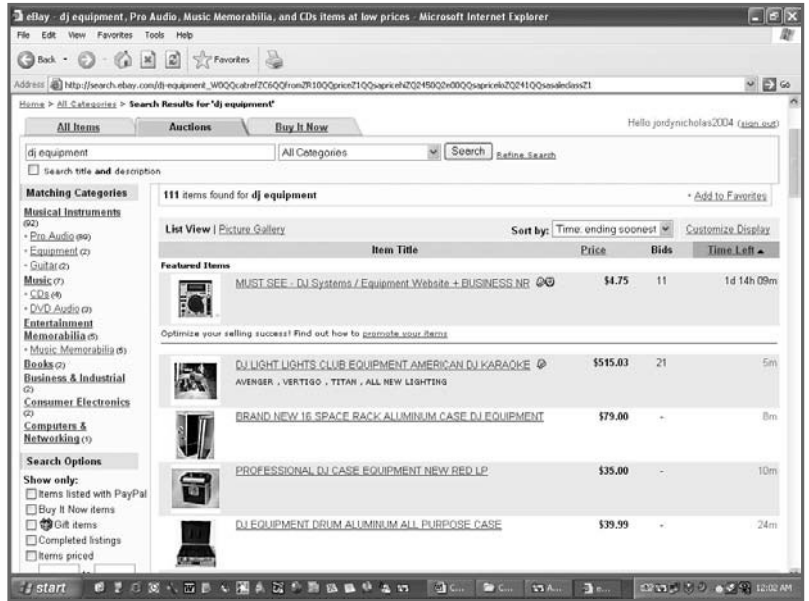


Figure 5.10

By selecting the Auctions tab, you will no longer see any Buy It Now listings.

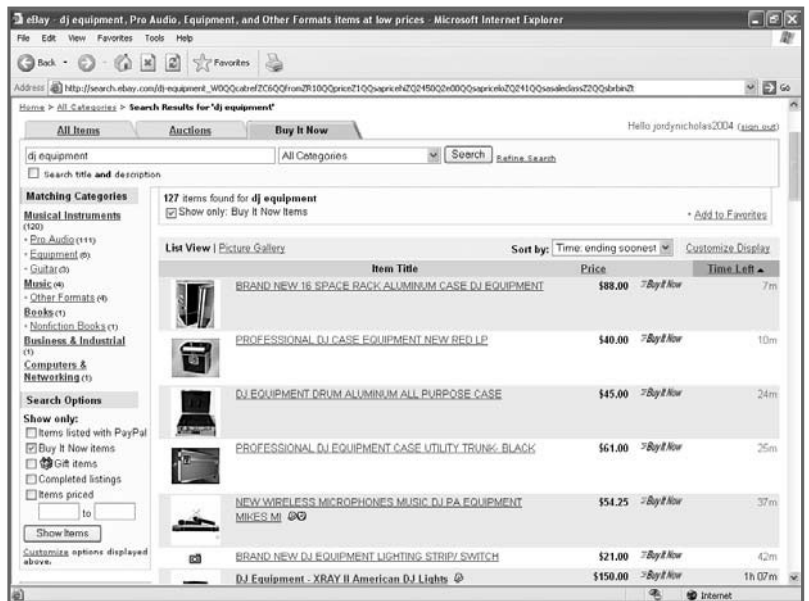
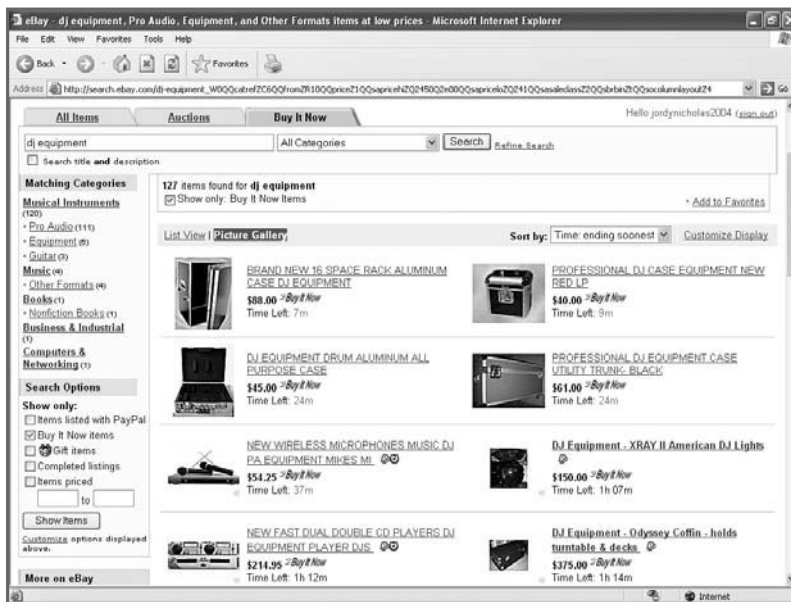


Figure 5.11

By selecting the Buy It Now tab, you will see only those auctions where it is possible to purchase an item at a fixed price—bypassing the bidding process.

Gallery allows you to see items with their photos just like a miniature picture mall. It's a Results page like in List view, but with pictures, as shown in Figure 5.12. This is definitely a better way to shop, isn't it? I would be remiss if I didn't tell you though that there is an additional charge to sellers for displaying their items in the Picture Gallery. Chapter 17, "Pix & Trix—Getting Your Listing to Stand Out," details the listing fee structure for the available options.



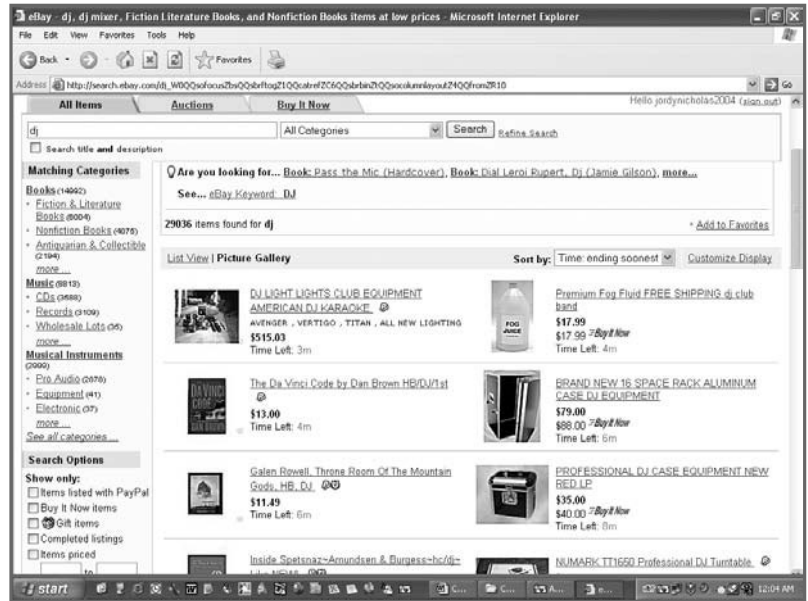
**Figure 5.12**

Visit the Picture Gallery and stroll through eBay's miniature photo mall.

## Are You Looking For... eBay Keywords

Sometimes you'll notice that eBay lends a helping hand when it feels you're struggling. For example, if you enter too vague a search, eBay will suggest a few keywords. You'll see the Are You Looking For link at the top of the page, displaying certain keywords that may or may not relate. For this example, I've typed the letters DJ in as my search. I know, I know, that's way too general and the results will most likely blow my monitor off my soda can collection. This is just for demonstration purposes. Please try this at home. Upon hitting the Search icon, eBay suggests the following, as shown in Figure 5.13,

“Are you looking for... Book: *Pass the Mic* (Hardcover), Book: *Dial Leroi Rupert*, DJ (Jamie Gilson), more...” These choices aren't even close to where I was going, but it's really my fault for being so vague. Thanks for trying eBay, we all appreciate it.



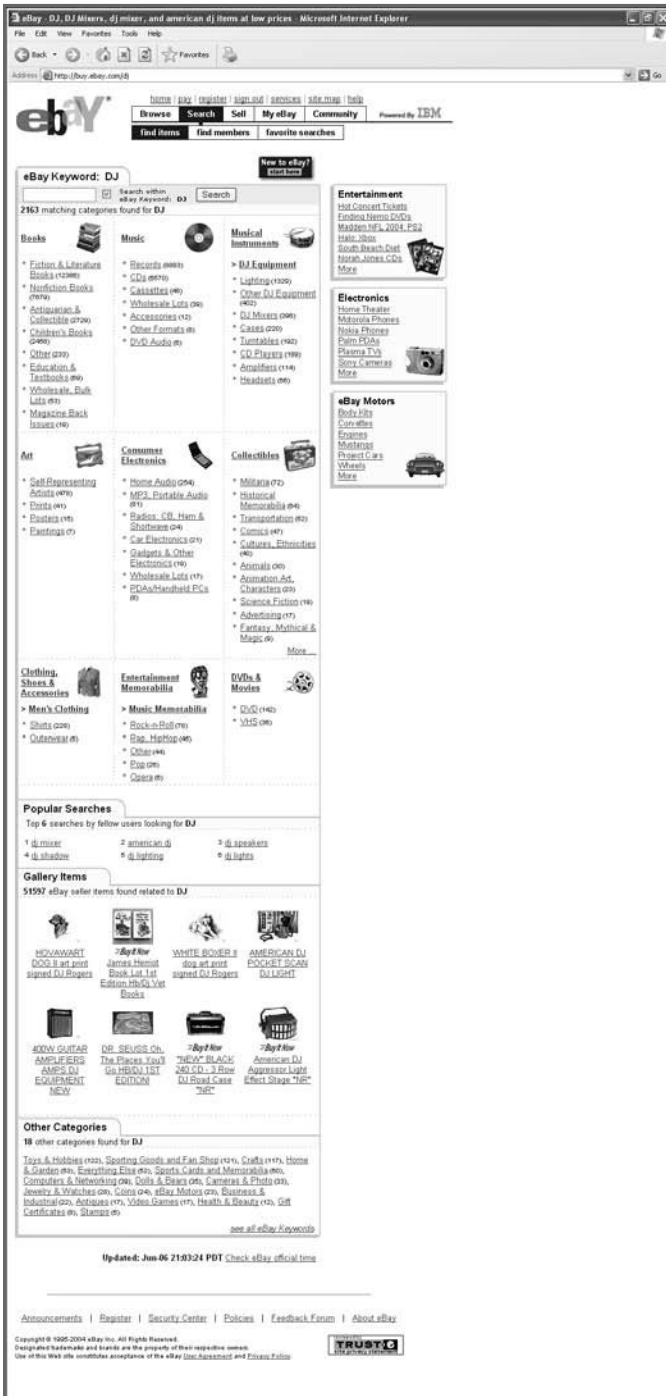
**Figure 5.13**

The Are You Looking For link—  
eBay tries to help!

You may have noticed the See link just below the Are You Looking For link. Click on the See link to find out what wonderful assistance eBay can provide if you just have the guts to ask. As shown in Figure 5.14, eBay keywords are an excellent way to drill down to the items you are really looking for by finding the categories that match up to them. As you can see, there are over 2,000 matching categories found for DJ.

## Working the Headers

The headers, at the top of each column where the results are listed, give you an idea of the kind of information you will see in each line item. Here's what those headers are and what they tell you about the item for sale:



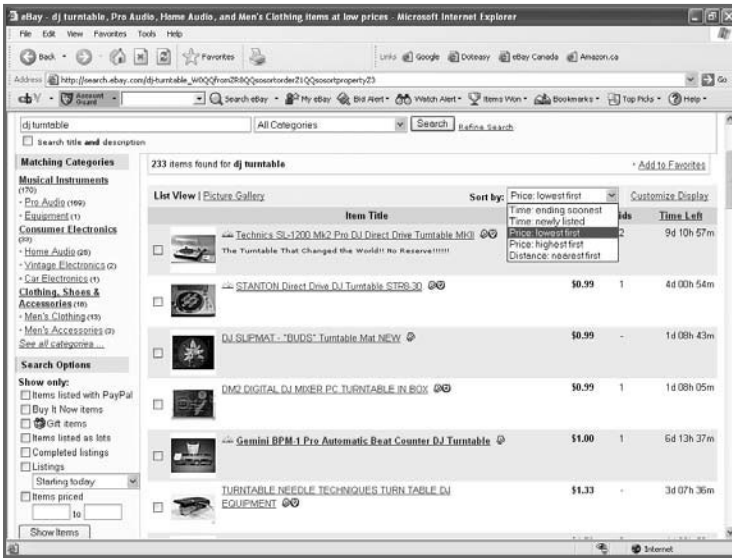
**Figure 5.14**  
See all the categories that match up to a Keyword search and get the results you want—faster.

- **Item Title.** When rooting through search results, the item title will grab your attention first. If a seller has done his job properly, an effective item title will draw you in to double-click on the item and then bid.
- **Price.** The price header and column will display the current price for that item. Do not be misled, though. eBay updates its listings on a regular basis, but sometimes the price on the Results page is not current. Notice the small print on the bottom of the page that states “Note: Bid counts and amounts may be slightly out of date.” If you are seriously considering bidding on the item, click on the item to see the current price.
- **Bids.** In this column, you will see the number of bids that have occurred for that item. If there are no bids, a dash will appear in this column. If there are no bids and the seller supports Buy It Now payments, then the Buy It Now symbol will be displayed. The Buy It Now feature is displayed as an option to buyers only if no one has placed a bid on that item. Act fast. Snooze and you’ve passed up a sure thing to instead enter a potential bidding battle.
- **Time Left.** This column displays the remaining time before that auction closes. When you go through the process of listing your item for sale on eBay, you have the following choice of auction durations: 1, 3, 5, 7, or 10 days. This column will show how much time you have left as a bidder to get in there and bid before the window of opportunity shuts down on your fingers.

## Sorting the Results

eBay gives you all sorts of options when you are viewing the Results page. Click on the drop-down menu shown in Figure 5.15. There are four options to explore. Two are related to time, and the other two involve price. If your preference is to sort the results by price, you can sort the results in ascending or descending order. If you prefer to work with time, you can sort the results by either Newly Listed or Ending Soonest. If you’re a clock-watching vulture type of bidder, then you may want to have your sorting option set to Time: Ending Soonest. That’s where all the last-minute shoppers prey. More on that later.





**Figure 5.15**  
There are four sort options available when filtering through search results.

## Icons, Icons, and More Icons

The Search Results page includes a number of small icons next to the item descriptions. Without knowing what each icon represents, they are just pretty little pictures. By hovering your mouse over the icon, a small tooltip will appear, giving you a brief description of that icon's role. Each icon will tell you something about either the seller or the item that is up for bid. Let's take a look at each, shown in Figure 5.16.

- **Camera.** When you see the camera icon next to an item, this means that there is a picture included with the listing.
- **PayPal.** There are two PayPal logo icons that you will see on the Results page. Both let you know that the seller supports PayPal. The PayPal icon with the shield attached also means that if you buy from this seller, you are protected for up to \$500 through the PayPal Buyer Protection Program. You are definitely going to feel a whole lot more secure dealing with this buyer, knowing if for whatever reason he doesn't deliver the goods, you're covered by PayPal for up to \$500. If you're a seller, it's in your best interest to sign up for this program. There are some requirements before you can qualify, and we will cover those in more detail when we look at selling items on eBay.

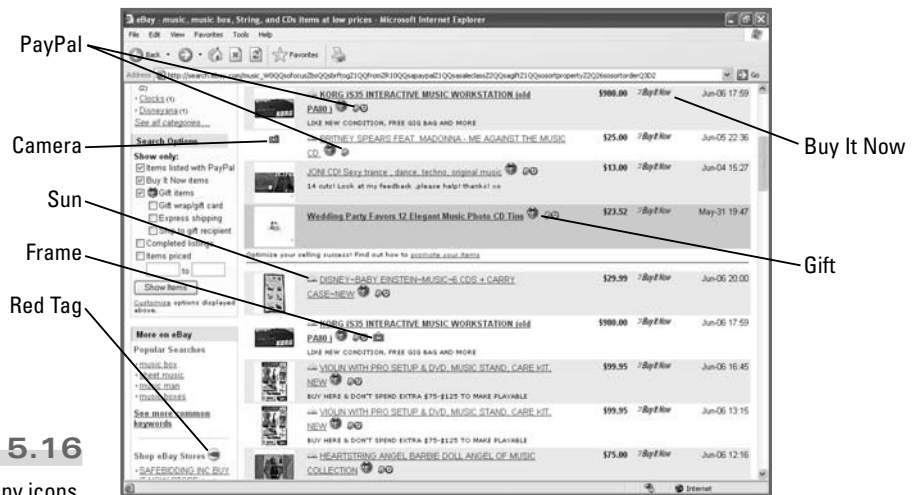


Figure 5.16

The many icons.

- **Sun.** When you see the little sun coming over the horizon, it's time to wake up. Sorry, I couldn't resist. The sun icon will appear to the left of an item in the Results list if the item is new and has been listed within the last 24 hours.
- **Buy It Now.** Located in the Bids column of the Results page, you will sometimes see the Buy It Now icon. We all know what that means by now—right? That item is available at a set, fixed price that you can pay without having to bid through the auction process.
- **Gift.** When you see the gift icon, you are seeing an item that the seller provides gift services for. This could be anything from gift wrapping to expedited shipping services. Be sure to ask the seller your questions before you bid.
- **Frame.** When you see a small frame icon, that means that a specific item is also featured in the eBay Gallery. The eBay Gallery is eBay's miniature picture mall where you can see photos of the items rather than just text listings. When in List view, any item that has the small frame next to it will be showing a photograph of the item for sale. Those sellers who do not have this feature will instead show a small camera in the place of the photograph. See the camera icon for more details.

- **Red Tag.** Finally, a red tag next to a seller's user ID means that he has an eBay Store.

Now, this is definitely not all the icons you will see on eBay, but these are the ones that you will see frequently. If any others become important during the course of this book, I will identify and explain them.

## Matching Items Found in Other eBay Areas

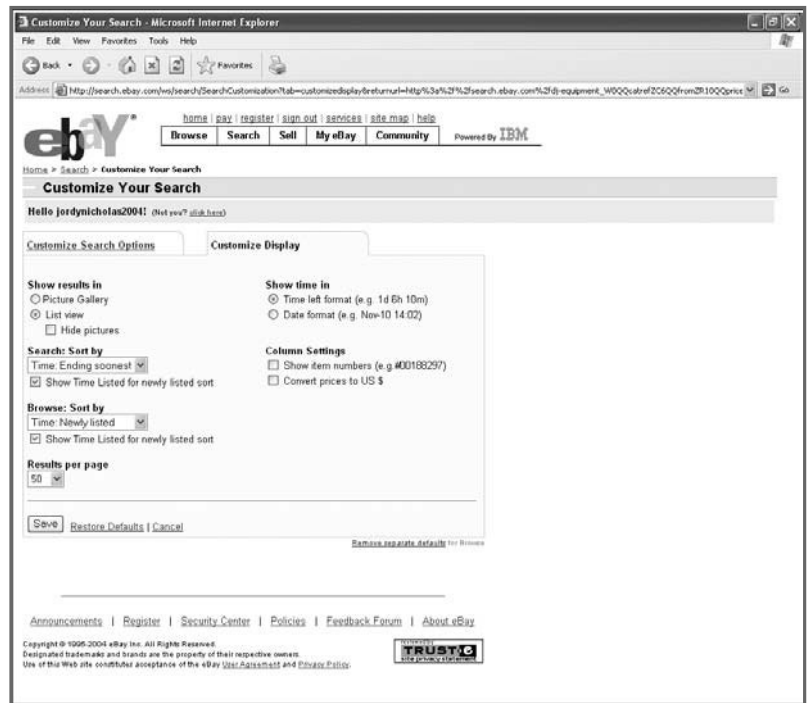
If you're really desperate, and the Results page just doesn't show you what you want to see, you do have other options. In the Matching Items Found in Other eBay Areas section of the Results page, you can find links to two different sources of items. The first is a link to Additional Buy It Now items. These are available from eBay Store sellers and are listed in the Store Inventory Format. These types of items appear only in eBay Stores and are sold at fixed (Buy It Now) prices. Although I mentioned that you would have to be quite desperate to check out these links, I take it back. I've done it, and I will continue to do so. Exhaust all your options. There are deals everywhere; you just need to know where to look.

The See All Items Including Those Available from Non-English Speaking Countries link will do exactly that. You will see all the items you saw previously, along with a bunch you probably won't understand. Unless you are a multilingual being, leave this one at home.

## Customizing the Display and Search Options

eBay does allow some elements of customization on the Results page. Click on the Customize Display tab on the right side of the page, just above the Time Left header. As shown in Figure 5.17, this page allows you to change several options on the Results page.

Within this view, you can set defaults as to how you'd like your results to be shown. You can choose from either Picture Gallery or List view, or for those people with slow Internet connections, there is an option to hide pictures entirely on the Results page.



**Figure 5.17**

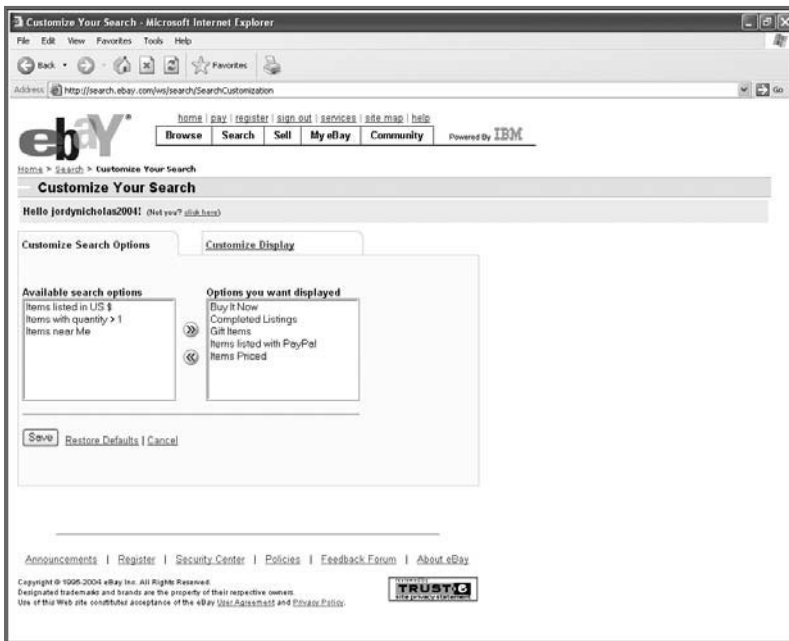
Customizing the Results page's display.

Within this page you can also set the default Sort By and Browse By views, as well as the number of results displayed per page. Again, depending on your Internet connection, this number can range from 25 to 200 results per page.

Last but not least, once you've made all the changes you want to make, you can save them as defaults, and your Results page will be yours and yours alone until you decide to return to this page and click the Restore Defaults button.

You also have the opportunity while you're on this page to click on the Customize Search Options tab, located in the top-left corner. Customizing your Search Options allows you to control what is shown in the Search Options section of the Results page. If you recall, the Search Options filtered the Results list based on display criteria you selected. As shown in Figure 5.18, there are items on the left side of the page in the Available Search Options box that can be added to the Options You Want Displayed box on the right side. As with the Customize Display options, you can save the changes as the default for all future visits to the Results page.

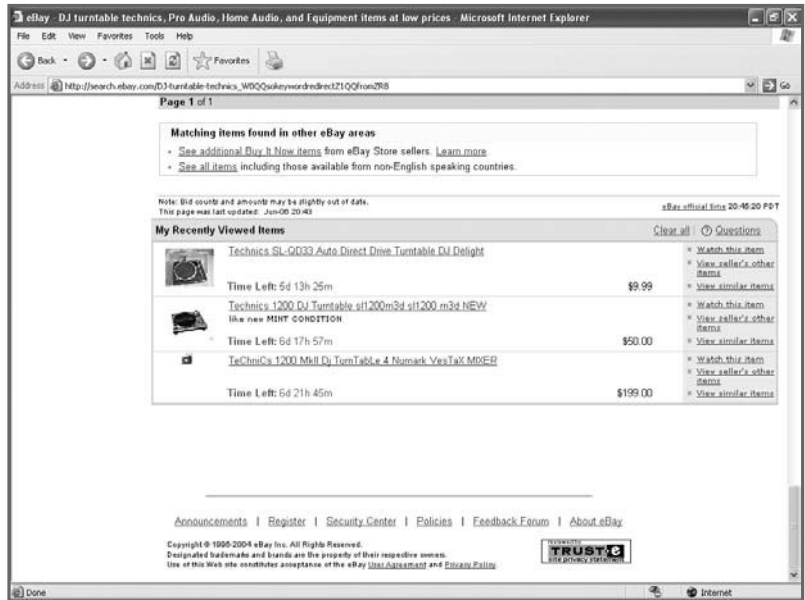
**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

**Figure 5.18**

Customize the Results page's search options.

## My Recently Viewed Items

As shown in Figure 5.19, eBay lists the last three items you've viewed and the last three searches you've performed. Just in case you have second thoughts about an item, there it is, stalking your every turn. There are some built-in features for this section that allow you to not only track your most recently viewed items, but find similar items, watch an item, and finally, see what else that seller may be peddling. Be warned. The items in your Recently Viewed list have a very short shelf-life. Each time you view an item, it replaces the third item on your original list. Put the ones you care about on watch patrol so you don't lose track of them. Chapter 6, "Understanding the Item Page View," explains in more detail how you can assign items to your watch list and not have to worry about them scrolling out of view. I strongly recommend you use this feature. You'll be happy you did.



**Figure 5.19**

See all your most recently viewed items.

Understanding the Results list and how you can control its content was the goal of this chapter. With this knowledge, you are much better prepared to tackle the following chapter on the Item View page. When you click on the result that catches your eye, the next page that pops up is what we're going to cover next.



---

# part 2

---

## Buying the Sounds

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

With the basics firmly tucked under our belts, we are now ready to attack the buying side of eBay. If you've already purchased items on eBay, you will still learn a truckload of information, especially as it relates to buying music-related items. We'll look at bidding techniques, what to do before and after you bid, and last but not least, how to avoid the scammers that lurk in the eBay shadows. Take note of all the tips and tricks that my panel and I will be sharing. Your buying experiences on eBay will never be the same again.



# chapter 6



## Understanding the Item Page View

---

In Chapters 4 and 5, we addressed the concept of searching and ultimately finding what it is you are looking for on eBay. Once the results came pouring in, we looked at many ways to filter through them and weed them down. Now, drum roll please, the moment you've been waiting for. We are going to click on a search result and view its associated Item page. In this chapter we will look at an Item page in detail to truly understand the secrets that lie beneath the various sections.

### Exploring the Item Page

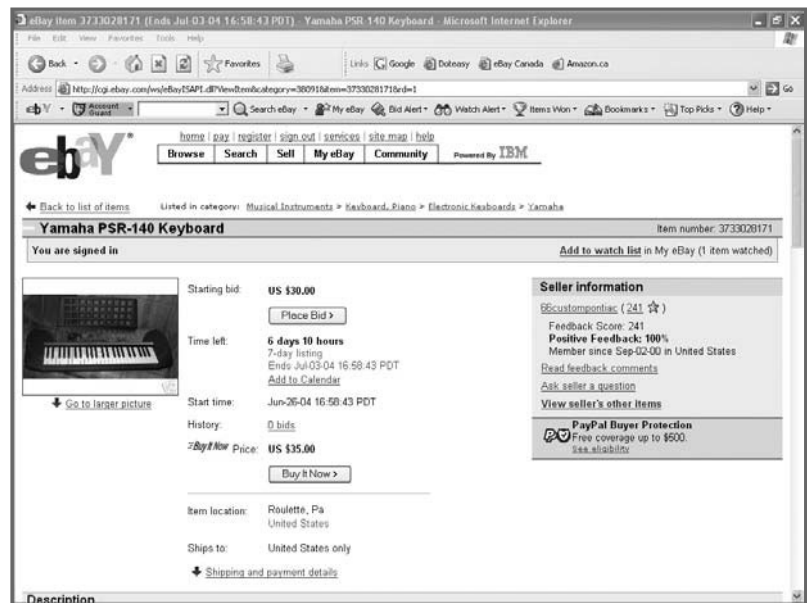
---

Matt was telling me a story that he thought would work perfectly for this chapter. A fellow band member, Ifoma, was thinking of buying a new keyboard. New to the band and new to eBay as well, he thought he would solicit advice from the band and attack full throttle. That's just what he did. After running a search on eBay (need I say that he was already well versed on the contents of Chapter 4, "Search and You Shall Find"), he found several items from which to choose. Ifoma was looking for a Yamaha keyboard and wasn't too picky as to the model. Price was a consideration, but not a huge one. He clicked on one of the Yamaha keyboard search results: "Yamaha Motif 6 synthesizer keyboard HARD CASE." What came in to view was the Item page. Although daunting at first, Ifoma settled himself

and took in everything he saw. There was a lot to read and a lot to figure out as well. Matt took the lead and guided him through the dips and valleys of the Item page so that poor Ifoma didn't get lost.

## Following the Category Paths

Near the top of the Item page, just below the main toolbar, is a category path listing, as shown in Figure 6.1. You may remember from previous chapters exactly what this path means. Put simply, and to avoid repeating myself too many times, the category path shows exactly where this item is located in the category tree drilldown structure. As a tip, Matt directed Ifoma to click on the Yamaha category at the end of the line. Ifoma almost dislocated a digit when he saw the results: a full page of Yamaha keyboards. This is a great way to refine your search once you think you've found what you are looking for. Ifoma skimmed through the list and found yet another Yamaha keyboard he liked. He clicked on the "Yamaha 9000 Pro Keyboard Professional Work Station" search result as Matt kept his lessons coming.



**Figure 6.1**

Follow the category path to search success.

## Seller Information Tidbits

Do not underestimate the value of this section on the Item page. Say you found the item you think you want, and everything seems to be hunky-dory. You view the Seller Information box, and what you see may as well be in Swahili for all you know. You need guidance. You need a helping hand. Let Phats be your assistant as he was to Ifoma on that fated day. From the top, you will see the seller's handle, or user ID. Although we cover some of these points in the following chapter, it still bears repeating due to its importance. Next to the seller's user ID is a number enclosed by brackets. This number represents the number of feedback points this seller has. In some cases you will also see a star symbol next to the seller's feedback rating. Each star has a different meaning and they are explained in more detail in Chapter 7, "Before You Bid." Suffice to say, if there is a star next to the seller's name, then that seller has at least 10 feedback points. Phat Matt equates stars with trust and only deals with those sellers who have a lot of points to their name. In this example, this seller has 209 feedback points and a green star next to his or her name, as shown in Figure 6.2.

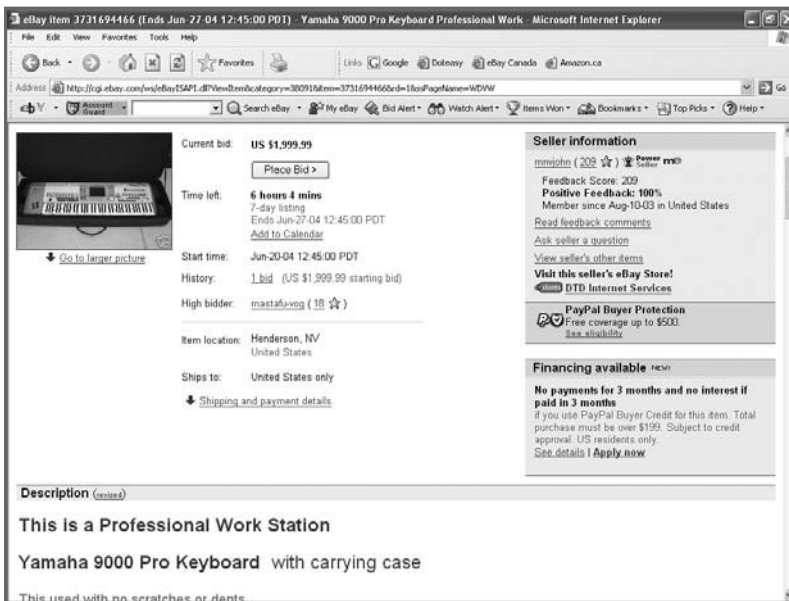


Figure 6.2

Seller's true colors: green star and 209 feedback points.

Below the feedback points in the Seller Information section, you will see a percentage for positive feedback. In other words, for all the feedback this seller has received, 100% of it has been positive. That's an incredible rating and means that the seller is reliable.

Just below the feedback points is a Read Feedback Comments link. By clicking on this, you will see all the feedback left for this seller, as shown in Figure 6.3. It is here where you will get a good indication of what kind of seller you are dealing with. It is always a good idea to check a seller's feedback. In Chapter 7, we really bring this point home by digging deep into the feedback forum, truly making sense of what it all means.

Comment	From	Date / Time	Item #
Transaction went without a hitch.	Buyer bobandbarbie (123 ☆)	Jun-26-04 05:49	5003170119
A+	Buyer gmb099608 (275 ☆)	Jun-25-04 23:41	5005360517
A+	Buyer gmb099608 (275 ☆)	Jun-25-04 23:41	5005220513
Real fast shipping, great packing, will deal again, Thanks A+++++	Buyer anaram1 (122 ☆)	Jun-26-04 13:67	6004426160
EXCELLENT TRANSACTION, NICE ITEM, I HIGHLY RECOMMEND, THANK YOU	Buyer hrysali09 (2104 ☆)	Jun-24-04 20:38	5004930538
great transaction great car	Buyer oklasaria (91 ☆)	Jun-24-04 18:35	5004174787
GREAT LOOKING CAR, FAST DELIVERY GREAT TRANSACTION	Buyer oklasaria (91 ☆)	Jun-24-04 18:35	5004174810
great transaction, item exactly as stated, will buy again ++++++	Buyer oklasaria (91 ☆)	Jun-24-04 18:35	5004174700
Fast and easy transaction! Thank you - Great asset to Ebay!	Buyer rusantracy (338 ☆)	Jun-24-04 08:40	2818511880
Great car Just as described Fast shipping AAAAAAAAA+++++	Buyer gofastboater (204 ☆)	Jun-23-04 19:03	5002149040
Great to deal with Would do again AAAAAAAAA+++++	Buyer gofastboater (204 ☆)	Jun-23-04 19:03	5002120226
A very prompt and professional transaction. Definitely recommend	Buyer cvrstalfallo2 (181 ☆)	Jun-23-04 18:31	5004170156
Thanks, Pleasure doing business Hope you get a lot of use with product.	Seller 95tink (127 ☆)	Jun-23-04 15:06	3017206603
fast service AAAAAAAAA+++++	Buyer cable10-1 (7)	Jun-23-04 14:18	6003430116
fast ship outstanding	Buyer piece_of_tai (520 ☆)	Jun-23-04 14:08	5001017828
fast ship great product	Buyer piece_of_tai (520 ☆)	Jun-23-04 14:00	5001952401
fast great to deal with	Buyer piece_of_tai (520 ☆)	Jun-23-04 14:00	5001917929

**Figure 6.3**

See all the feedback comments left for a seller.

The Seller Information section also displays an Ask the Seller a Question link. By clicking on this link, you will enter a page where you can type your comments or questions and have them sent through to the seller. This is an excellent tool to use and is explained further in Chapter 7.

One of my favorite links in the Seller Information box is the View Seller's Other Items link. By clicking on this link, you will be brought to a page on which you can see all the other items this seller is selling, as displayed in

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Figure 6.4. This is especially handy if you enjoy buying from a specific seller and want to see what other products he may be selling. In addition, some sellers encourage buyers to purchase more than one item from them in order to decrease shipping costs. However, Matt uses this feature for an entirely different reason. He's forever a skeptic and a cynic. When he sees something that seems too good to be true, he knows it probably is, so he tries to cover all the bases and pull out all the stops. Matt tells Ifoma that checking a seller's other items for sale on eBay can sometimes tip you off to potential issues with a transaction. Keep your eyes peeled for repeated use of similar descriptions. Think about it for a minute. If you check the seller's other items and each is advertised as doing the same thing, sharing the same characteristics and specifications, then you most likely have a scammer waiting to scam. Here's how this would work. A scammer has ten different "non-existent" stereos to sell. To save himself time, the scammer lists the stereos for sale with descriptions that are very similar. If the items are different, then how can they share so many of the same characteristics? This may be a scammer who has no idea what he or she is selling. This may not always be the case, but Matt would rather be safe than sorry. After reviewing this seller's other items for sale, Ifoma saw nothing out of the ordinary so Matt continued his lesson on exploring the Item page view.

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying an eBay seller's item list for user 'mrvjohn'. The page title is 'eBay.com Seller List: mrvjohn - Microsoft Internet Explorer'. The address bar shows the URL: 'http://cgi6.ebay.com/ws/ebayISAPI.dll?ViewSellerOtherItems&userid=mrvjohn&include=0&ance=1&sort=3&rows=50'. The search bar contains 'Search eBay'. The page content shows a table of items for sale, with columns for 'Picture', 'Item Title', 'Price', 'Bids', and 'Time (ends PDT)'. The items listed are:

Picture	Item Title	Price	Bids	Time (ends PDT)
	OLD USA Ferrara Nougat Candy REFRIGERATOR CAR SET DISCONTINUED Old Stock in New Unopened Box	\$33.95	Buy It Now	51 mins, 27 secs
	Galvanized Windmill Kit G Scale Jcb. usa. bachmann NIB Everyone should have a least ONE on their Kail Road	\$21.95	Buy It Now	1 hours, 19 mins +
	Bachmann Spectrum 81498 Baldwin Mogul 2-6-0 G. gauge Denver Rio Grande New In Box	\$329.95	Buy It Now	1 hours, 33 mins +
	USA TRAINS 4 Car Set AMTRAK ALUMINUM NIB	\$415.00 \$729.95	2 Buy It Now	3 hours, 18 mins +
	Yamaha 9000 Pro Keyboard Professional Work Station	\$1,999.99	1	6 hours, 03 mins +
	Bachmann Spectrum 81498 Baldwin Mogul 2-6-0 G. gauge Denver Rio Grande New In Box	\$20.50 \$339.95	6 Buy It Now	9 hours, 18 mins +
	USA TRAINS AMTRAK A/B DIESEL'S + 4 PASSENGER CARS NIB	\$405.00 \$1,129.95	7 Buy It Now	10 hours, 48 mins +

Figure 6.4

What else is this seller selling?

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

## I'm Watching You

Just above the Seller Information box is an Add to Watch List in My eBay link. What does this mean? Well, if there's an item you want to keep your eye on but aren't ready to bid on just yet, eBay gives you the ability to add it to your watch list. Matt and I use this feature frequently and sometimes we both have at least five items we are watching at once. At any given time, you can access your My eBay page and see all the items you are watching but haven't necessarily bid on yet. As the item gets closer to its auction-end, you can jump in and bid if the price or feeling is right.

## Item Details

The Details section of the Item page displays very important information to the potential bidder. Here you will find everything from current bidding price to history to location of the seller. It is key that Ifoma understand what each element of this section means and how it can affect his decision to bid or not.

### Current or Starting Bid

Whoooooeee. Depending on what price this baby starts at, you may think twice about bidding. Most people like an auction that starts off low. That's the whole mystique behind auctions—you want to feel like you're going to get a deal. For this item (see Figure 6.5), you can see that the current bid is set at \$286.00. This means that if Ifoma were to bid right now, he would have to bid at least \$291.00 to enter the game. However, that doesn't mean he would automatically become the highest bidder. There's more to bidding than that, and we will be covering this topic in more detail in Chapter 8, "Bid to Win."

### How Much Time Do I Have Left, Doctor?

The Time Left section of the Details area is an excellent source of valuable information as well. Depending on your bidding techniques, this will tell you how much time remains in the auction. When we discuss the art of

**Figure 6.5**

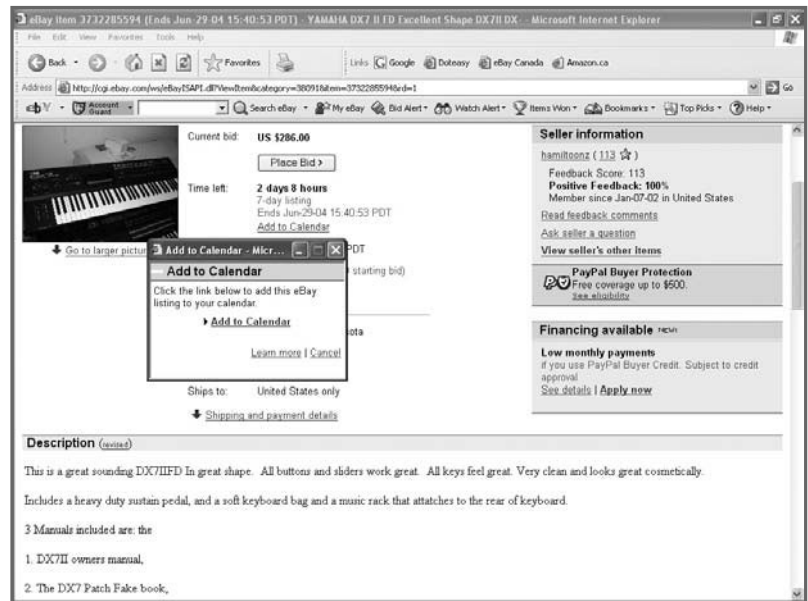
Current bid to beat: \$286.00.

“sniping” in Chapter 8, you will really see how this information can be important. This box also tells you how many days the item is listed for. In this case, the seller chose a 7-day listing, truly prolonging the bidding experience. Obviously, the longer the item is live in an auction, the more chance someone will come across it and bid.

## Add to Calendar

Last but not least, within the Time Left area you will find an Add to Calendar link—another crowd favorite and one of Matt’s tips and tricks for the eBay masses. If you find an item you are interested in and aren’t ready to bid on it just yet, you can instead click on the Add to Calendar option. A small window will open, as shown in Figure 6.6, asking you to click on the Add to Calendar link. Click on this link and watch the magic as your calendaring software is updated with that specific item’s end date. Depending on the settings of your personal calendaring software, such as Microsoft Outlook or Palm Desktop, a reminder will pop up 15 minutes before the auction closes. Matt swears by this feature, and it is yet another tool in his toolbox of eBay wizardly hints.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 6.6**

Add to Calendar feature—  
built-in reminders!

## Start Date/End Date

This is fairly self-explanatory. It shows when the auction started and when it will end.

## History Class

Matt took this opportunity to quiz us once again. Why would history be an important part of the Item page? Why do we care what the history of the bidding was for this item? History will give you a good idea of what you are up against. Checking the bid history, as shown in Figure 6.7, will sometimes tell you if there's someone bidding who is really hot and heavy for that item. You can usually trace a bidder's steps through the list of history bids to see how aggressive he is. You can even go further and click on that person's user ID to get a better picture of who you are dealing with. How high has the bidder gone in the other auctions he's won? What kind of items is the bidder buying? Are they similar? If you're serious about winning an auction, checking history has to play a part in your game plan.



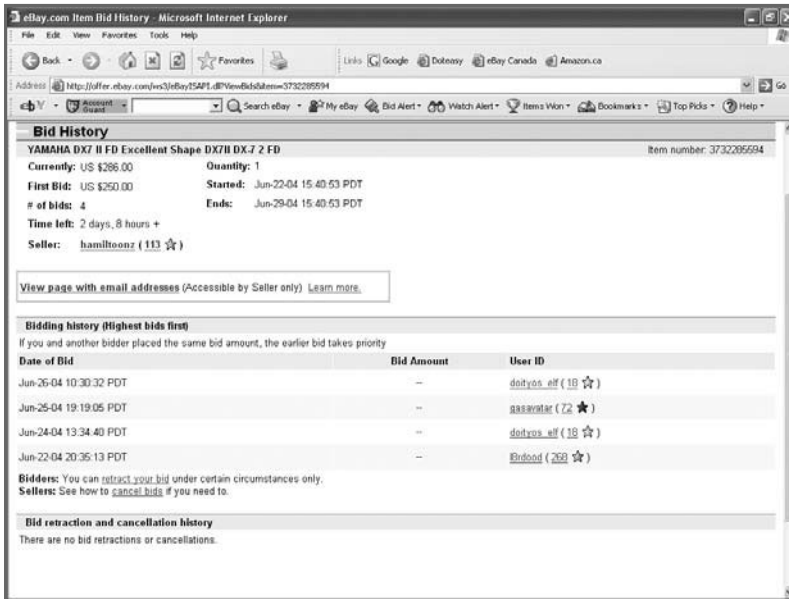


Figure 6.7

Bid History—who are you bidding against?

## High Bidder

The high bidder is the person who currently has the highest bid on an auction. The high bidder's user ID is listed along with her feedback points. As a potential bidder, you can get a feel for what kind of bidder you may be bidding against by reviewing this member's feedback forum and comments.

## Item Location

Depending on your own personal phobias, you may prefer to only bid on items from certain locations. Matt and I know many bidders who refuse to bid on any item with a location outside of the United States or Canada. They typically cite several reasons for their aversion to non-North American locations. They are:

## Shipping

Obviously, the farther the location is from where you are located, the higher the shipping costs. Over and above shipping costs, the farther away the item is located, the more opportunity it will have to get damaged in transit.

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

## Customs

One of my biggest pet peeves is surprise custom charges when buying items on eBay. Twice now I've won items from overseas sellers, and in both cases, when I arrived at the post office to pick up my parcel, I was caught off-guard by the well-meaning clerk who told me that I owed additional money for customs charges. I'm not sure whose fault that was, but needless to say, I wasn't very happy. When dealing with overseas sellers, ask the right questions regarding customs charges to avoid any nasty surprises.

## Regional Differences

Depending on what it is you are buying, you sometimes have to consider that there may be regional differences that could affect operability. For example, Matt had issues with his *Essential Clash* DVD that he purchased from the UK. When he got it home and popped it into his DVD player—no dice. It didn't work. The DVD was Region 2, allowing it to be played only on Region 2 DVD players from the UK and other parts of Europe. You also have to think about any electronics you purchase that are set to play only PAL video formats. Lots to think about if you are planning on purchasing items overseas.

## Bootlegs/Pirated Copies

Some countries outside of North America are notorious for duplicating and pirating DVDs and music CDs. What's worse is that they may show a picture in their Item page that displays the CD's or DVD's original cover. All they've done is stolen the image from another website and displayed it on their Item page. Not until you receive the item do you realize it's obviously a dupe. Of course, this could happen in North America as well, so avoid being scammed by doing your homework and asking the right questions, regardless of where your purchase is coming from.

## Ships to...

For many of the reasons stated in the "Item Location" section earlier in this chapter, sellers sometimes want to avoid the hassles of shipping overseas.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Being from Canada, it is really important that I check this section of the Item page before I bid on an item. I hate it when I find the perfect item and I'm about to bid and then I spot the dreaded Ships to section stating that this seller will only ship to the U.S. Following Matt's advice, I often e-mail the seller and ask if he or she would be willing to reconsider. Sellers want to sell. The more bidders, the better. In most cases, they tell me that they are willing to ship to Canada but want to avoid any border issues. With the proper assurances, I am back in business and ready to bid with the rest of the Americans.

Bottom line—always check the Ships to section of the Item page. The last thing you want to do is win an auction and then find out that the seller refuses to ship to you because you didn't read the description properly and you live outside of the seller's shipping area. This could result in negative feedback coming your way—so stay out of trouble and patiently read your Item pages. Your reputation depends on it.

## Describing the Description

The next section of the Item page is the Description area. Here is where you will find the guts of the eBay ad presented by the seller, as shown in Figure 6.8. This is really where the seller has the opportunity to spin his product, creatively design his page, and hopefully entice you to bid on his item.

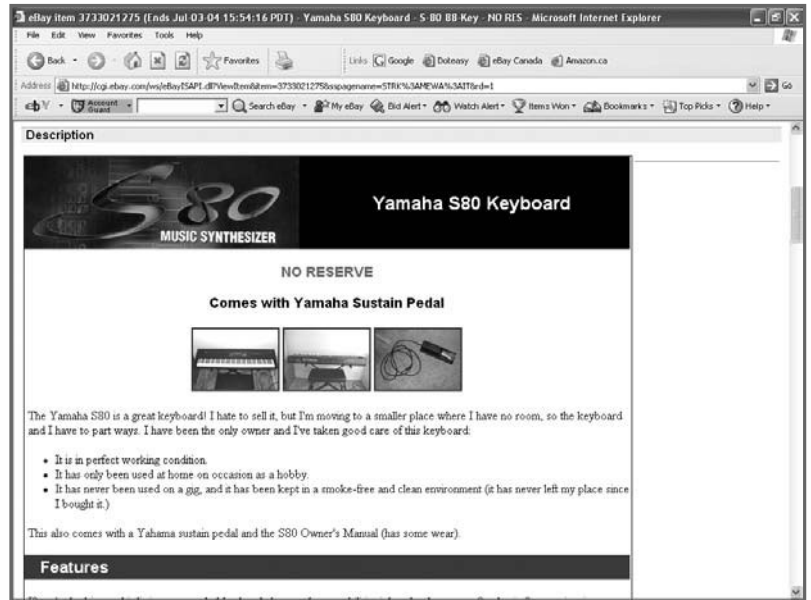
I'm not going to go through how to write the best description for your listing because that will come in Chapter 15, "Titles and Descriptions," but I will take this opportunity to discuss some things you should watch out for as a bidder browsing the ads on eBay.

### Outrageous Claims

"Electric guitar signed by Jim Morrison of the Doors, starting bid \$29.99." Hard to believe? If I've said it once, I'll say it again: If it sounds too good to be true, it isn't—true, that is.

It's so easy to fall for some of the claims made by these professional marketers on eBay. They will spin their item every which way from Tuesday and many will fall for it. Be smart and really question the outrageous claims. Look at feedback ratings and ask the seller questions before you bid.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

**Figure 6.8**

The listing's description sells the item.

## Spelling Errors

Now, this isn't some slight against those people who have problems spelling. This is more of an issue of ensuring that you are dealing with professionals rather than eBay hacks out for a quick buck. Professionals on eBay, people like you and me, put time into our listings. Attention to detail is very important, and buyers and sellers alike know this to be true. If you come across a listing that's riddled with typographical errors—beware. If the sellers are this sloppy and careless with their own stuff, just imagine the type of service you may get. Again, if you really want to bid on one of these items, ask the right questions, and you won't be sorry in the end.

## Not Enough Information

One of my own personal pet peeves on eBay—and I do have many—is those descriptions that just don't tell you enough. The following description is real. I copied it from eBay. To avoid any potential lawsuits, I've purposely not included a screen capture of the listing. Here's what it said:

“This beautiful banjo for sale. Plays well. Collector's edition. No serial number.”

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Needless to say, there weren't any bids on this item. You can never put too much information into your description. Err on the side of novel writing, rather than quick one-liners. Typically, if a seller can't find the time to include relevant information in the ad, I move on to the next one. Show some respect for my time, and I will do likewise. Chasing down a seller to get the brand name or condition details of an item is not something I will waste my time doing.

## No Mention of Condition

Although somewhat covered in the previous example, a description of the condition of an item is a definite must in an ad. You always have to ask yourself—what is this seller trying to hide by not including this valuable bit of information? This is especially suspicious when it's something expensive, electronic, or fragile.

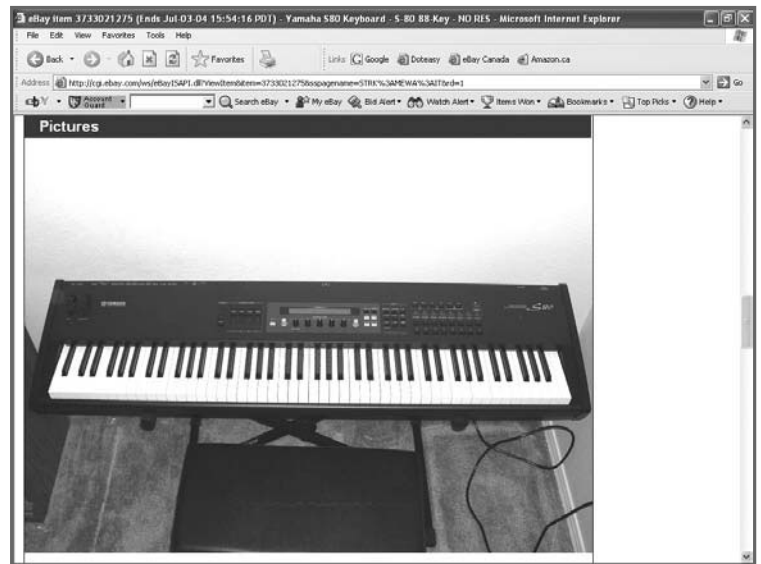
## The Photograph

Good listings include photographs, as shown in Figure 6.9. In some cases sellers display a smaller-sized photograph near the top of their ads and a larger version of it closer to the bottom. Either way, including a photograph is smart business. What follows are a couple of eBay thorns in my side regarding the photos sellers don't actually take. Enough riddles friends, read on.

## No Photo

This is another one of my eBay pet peeves. This one probably takes the prize for the most annoying. Did you know that including a picture with your listing is actually free? You probably didn't, considering we haven't hit that chapter yet. eBay will allow you one picture for your ad free of charge. If you want to include a second or third picture—which I strongly recommend—then eBay will charge you 15 cents per picture. That's not going to break anyone's bank, is it?

Then why do some people not display a picture with their listings? Maybe they don't have a digital camera or a scanner. Your guess is as good as mine, but I can tell you that they won't be getting my business. I, like many others



**Figure 6.9**

A photo is a must when creating a listing.

on eBay, need to see what it is I am bidding on before I commit to anything. To have to go through the labor of e-mailing the seller for a photo is a real delay of game and not the type of game I like to play.

## Not a Real Photo

Although we will be covering photographs in more detail in Chapter 17, I would truly be remiss if I didn't state the following warning to bidders.

Always ask yourself: Is the photo shown in this ad an actual shot of the item for sale?

Remember that there are sellers who will steal images from other web pages and use them as their own, instead of actually taking photographs of their items and including them in their listings. This is most commonly done with music CDs and DVDs. Call me a nut, but I'm almost fanatical about DVDs and their condition when I buy them used. There can't be the slightest scratch or crack in the case or DVD. When I bid on DVDs and CDs on eBay, the seller has to show me a real shot of the item for sale—not the manufacturer's photo that is shown on all the e-stores on the web. Give me the real thing and you'll get my bids.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Counters

Typically located just below the photograph(s) or item description, you will find a counter (see Figure 6.10). Phat Matt just loves these and strongly recommends them to all the rock 'n' roll cats out there hoping to run their wares on eBay. This is yet another freebie from eBay, where sellers are given the option to include counters on their listing page. As a bidder, you can gauge how much action a listing is getting by viewing its counter—prior to actually bidding. If the counter value is high, that item is experiencing a lot of views, which may mean there are other bidders thinking of bidding closer to the auction's end time. I smell snipers. See Chapter 8 for more details on this bid technique. Counters will be discussed in further detail when we run through the process of selling an item on eBay in Chapter 17.

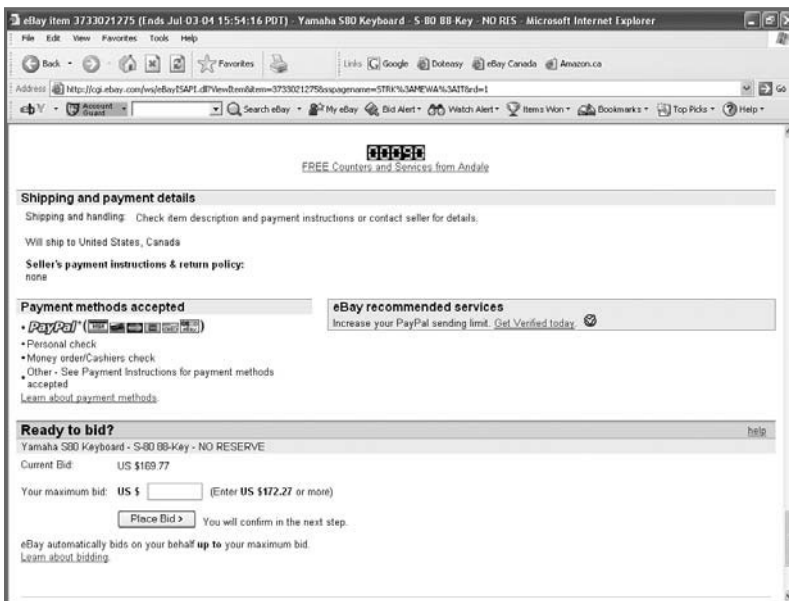


Figure 6.10

Use counters to get a good idea of the traffic a listing you're interested in is generating.

## Shipping and Payment Details

This is the section that Matt really hit the brakes on when he was showing Ifoma the eBay ropes. Always, and he means always, look very closely at the

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

shipping and payment details section of the Item page. Many sellers artificially inflate their shipping charges in hopes of sucking more money out of unassuming, trusting eBay newbies. Don't fall for that one, though. Do your homework. When a shipping charge is listed, contact the seller and ask what shipper he is using. Contact that shipping company and see what the charges really are. In many cases, by simply asking the seller to ship a different way, you can get the price to come down.

In some cases though, it just doesn't make sense to bid on an item with a high shipping and handling charge. For example, bidding on a seven dollar Meat Loaf music CD and finding out that the shipping charges to Canada are five dollars just doesn't jive with me.

It's in this section as well where you will see if insurance is offered for this item. Insurance is strongly recommended on any item you buy on eBay and it typically isn't very expensive. If it's offered, I usually purchase it. This is especially important for expensive, fragile, or electronic items.

Finally, you may also see the Ship to information repeated at the bottom of this section. Keep both parties happy by always confirming that you are in a location that the seller will actually ship to.

## Accepted Payment Methods

Matt doesn't like to wait. He only buys from sellers who support PayPal payments. The Payment Methods section of the Item page is very important because it lays out all the different ways a buyer can pay for the item for sale. I remember the days when I sent certified checks to sellers. I had to go through the labor of going to the bank to get my check certified, then to the post office to mail the check, wait until the seller received it, then further wait until the seller chose to ship it, and then finally receive my item. Those were the bad old days. Since PayPal has taken off, you will never see me or any of my cronies buying any other way. No, I don't work for PayPal, but I know a good thing when I see it.

If you're purchasing or bidding at an eBay store, you may also see credit cards listed as a payment method. Credit card payments make purchasing a



breeze. When you pay using a credit card, items tend to ship out a lot quicker, meaning we all get what we purchased a lot faster. The more payment methods a seller supports in her listing, the more action her ad will get from potential bidders. This tip brought to you by Phat Matt, the rock icon.

## Ready to Bid?

---

“Am I ever!” Ifoma screamed. Not so fast, tough guy. We discuss bidding techniques in Chapter 8. This is the section of the Item page where you place your bids for the items you are interested in. The process is pretty straightforward, but it does require some explanation. Make sure to read Chapter 8 first, and resist the urge to hit that Place Bid button. I’m sure you’ll be happy you did. If you can stand the wait, I also recommend you check out Chapter 7, “Before You Bid.” Phats really makes a splash there, revealing tricks of the trade and tips you’re just not going to want to miss.

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 7



## Before You Bid

---

Fools rush in. Have you heard that saying before? Although it applied to something completely different, it still works for bidding on eBay. Bidding is serious business on eBay. When you bid, you are committing yourself to an item and potentially a purchase. Do the right amount of research before each bid and see your eBay bidding and buying confidence go through the roof.

## Introducing—The Rock Star

---

You heard of him, he's popped his crazy head in and out of this book since the beginning, and now you are really going to meet him. His name is Phat Matt, and he's the eBay rock star. Matt plays for a band called Solace, and together with his band, he's been buying and selling musical instruments on eBay for some time now. For this chapter on tips before the bid, he really dug deep into his arsenal and gathered all sorts of goodies he wanted to share. Although the focus in this chapter is on musical instruments, don't be distressed. Many of the tips provided will apply to anything that's music related on eBay.

## Know Thy Item

---

What do you really know about the item you are bidding on? If you aren't an expert on it, then don't bid on it. Now, this may not make sense to someone

who is bidding on a CD or maybe a comb or guitar pick, but to someone bidding on a brand new bass guitar, you may want to pay heed to this advice. If you're planning on bidding on something big or expensive, do your homework and know thy product before you hit that Place Bid button. Darn, that Place Bid button is fun to hit though, isn't it? Control yourself and think about the following ways you can ensure that you know what you're doing before you punch it now and regret it later.

## Check Out the Competition

Picture this. You're on eBay and you come across the perfect guitar. You know you want it but something is telling you to hold up. There's something smelling unusually fishy about this item. Check the competition. Don't just bid on the first one you see. There are undoubtedly more guitars out there on eBay and you should always exhaust all searches to ensure you are bidding on the right one.

Not too long ago, Phats searched for a Hofner Colorama Electric guitar on eBay. After an initial (or rookie, as he likes to call it) search, he found it. The stars were aligned that night he quipped, as he hastily moved his mouse pointer to the Place Bid button. But he stopped. Like the tractor beam in *Star Wars*, something pulled him away. Instead, Phat Matt ran another search. Using many of the techniques outlined in Chapter 4, "Seek and You Shall Find," he was able to find three more Hofner Colorama guitars. He did a quick comparison and was he ever happy he did. It seems that for one of the items, the seller had misspelled the name "Hofner," spelling it instead with two Fs. Common mistake. Too bad, too sad—for the seller. No one had bid on that item because no one could find it.

With three hours left in the auction, the guitar was still being sold at its initial asking price with nary a bidder in site—except for Phats salivating at his keyboard. Did he bid you ask? He sure wanted to, but held back yet again. He had three hours to get to know this item even better.

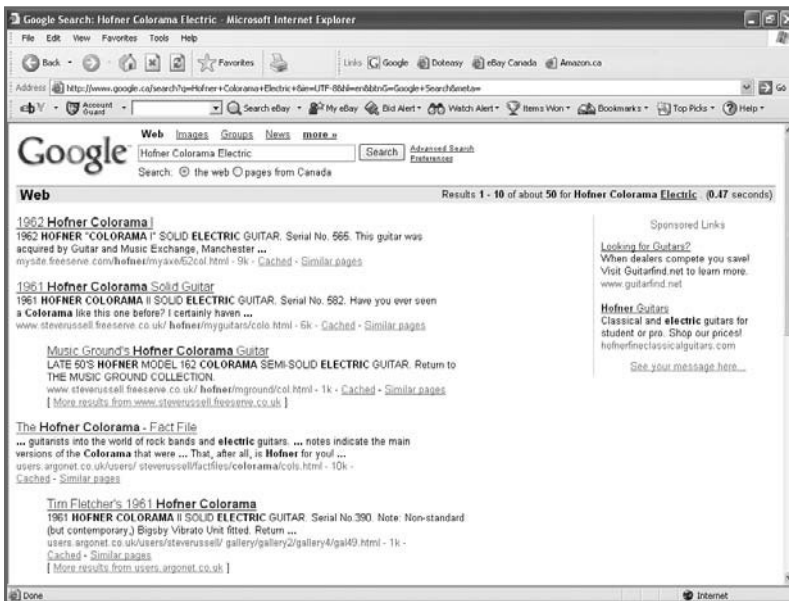
## Go Online

If you're surfing eBay, you're already online. Matt suggests checking other online auctions and stores to see how much they are selling the item for.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

This would apply to any musical instrument you are planning to buy on eBay. There are so many online stores to peruse that you won't have any problem finding the instrument you are looking for.

Google is the best site to use, in my opinion, when attempting to find other vendors outside of eBay who are selling musical instruments. By searching on Google, as shown in Figure 7.1, Matt was able to find a number of sites selling the Hofner guitar. Using these finds as a guide, Matt compared the eBay item's specs with those he found off-site. Things were looking up as, spec for spec, he found a match. He also made a point of looking at price. He was getting a great deal on eBay, and now his heart was pumping faster.



**Figure 7.1**

Searching Google for more information.

Phats grew more and more confident that this guitar was the genuine article, and he was about to embark on a musical fantasy—eBay style.

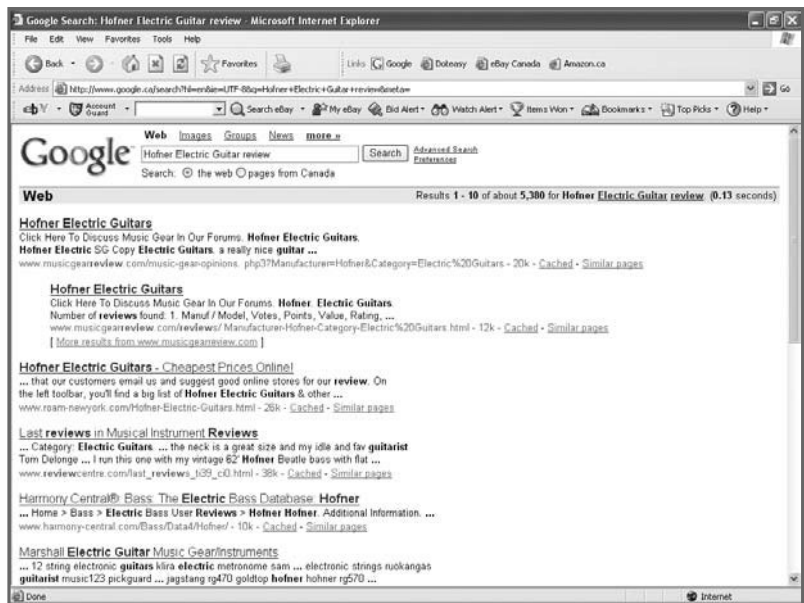
## Thumbs Way Up

The web is also a great resource when searching for reviews on certain items. Matt found plenty of sites ranting and raving about these incredible guitars.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Use a search engine like Google, or something similar, and simply enter the name of the musical instrument you are looking for with the word “review” in the search criteria. As shown in Figure 7.2, lists and lists of reviews will appear giving you a good idea of the quality of the item you are thinking of bidding on. Another good site for pricing and reviews is [epinions.com](http://epinions.com). This site includes opinions and ratings on everything from electronics to music to movies and cars.

Matt tends to trust customer reviews rather than manufacturer or magazine reviews. Too many palms getting greased, he says, and you never know who’s scratching who. Use all the tools available to ensure you know everything you need to know about the item—before you bid.



**Figure 7.2**

Search Google for reviews as well!

## Ask an Expert

Although he feels he’s an expert on nearly anything music related, Matt knows his limitations. With only two hours left before this auction was to expire, Matt grabbed the yellow pages and looked under “guitars.” There he found several stores that sold musical instruments, specifically vintage and

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

rare guitars. Although some stores were more cooperative than others, Matt managed to get through to one where the owner spent nearly twenty minutes talking his ear off about the Hofner line. The owner explained to Phats over the phone that the Hofner guitars were made specifically for the UK market but were distributed all over the world. Here's what he told Matt:

“Extremely popular in the early sixties, Hofner guitars were used by George Harrison (his first guitar was a Hofner), John Lennon, Midge Ure, and Mark Knopfler, just to name a few.”

When Matt explained to this expert what he had found, skepticism set in. This expert knew a thing or two about a thing or two and warned Matt that this guitar sounded like a “reconstruction jobbie.” Everything from the scratch plate to the rotary controls seemed a little wonky.

Advice in hand, Matt started to feel a little more leery about making the purchase. With less than an hour to make his move, Matt did what may have seemed like the impossible. He e-mailed the seller asking some questions. Would he get a response before auction end? Read on my friends, read on.

## Ask Seller a Question

You're looking at one of the most powerful weapons on eBay. Never leave home without it because this baby can make or break a bid. Matt tells me that regardless of what he is bidding on, he e-mails the seller and asks questions. To me, that sounded really strange, a time waster, and annoying. He gave me a couple of minutes to ponder over what he had said, and when I couldn't come up with a good reason why, he finally spilled the beans. When you e-mail a seller with questions, you can usually tell what kind of transaction you will have if you win the auction. Just imagine, you e-mail the seller with a question. He doesn't respond. That doesn't scream of someone too reliable. Or, you e-mail the seller with a question and he or she does respond—with expletives, sarcasm, and/or rage. Again, not the seller profile you are looking for. Typically, what you will get when you e-mail a seller with questions is answers. What you are looking for is complete and honest answers.

Never be scared to e-mail the seller. This is really your only chance before you bid to ensure you are getting what you ask for. This was also Matt's

chance to test the seller and see if he could get the information he needed to confirm if this was an original Hofner or a “reconstruction jobbie,” as his expert had put it.

From the Seller Information section of the Item page, Matt clicked on the Ask the Seller a Question link. After logging in, Matt typed his message in the provided text box. What Matt really likes about this feature is the way it doesn't jump you out of the website and load your e-mail program. Everything happens within eBay, saving you time in the process. Once he was done typing his message, he simply slammed on the Send Message button, and the clock continued to click. Would he get his response? You better believe he did. The seller responded to all his questions and admitted that the guitar was reconstructed using pieces from three other guitars. All's well that ends well, I guess. Needless to say, Matt did not go for this guitar. His search continues. Let's look at other ways of preparing yourself before you bid on a specific item on eBay.

## Check and Read Feedback

In Chapter 3, “Getting Started,” we visited the topic of understanding feedback. I explained that feedback was pretty much the badge you wear that states if you're credible or not—as a buyer or seller. You can probably already tell then why it is important to check a seller's feedback ratings before you bid on his or her item. Next to the seller's name is a number enclosed by parentheses. That magic number is actually a link you can click on that will take you to that seller's Feedback page. There, you will see exactly how many transactions he or she has performed and the feedback for each item.

Let's review a seller's Feedback page in detail so that we truly understand its content.

### Star Rewards

The top-left corner of the Feedback page shows you the seller's name and the number of transactions he has on eBay. The transactions are measured in feedback points for both purchases and sales on eBay. Each time a member sells or buys an item on eBay, a point type is given that contributes to

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



his overall feedback number. Next to that number, you will sometimes see a star symbol. The color and type of star speak volumes to someone who is thinking of bidding on an item from this seller. Every time someone leaves feedback and it's positive, eBay rewards the seller with a point. Once a seller receives ten points, eBay places a yellow star next to his name, letting the world know that the seller has completed ten transactions. Does this mean that he's completed ten positive transactions? Not necessarily. When someone leaves a seller positive feedback, he is given one point. When someone leaves neutral feedback, the seller doesn't get any points. Finally, when someone leaves negative feedback, eBay will take away a point. Once he hits shooting star status, a seller is invincible, with over 10,000 points under his belt. As long as the seller doesn't have any negative feedback, bidders like yourself can pretty much assume that as a seller, he's trustworthy. This point system works exactly the same way for buyers as well, so don't think you're getting off that easy! Sellers will judge your dependability as a buyer based on the number of points you have.

Table 7.1 displays the different types of stars available and how many points you need to get one.

**Table 7.1** Star Rewards on eBay

<b>Description of Star</b>	<b>Points Needed</b>
Yellow	10 to 49
Blue	50 to 99
Turquoise	100 to 499
Purple	500 to 999
Red	1,000 to 4,999
Green	5,000 to 9,999
Yellow Shooting	10,000 to 24,999
Turquoise Shooting	25,000 to 49,999
Purple Shooting	50,000 to 99,999
Red Shooting	100,000 or higher

## Recent Ratings

Just below the member profile name, number, and symbol, you will see a very important part of this page: the Recent Ratings section. Here, you will see all the feedback activity over the past 1, 6, and 12 months for that specific seller. As shown in Figure 7.3, it's a quick way to get a bird's-eye view of that seller's reputation on eBay.

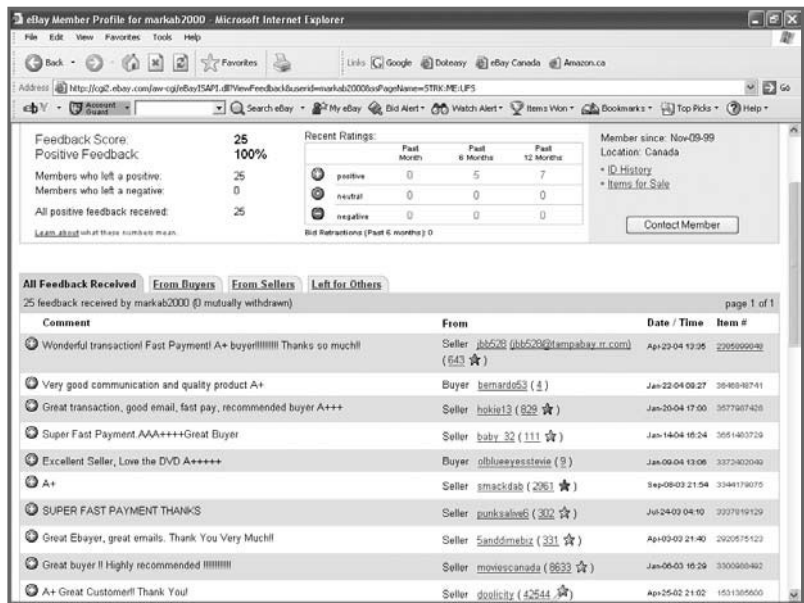


Figure 7.3

Recent feedback ratings.

## Feedback Score Breakdown

To the left of the Recent Ratings section, you will find the feedback score broken down. These numbers are extremely telling. It is here where you will see the breakdown of positives, negatives, and neutrals for a seller or buyer.

## Retracting Your Bids

Hidden just below the Recent Ratings section of the Feedback page, you will find a number for bid retractions over the past six months. What is a bid retraction? Before I answer that, understand that the whole purpose of

this chapter is to prepare you before you bid. These are the things you need to look out for before you bid on an item. The operative word in both these phrases is *before*. Now, with all that said, bid retraction allows a bidder to place a bid on an item, then once it's gone through, pull that bid back without any accountability. Wrong! eBay frowns and comes down quite harshly on those people who exercise this option. Bid retracting is available only under certain circumstances, and when it is abused, eBay will let you know with a stiff warning or a no questions asked suspension. I've said it before and I'll say it again—keep your nose clean and no one will get hurt. Do your homework and you won't have to retract any bids.

The conditions under which you can safely, without threat of expulsion, retract a bid are as follows.

## Typographical Errors

Due to a keyboard fumble, you enter "\$888.88" instead of "\$8.88." You will undoubtedly win that auction, but that's probably a lot more than you wanted to spend. As long as you immediately retract your erroneous bid and re-enter the correct one, you won't have any problems, and you'll stay in eBay's good book. If you delay in entering the correct bid once you've retracted, bells will go off and sirens will wail.

## Description Follies

When I first started buying on eBay, I bid on a statue of Gene Simmons, as shown in Figure 7.4. This thing was really cool and a definite must-have for any KISS collector.

After reviewing the item details and feeling especially confident about the seller, I placed my bid. A couple of days later in this 5-day auction, I realized that the description of the item had changed.

Originally, the item description for this Simmons statue was:

"You are bidding on a factory-sealed, mint condition McFarlane Collectible Figure. Packaging is also in mint condition without any scuffs, dents, or scratches."



**Figure 7.4**

Gene Simmons—cool statue!

When I checked back a few days later, it said the following:

“You are bidding on an opened McFarlane Collectible Figure. The statue contains two small scratches, one horn has been damaged and the packaging is in good to fine condition.”

That’s a far cry from the original description, don’t you think? At the time, I was Joe Rookie, and I didn’t retract my bid. Fortunately, someone else bid against me and won.

The point of that anecdote is that you can retract a bid when the description of an item you have bid on changes significantly. Keep in mind, though, that the change has to be dramatic, or eBay will crack its whip and send you to Yahoo! Auctions faster than you can say “give me another chance.”

## **Seller MIA**

Seller MIA is when you’ve made every effort to contact a seller once you’ve bid on an item and he is nowhere to be found. Every attempt to call or e-mail the seller has come back fruitless. You can retract that bid because it’s most likely not going anywhere anyway.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Identity Theft

If someone gets hold of your user ID and password and bids like a wild man on items across eBay, you may be able to retract those bids. Keep in mind that this too will be something eBay looks at very closely to ensure you aren't abusing the system.

Any way you cut it, you have to fill out a retraction form and explain why you want to retract. If you are successful, eBay keeps track of how many times you've retracted on your Feedback page. Potential sellers will most likely think twice about chronic retractors—that's if you're around long enough. Abuse of this privilege is extremely serious to eBay, so violators beware. For more information on retracting bids, visit the eBay Help section and search on the keywords "bid retraction."

## Member Profile

In the top-right corner of the Feedback page, you will see a box in which there is information about the seller. In this box, you will find the seller's location and time spent as a member on eBay. The seller's location will typically state a country like Canada or United States, and the Member Since section will show the date this member registered for the first time on eBay.

This section of the Feedback page will also show an ID History link for this seller. By clicking on this link, you will see all the user IDs this seller has adopted during his or her stay on eBay.

Just below the ID History link, you will see the Items for Sale link. The Items for Sale link will take you to a page where you can see all the other items this seller is selling on eBay.

Last but not least, you are given the option to contact the seller by clicking on the Contact Seller button. This will take you immediately into the Ask the Seller a Question page, where you can type out a question or comment related to the item you are bidding on, as shown in Figure 7.5.

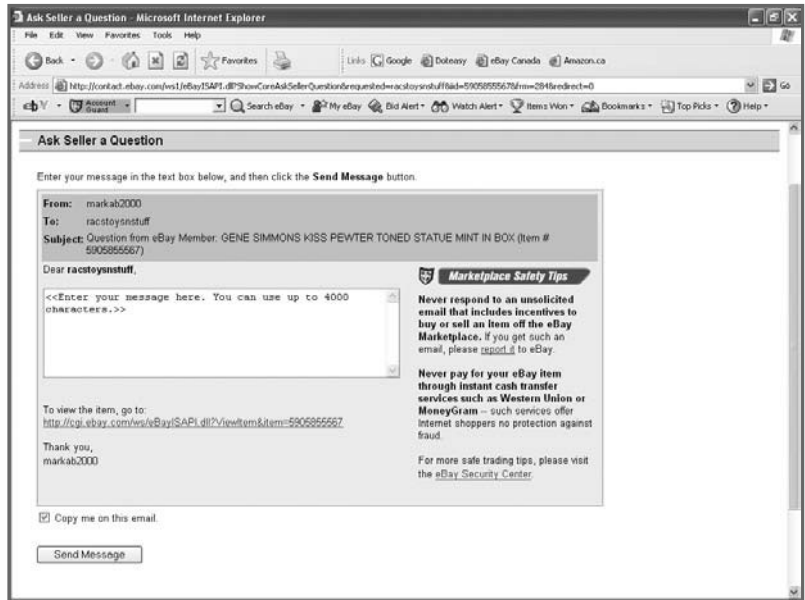


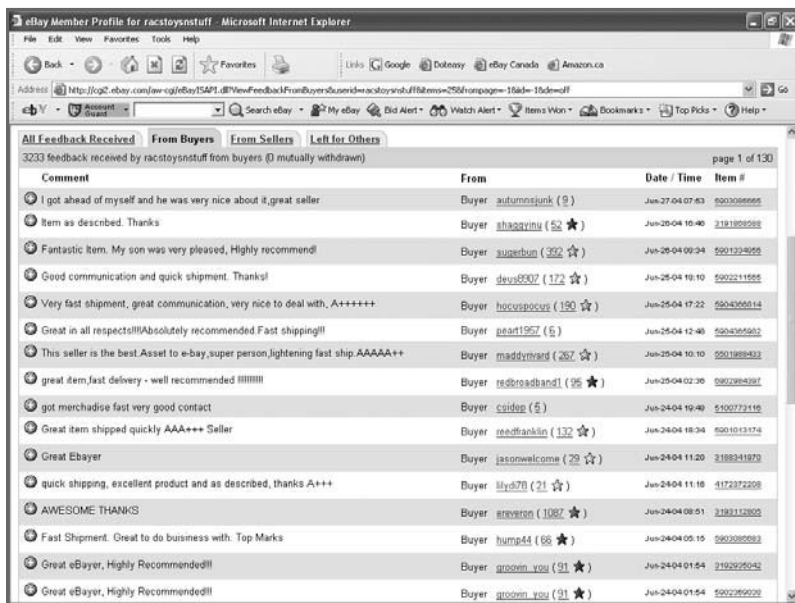
Figure 7.5

Ask the Seller a Question.

## Feedback Comments

As you move down the Feedback page, you will come across the meat and potatoes of this section—the actual feedback comments. These can be a lot of fun and are extremely telling as well. You will sometimes even see banter back and forth between a seller and a buyer as they duke it out—feedback style. There are four tabs along the top, giving you different views of the feedback displayed. They are:

- **Feedback Received.** By default, feedback results are displayed in this manner. Here, you will see all the feedback a member has received from both a selling and a buying perspective.
- **From Buyers.** When you select this tab, only the feedback coming from buyers will be displayed, as shown in Figure 7.6. This would be more relevant to your cause if you were planning on bidding on an item from this seller and you wanted to see what other buyers had to say about their experience.



**Figure 7.6**  
Feedback from the buyers only.

- **From Sellers.** On the flipside, you can also get a good idea of how this member deals with other sellers on eBay. By selecting this option, you will see all the feedback that other sellers have left for this particular member, letting you know if he or she has been easy or difficult to deal with.
- **Left for Others.** With this option selected, you can see all the feedback that this member has left for other people on eBay. If this member is leaving negative feedback for everybody and their brother, he or she may not be the type of seller you want to deal with.

Each feedback comment line contains four listings, as shown in Figure 7.7, and discussed next.

- **Comment.** This is where you will find the actual comments on how the transaction went. Examples are as follows:

*Positive feedback:* “Friendly service and very fast delivery! A great seller!”

*Neutral feedback:* “Prompt service, quality product, I thought ad was misleading, ask questions first.”

*Negative feedback:* “No sign of item 14 days on, payment made 15th March-PAYPAL confirmation rec’d”

Comment	From	Date / Time	Item #
GREAT BUYER, FAST PAYING, THANK YOU	Seller <a href="#">oldauntpatty5</a> (2109) ★	Jun 20 04 18:20	550185285
good transaction, was sent with care and arrived in good order. A+A+A+A+	Buyer <a href="#">tiralin</a> (48) ★	Jun 25 04 16:48	223952993
Fast payment, great buyer. Thanks!!!	Seller <a href="#">jass217</a> (155) ★	Jun 24 04 04:53	430779862
Great item & Wonderful Service!!!	Buyer <a href="#">treasurekid</a> (188) ★	Jun 10 04 21:59	5001931305
Great doing business with this seller.	Buyer <a href="#">theflneckfan</a> (50) ★	Jun 15 04 09:05	229221234
Thank you! Great communication. Highly recommended!	Buyer <a href="#">look4tickets</a> (19) ★	Jun 15 04 05:28	4192402400
Easy quick transaction, books arrived in excellent condition. Thanks AAA+++	Buyer <a href="#">dhwnee</a> (38) ★	Jun 15 04 18:13	6201236554
fast and reliable	Buyer <a href="#">zaph77</a> (150) ★	Jun 15 04 08:33	6100081800
Fast, Friendly and Exactly as described - Excellent order - Thank you!	Buyer <a href="#">moonbeamy69</a> (6) ★	Jun 14 04 06:40	3679042308
wonderful clock thank you EXCELLENT GOOD JOB A+A+A+A+A+A+A+A+A+A+	Buyer <a href="#">lew45</a> (48) ★	Jun 13 04 12:19	2247120023
thanks smooth transaction	Buyer <a href="#">saxceesadi</a> (32) ★	Jun 12 04 15:19	2204740047
Super Customer! Thank! People like you make E-baying fun! Always Welcome!	Seller <a href="#">vintageanita</a> (726) ★	Jun 11 04 12:22	4181450370
Top Class Ebayer To Deal With! Hope to work with again! Many Thanks! 5*s	Seller <a href="#">vintageanita</a> (726) ★	Jun 11 04 12:22	6200377513
GREAT MULTIPLE BUYER! FAST PAYER! WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND! 5*s	Seller <a href="#">vintageanita</a> (726) ★	Jun 11 04 12:22	6200383884
Exceptional Buyer & Prompt Payer! Thank you for a Great Transaction! 5* #Bayer	Seller <a href="#">vintageanita</a> (726) ★	Jun 11 04 12:22	3679282248
GREAT EBAYER-FAST PAYMENT-RECOMMEND ATTTTT!	Seller <a href="#">ariananthellis</a> (300) ★	Jun 11 04 00:40	2484000125
Good communication !! A pleasure to deal with !!	Buyer <a href="#">red-hot-bambi</a> (private)	Jun 06 04 01:59	4198735493

**Figure 7.7**

Feedback Comment lines contain a lot of valuable information.

- From.** In this column of the feedback page, you will see who actually left the feedback. Was it a buyer or a seller? You will also see that member’s user ID, number of transactions, and member symbol. This makes it really easy to check up on those people leaving feedback too.
- Date/Time.** The date and time the feedback was left is another bit of information collected and displayed in this section of the Feedback page.
- Item#.** The last column is the actual item number. This item number is actually a link that will take you to that item on eBay—even though it’s a completed item and the auction has closed. This is a great way to see how other buyers who bought similar if not exact duplicates of the item you are bidding on felt about their buying experience.



## Public or Private

You may come across members who prefer to make their Feedback pages private. All the experts on this panel strongly recommend that you do not entertain this option. The whole purpose of having feedback in the first place is to get other members to trust you and feel safe dealing with you. If your feedback is marked private and no one can see it but you, then you aren't doing a good job opening up to everyone.

Personally, I will never deal with anyone who has set his feedback to private. That's my preference, and it speaks to my comfort levels when performing transactions on eBay. I religiously read a seller's feedback before I even think of making a bid on an item. If I can't see it, then I'm not bidding, and I'm sure this feeling is shared among many other eBay members.

## Visit the Backstage Lounge

I thought this was the perfect place to drop the Backstage Lounge into the book. Before you bid on eBay, I thought you should know that this option exists. The Backstage Lounge is eBay's musician information station, and is shown in Figure 7.8.

This site has it all. You'll find instrument buying guides, product information, celebrity gear overviews, cool lessons, musician forums, and content from some of the best music magazines out there. You can really get your music education from these pages and ensure that you are bidding on the right thing. There's even a glossary of musical terms, shown in Figure 7.9. Imagine never being stumped again by some tough-talking seller using big-time musical terms in his item description. For example, did you know that *sibilance* is a musical term that means high-frequency, airy vocal sounds such as "ss" and "sh"? Too cool!

The best thing about this site is that it never goes stale. eBay changes the content on a monthly basis, ensuring that you never get bored seeing the same old thing. Impress your friends and make informed bids using the Backstage Lounge.

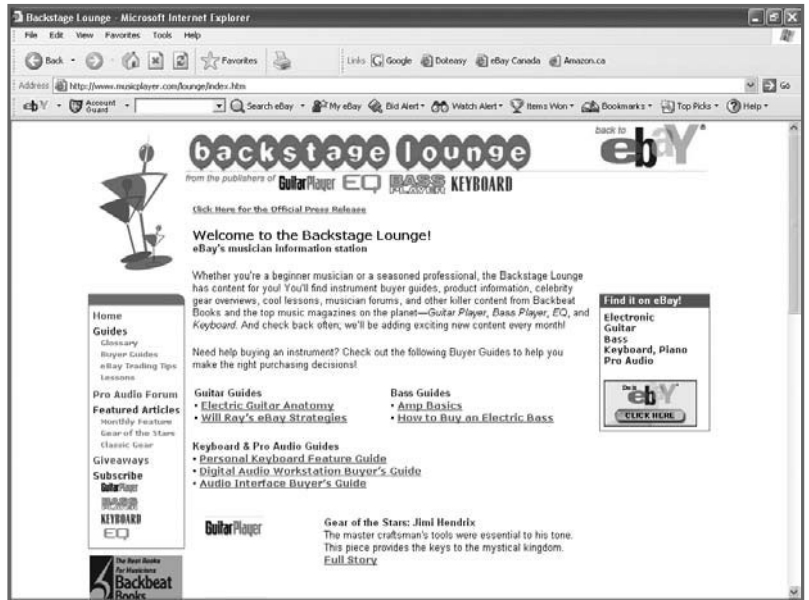


Figure 7.8

Visit the Backstage Lounge on eBay.

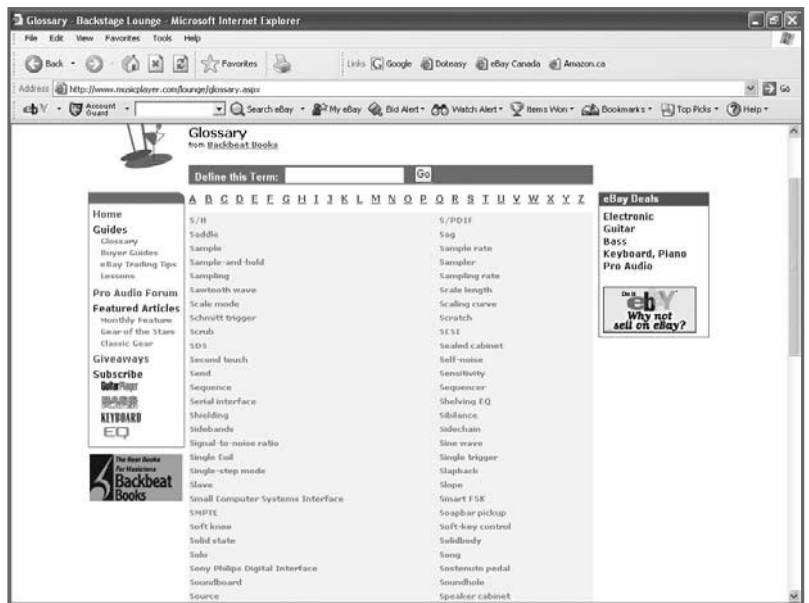


Figure 7.9

Get your terms straight using the music glossary.

## Giving Works—Charity

At first glance this may seem like a strange place to talk about charity and eBay's Giving Works pages, but I thought it fit perfectly into the “Before You Bid” chapter. Before you bid using the traditional means of search and you shall find, you should also know that you can find and bid on items where proceeds go to charity.

From eBay's front page, click on the Giving Works (Charity) link. You can do one of three things when you are presented with the Giving Works page.

### Search

In the top-left corner is a search box with two options below it, as shown in Figure 7.10. You can search in the Giving Works Items Only, and you can enable the Search in Titles and Descriptions option. As on eBay's regular site, your searches and results will be much the same except for one significant difference: All the results returned will be backed by donations. This means that those items have proceeds of their sale going to a specific nonprofit.



Figure 7.10

Giving Works proceeds go to charity.

## Categories

Like on the regular site, the Categories section of the Giving Works page allows you to browse through different collections of items—all with proceeds going to charity.

## Shop by Nonprofits

Simply click on the Find Items link in this section of the Giving Works page and you'll be presented with the option to search for your favorite charities. Once you find the charity you like, Giving Works will display all the associated items for sale on eBay. If you choose to bid on one of these items and you win the auction, a specified portion of the sale price will be automatically sent through to the associated charity group through something called MissionFish, discussed next. This is a great way to find and bid on items you want and at the same time contribute to a worthy cause.

## MissionFish

In 2003, eBay invited MissionFish to offer eBay members a simple way of supporting their favorite causes through buying and selling items—something they were already doing on eBay. The process is quite simple and outlined in the following steps and in Figure 7.11.

1. A nonprofit signs up with MissionFish.
2. eBay sellers pick a nonprofit that they wish to support and determine the percentage to share for each sale.
3. To control their brand, the nonprofit has the choice to accept or reject this association. Assuming it's a go, the bidding begins on this item.
4. When a bidder wins one of these auctions, it's business as usual for both the seller and the buyer.
5. MissionFish automatically collects the donation and pays the nonprofit and closes things off by sending through a tax receipt to the seller.

You can learn a whole lot more about MissionFish and Giving Works at [www.ebay.com/givingworks](http://www.ebay.com/givingworks).



Figure 7.11

MissionFish—support your favorite cause on eBay.

Preparing yourself before you bid is an essential step in the bidding process and should not be overlooked. In the next chapter, we'll explore the art of bidding and the different strategies you can use in your drive to win an eBay auction.

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 8



## Bid to Win

---

For this chapter, I gathered my panel experts together (at least by phone) and asked them to give me their best bidding techniques. How do they bid? I assumed, since they are masters of the Bay that they must be using superior bidding methods. What I found out was really exciting. I managed to capture all their tricks of the trade and compile them into this chapter for you, the lucky reader.

### Are You Ready to Bid?

---

Of course you are. You've been through seven chapters now and you've been warned, tipped off, given advice, and educated on the ins and outs of eBay. There are some additional things you should consider now as you enter this new world of bidding on eBay.

#### Short on Cash?

Before you bid, make sure you have enough money to pay for the item. Now that may seem obvious, but many people bid without really being able to pay. This is a sure way to ensure you get negative feedback from other members and ultimately barred from eBay.

#### Know Your Limits

Similar to the previous point, make sure you set your own personal bid limit before you begin bidding. It is very easy to get so caught up in a bidding war

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

and when the smoke clears, you're paying double what the item is actually worth. Be reasonable and know your limits, and you won't end up bidding too much on items that aren't worth it or you can't afford.

## Vanilla Bidding Explained

The process of bidding on eBay is really easy, and it's meant to be that way. The first method we will review is one I affectionately call *vanilla bidding*. True to the name, this method covers the standard, almost basic way of bidding on eBay. To begin, let's solicit the assistance of our friend Swifty, who is currently in the market for a David Bowie t-shirt iron-on.

Let's look at his bidding technique using the vanilla method.

### Placing Your First Bid

After performing a search for the David Bowie iron-on, Swifty finds just what he was looking for. With one day left in the auction and a starting bid of \$1.99, Swifty can't go wrong. Once on the Item page, Swifty scrolls down to the bottom of the page. There in the Ready to Bid section is a text box in which to enter a maximum bid. What does this mean? My maximum bid? Is this how auctions work?

Swifty needs to enter the maximum amount of money he is willing to spend on this David Bowie iron-on. Let's say it's \$5.00. He then enters \$5.00 in the Maximum Bid box, as shown in Figure 8.1. You'll notice that next to the Maximum Bid box there is a note from eBay stating, "Enter US \$1.99 or more." Swifty has told eBay that he is willing to spend up to \$5.00 on this item and no more. This is between Swifty and eBay—not the actual seller. As far as the seller is concerned, Swifty has bid on his item at \$1.99.

The results of this bid are shown in Figure 8.2. eBay alerts Swifty that he is indeed the current high bidder, and an e-mail is sent confirming his bid on this item. All e-mail alerts will be sent to the account you specified when you first registered on eBay.



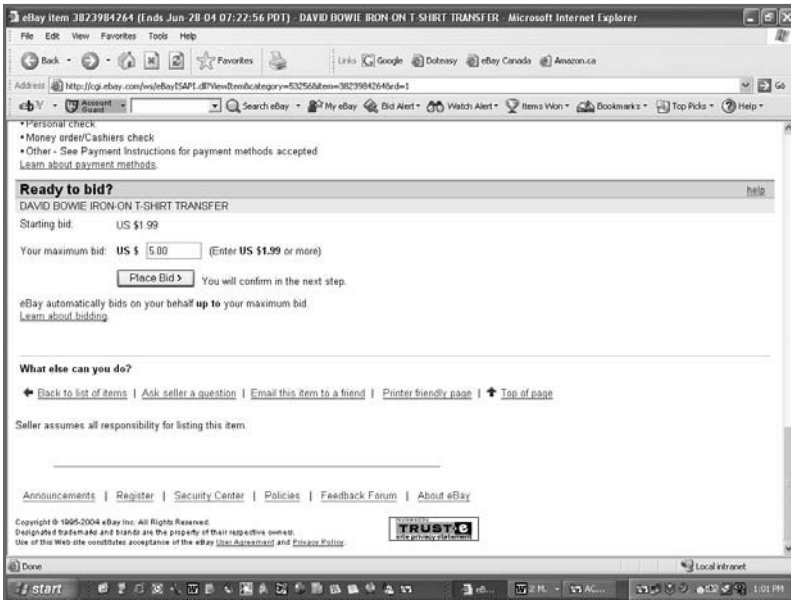


Figure 8.1

Entering his maximum bid of \$5.00.

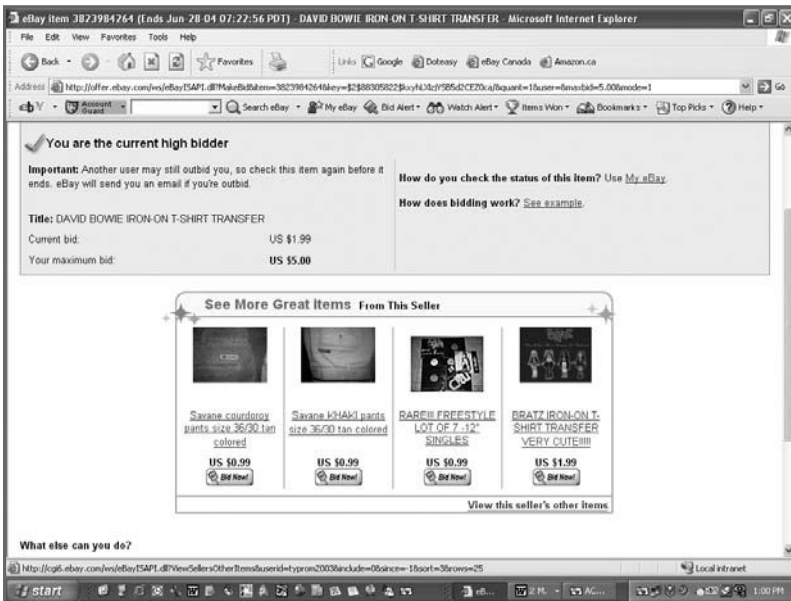


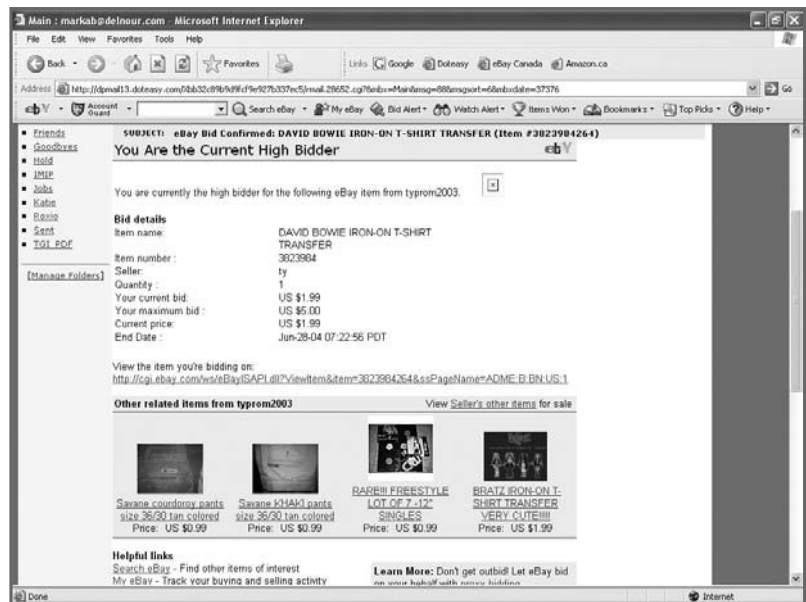
Figure 8.2

We have a high bidder!

As displayed in Figure 8.3, the e-mail shows all sorts of information regarding his bid, such as the item name, auction-end date, current bid amount, and Swifty's maximum bid. Swifty keeps this e-mail and all correspondence regarding eBay transactions. If things go wrong, as they sometimes do, it's important to have a paper trail for backup purposes.

If someone else were to come along and bid against Swifty for this item, let's say at \$2.50, Swifty would still be the high bidder, because eBay knows that he's willing to go as high as \$5.00. eBay will automatically upgrade his bid to \$2.75 to beat out the last bidder's advances. This is eBay's built-in free service, proxy bidding, at work (see Table 8.1 for more information on proxy bidding).

The attacking bidder will receive an alert from eBay stating that he has been outbid by another bidder. This is shown in Figure 8.4. It will be up to that bidder to bid again if he so chooses.



**Figure 8.3**

E-mail message confirming you are the high bidder.

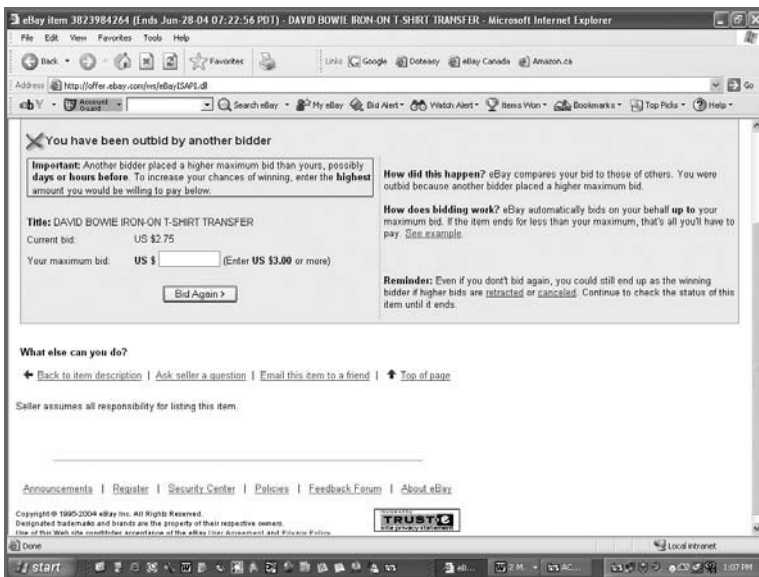
## eBay's Bid Increments Table

eBay uses the bid increments shown in Table 8.1.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

**Table 8.1** eBay's Proxy Bid Increments

Bid Amount	eBay Increment
\$0.00-\$1.00	\$0.05
\$1.00-\$5.00	\$0.25
\$5.00-\$25.00	\$0.50
\$25.00-\$100.00	\$1.00
\$100.00-\$250.00	\$2.50
\$250.00-\$500.00	\$5.00
\$500.00-\$1000.00	\$10.00

**Figure 8.4**

A bidder's bid has been outbid.

## Outbid?

The bidding continues in Swifty's absence until someone bids higher than his limit of \$5.00. If that happens, Swifty is out of the game, and the new bidder becomes the high bidder for that item. Swifty will be notified by e-mail that he has been outbid, and he too will have a chance to re-enter the fray—if there is enough time left in the auction.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

That's it for vanilla bidding. Wasn't that easy? The only thing to remember here is that eBay will bid automatically on an item in your absence up to the maximum bid amount you specified. You will be alerted by e-mail if someone outbids your maximum amount. Otherwise, if no one else bids or bids higher than your max, you win the item, and the David Bowie iron-on is yours. Good luck on that, Swifty.

## Nudge Bidding

---

Nudge bidding is very similar to vanilla bidding with one small difference. Instead of entering the maximum amount you would bid, you simply enter the amount you want to bid at that time. You are willing to wait to see what happens. If someone outbids you, you simply return on your own and nudge your bid up a little and see where that takes you. This is the most common way of bidding, especially for people new to the system. The problem with this method is that you bypass eBay's free proxy bidding service, which will keep you in the game even when you're not near your computer. Why not let them do the work for you?

It is important to note that nudge bidders are almost always beat by *snipers* due to their conservative bid approach. (Snipers are explained in further detail in the following section.) Do yourself a favor: Enter your max bid and let eBay bid on your behalf. Unless you're chained to your computer, there's no way you can beat eBay's 24-hour tracking abilities.

## Sniping

---

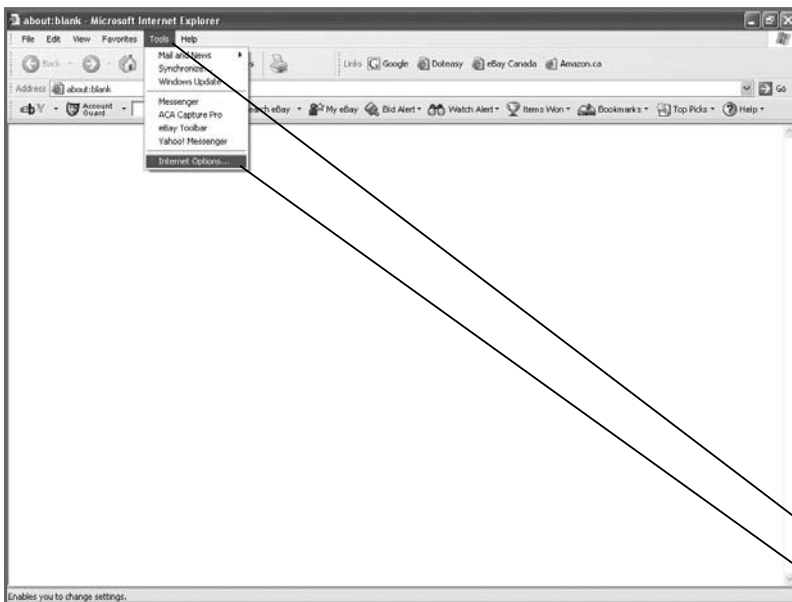
When you hear the word sniping, what do you think of? Probably something negative, I would guess. Sniping, on eBay, is the outbidding of other buyers in the closing minutes or seconds of an auction.

Phat Matt has become quite the pro at sniping on eBay and has volunteered to provide us with his winning technique. Although he doesn't claim that he created this technique, he tells us it's quite popular on eBay—especially among the seasoned members. Every second counts when sniping, considering that there are others trying to do the same thing.

## You're so Refresh

To begin with, Matt suggests making a small change to your browser settings before you start any snipe activity. To ensure your screen refresh occurs as quickly as possible, turn off the ability to see graphics in your browser. For those of you new to the term “refresh,” it's simply the act of a browser redrawing the page. Graphics or photographs really slow down a web page's refresh rate, so for the purpose of sniping, we will disable this picture option in Internet Explorer.

Assuming you are using Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher, follow these steps to disable graphics for this sniping example. If you are using a different browser, I recommend you consult that browser's help files for alternative instructions.



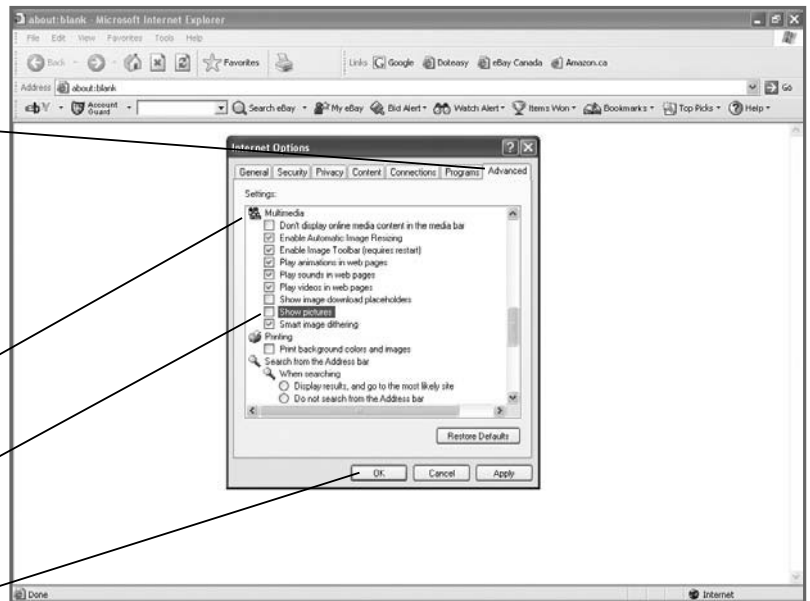
1. Launch Internet Explorer.
2. Click on Tools.
3. Click on Internet Options.

4. Click on the Advanced tab.

5. Scroll through the list of options until you come to the Multimedia header.

6. Click on the Show Pictures checkbox. The checkmark should disappear, leaving an empty box next to this option.

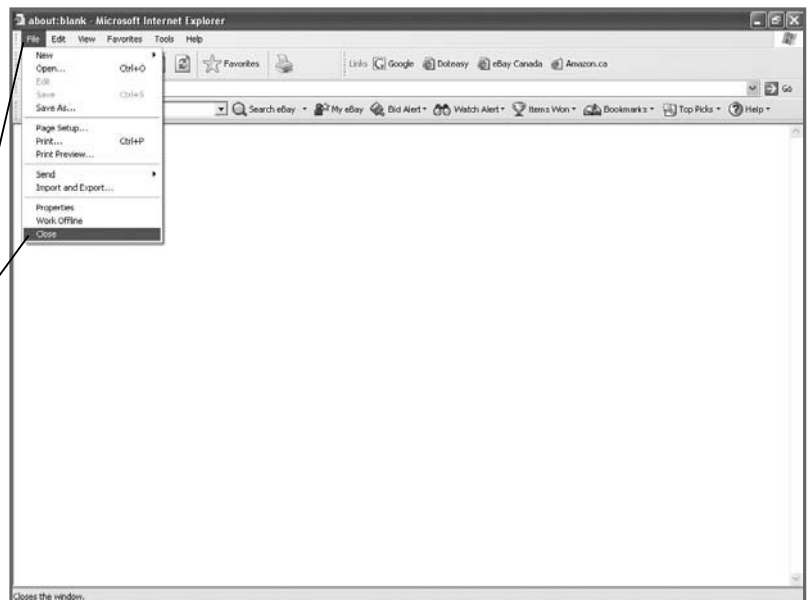
7. Click on OK.



8. Click on File.

9. Click on Close.

10. Launch Internet Explorer again. The setting modification for no pictures will be in effect and applied to any future websites you visit.



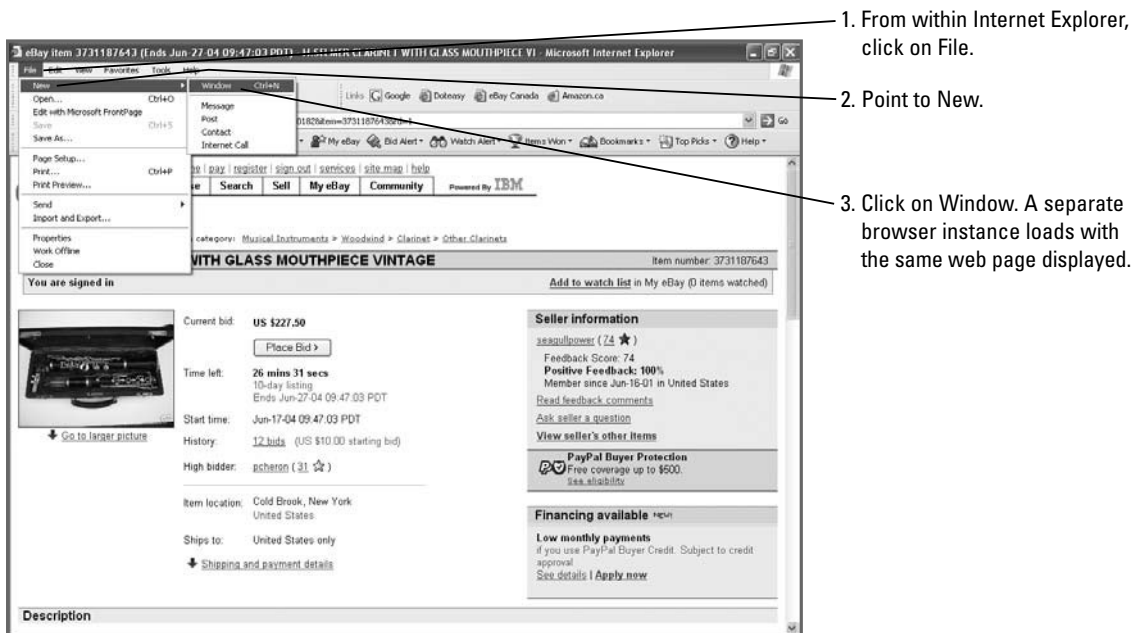
To reestablish the original settings in your browser, simply follow these steps again, except for step 6, where you will be placing the check back in the checkbox to enable this option for picture display.

## Prep Steps

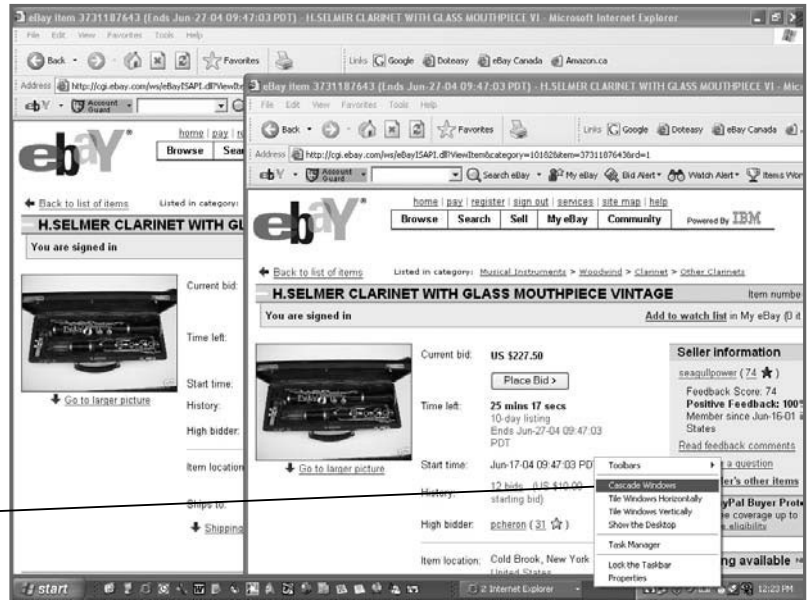
This first step is key. You must sign in. Type in your user ID and password and log in to eBay. This will save you valuable time when “pulling a snipe” in an auction.

Now that you are logged in to your account, locate the item that you hope to snipe and ultimately win. Once you have it in your sights, this is where the snipe process truly begins.

Our goal here is to have two Internet Explorer windows open, placed side by side, both displaying the same item that you want to snipe. If you want to do this the slow way, launch Internet Explorer again from the desktop and copy and paste the URL from the first browser to the second one. We don't work the slow way, though. Here's the quick way to create a duplicate window using Internet Explorer.



4. Making sure that only the two browsers are open on-screen, right-click on the Windows taskbar.
5. Select Cascade Windows. Both windows become visible, one slightly overlapping the other.



## The 10-Minute Mark

Ten minutes before the auction closes, scroll down to the bottom of the Item page to place your bid. Enter the highest amount you are willing to pay for this item. If you're willing to snipe, you most likely want it bad enough, so put your money where you keyboard is and loosen those purse strings. You'll only get one chance to snipe, so if it's too low, you will most likely lose.

With your highest bid amount punched in, do not hit the Place Bid button yet. It's too early. Move your attention to the other browser, where you are seeing pretty much the same thing minus your bid amount. What you want to do here is keep refreshing the screen so that you can see all the bid activity for this item. As the clock ticks away on this auction, all sorts of fast and furious bidding could be happening right before your eyes. Do nothing. Sit, wait, and continue to refresh the second browser, leaving your bid browser in view. If keyboard shortcuts are your thing, you can also quickly refresh your screen by pressing the F5 key.



## The 10-Second Mark

Ten seconds before auction-end, if your highest bid is still higher than the current bid status, move to the bid browser, count to three, and click the Submit button. You've just sniped your first auction. How did you do?

## Alternate Snipe

Another way of performing a snipe that doesn't involve having to disable graphics in your browser is by using the Bid History page.

Instead of repeatedly refreshing the actual Item page, you would instead refresh the Bid History Information page. We learned all about bid history in Chapter 6, "Understanding the Item Page View." As shown in Figure 8.5, you will see all the activity as it happens, complete with bid amounts and user IDs for added thrills and fun.

The screenshot shows two browser windows. The left window displays the eBay item page for 'H SELMER CLARINET WITH GLASS MOUTHPIECE VI'. The right window displays the 'Bidding history (Highest bids first)' page for the same item. The bidding history table is as follows:

Date of Bid	Bid Amount	User ID
Jun-26-04 22:45:48 PDT	--	pscheton (31 ☆)
Jun-27-04 03:57:26 PDT	--	buff_35 (33 ☆)
Jun-24-04 21:29:21 PDT	--	mozam (42 ☆)
Jun-26-04 18:00:02 PDT	--	malak490 (9)
Jun-26-04 10:44:44 PDT	--	ant19555 (11 ☆)
Jun-25-04 21:05:34 PDT	--	ant19555 (11 ☆)
Jun-25-04 21:03:12 PDT	--	ant19555 (11 ☆)
Jun-25-04 21:02:52 PDT	--	ant19555 (11 ☆)
Jun-19-04 05:07:06 PDT	--	vtracproductions (2350 ☆) MP
Jun-19-04 09:22:01 PDT	--	grtten (289 ☆)
Jun-17-04 12:06:44 PDT	--	brassmanjack (5)
Jun-10-04 09:21:04 PDT	--	mbansaxes (138 ☆)

**Bidders:** You can retract your bid under certain circumstances only.  
**Sellers:** See how to cancel bids if you need to.

Figure 8.5

Bid history and the snipe.

## Odd Man in Technique

Jordy offered up this technique, and it's one he uses all the time when he's bidding for music CDs on eBay. When placing your bid using any of the techniques discussed in this chapter, always enter an odd, somewhat strange number as your bid amount. Most people bid using nice, clean numbers like \$5, \$150, or \$275. Even when they are setting maximum amounts they are willing to pay, they almost always enter a nice round number.

With the odd man in technique, you will be entering numbers like \$5.53, \$151.01, and \$276.05. With eBay's automated increments, most bidders assume that you must go with their suggested incremental amount when bidding. Here's an example of this scenario at work.

Swiftly bids on an Elvis clock, and it reaches his maximum bid of \$34 even. He is currently the high bidder and very happy. eBay's automated increment will be \$1.00, meaning another bidder would have to bid \$35 or more to beat him.

If the next bidder is Jordy, and he bids \$40.53 on the clock as his maximum amount, eBay will show that he is now the high bidder, and the item will be listed at \$35. (Pssst—remember vanilla bidding and eBay's proxy bidding techniques?)

Swiftly will most likely counter bid and come back hard, maybe setting a mental limit of \$40 in his head. Using his favorite nudge technique, he will most likely continue bidding, one dollar at a time, until he hits his limit—\$40. Jordy would win this bid by 53 cents. Keep it odd. The odd man (or woman) wins on eBay.

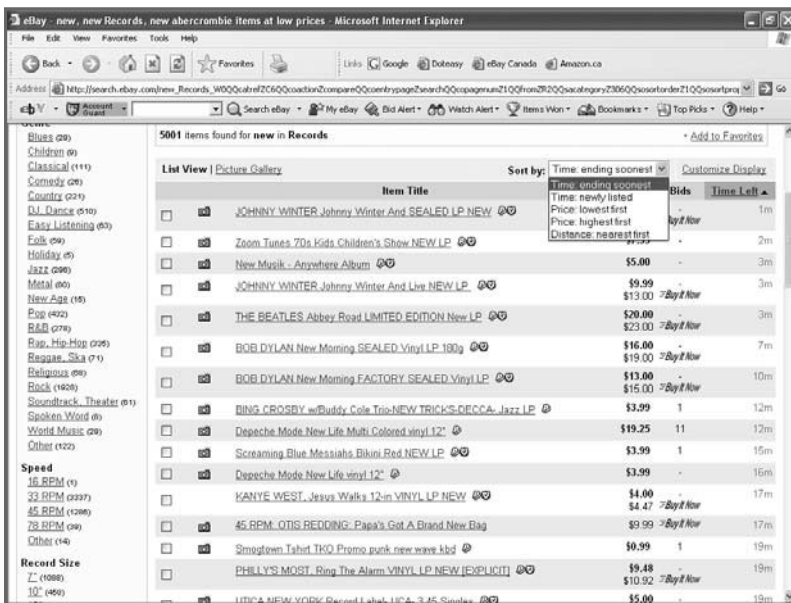
## The Last-Minute Shopper—AKA Vulture Techniques

This is a technique shared by most of the experts on this panel. It's also the first one I used when I started using eBay. The premise behind this is extremely simple and has a real sniper feel to it, minus the work. The goal is to search and bid on auctions that are minutes from closing. You aren't typically looking for anything in particular but rather a category of goods that interest you. For someone like Swiftly who collects rare, hard-to-find vinyl, the vulture technique is a personal fave.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Here's how it works. From eBay's front page, Swifty clicks on the Music link within the Categories section on the left side of the page. On the next page, he clicks on the Records link. The Records link brings him to the Search Results page, where he sees all the records currently for sale on eBay. From this General search, over 163,905 items are found. He adds the word "new" to his search criteria and repeats the search. Just over 5,000 results are found.

The vulture swoops in for the kill. On the right side of the Results page is a drop-down menu where you can select from one of four options. We discussed these options in Chapter 5, "Found It! Now What?" Swifty selects the Time: Ending Soonest option from the drop-down menu, as shown in Figure 8.6. Swifty now sees all the vinyl auctions that are minutes from closing, hence the name, last-minute shopper. He can also see which ones have bidders and which ones don't. You have to act quickly or some of these great deals will slip away. Don't forget, though, that snipers are hiding around many corners on eBay, so no one technique is better than the other. Use them as-is or mix them together—do what works best for you.



**Figure 8.6**

The last-minute shopper strikes.

## A Bitter Shill

So far, the techniques discussed in this chapter have all been above the waist, too legit to quit, and fair game practices. Shilling, on the other hand is a completely different story.

I was somewhat conflicted over including it in this chapter. I eventually decided that I would include it as a warning to those of us who do play by the rules. There are deceitful players out there, and this is one of their favorite tricks. The real trick, though, is detecting it and getting out before it's too late.

### What Is Shilling?

*Shilling* is fraudulent bidding by a seller (using an alternate user ID) or a cohort of the seller to artificially inflate the bid price of an item. This practice is also known as *collusion* or *the bid rig*. Here's how it works. In this example, I will use Seller A and Seller B as my actors, as opposed to my expert's names. These guys would never use such a practice.

Seller A creates a listing for a piano he's selling with a reserve price of \$500. A reserve price set by a seller simply states that there is a minimum price for this item, and if the auction does not hit that number, the seller does not have to sell.

Seller B, a good friend of Seller A, then bids on the item to get things going. Some members on eBay begin bidding as well. The bid price is now set at \$400, with no other bids coming through. With only one day left in the auction, Seller A is frustrated and wants his item, at the very least, to exceed his reserve price. He contacts Seller B and asks him to bid on his item again and continue doing so until he hits just below the reserve price. Another member on eBay then bids, pushing the price past the reserve price. The auction ends, and Seller A has made a sale at \$550 for his piano.

### Detect and Squash the Shill

This is easier said than done, unfortunately. Do not despair, though; it is possible, but not without a little detective work on your part. Look for clues

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

that you may be the poor unfortunate patsy caught up in this ruse. Here are some things to look for.

## Reserve Prices

There's nothing wrong with Reserve Price auctions. Just keep your eyes on the bid history to see if someone, the same person, has bid a number of times to bring the price up. Typically, that same person's user ID will continue to appear until he comes close to the reserve price.

## Zero, Low Numbers

When you notice, again through bid history, that a lot of undesirables are hanging around a certain item, you may be part of a shill. When I say undesirables, I am typically referring to those members with zero or low numbers of transactions under their belts. These are either friends of the seller or the seller himself under different user IDs.

## Past Bid History for This Seller— Same Names Keep Popping Up?

This one is a real humdinger. I like to save the best for last. To avoid the shill, make a point of checking into a seller's past sales. On the seller's Feedback page, locate the comments coming from buyers and click on as many item numbers as possible. On each Item page, check the bid history. Make a list of any repeating names. Those names may be associates of the seller, popping into his auctions to lend a helping hand.

If you haven't noticed yet, your best defense against a potential shill operation is bid history. Check it throughout the length of the auction and look for these telltale signs. Shilling is a very serious offense on eBay and is not taken lightly. If proven, shillers are kicked off the site, never to return again.

Now that you're a savvy bidder, you're ready to enter the bidding fray. What happens after you place a bid? Do you just sit and patiently wait for the outcome? Are there things you can be doing as the clock ticks down? Win or lose, there are steps to take, and they are all outlined in Chapter 9.

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 9



## After the Bid

---

What happens after you bid? You've just learned some bidding strategies, and you've probably already tried a few. Now that your bids are in, how can you monitor your auction activity? How do you keep a level head when the bids get fast and furious? In this chapter, we will look at all the things that can happen after the bid. Hopefully, one of those things is—you win!

### Checking Your Activity

---

It's important that you stay on top of all your bidding—especially if you are bidding on more than one item at a time. As you learned in the previous chapter, the different bidding strategies all require some form of monitoring and timing. In this section, we will look at the different ways eBay can help you monitor your activity after you throw in your bid.

### Notifications

---

Any time you bid on an item and end up as the high bidder, eBay will send you an e-mail notification. You can turn this feature on or off through the My eBay preferences page. There are several notifications that eBay can send, depending on your settings. In this section we will look at each option in detail to ensure you have the right ones activated and the right ones disabled.

When I started using eBay, I remember my e-mail Inbox almost exploded with messages coming every which way but loose. Now, as a savvy eBay, I receive only those that help me rather than fill me with uncontrollable rage.

To access the Notifications Preferences page, you must first click on the My eBay button on the main toolbar. You'll most likely be asked to sign in, and then the My eBay front page will appear. Along the left side of the My eBay page, you will see navigation links. Scroll down the page a little until you see the eBay Preferences link in the My Account section. Click on this link. At the top of the page that follows is a section called eBay Preferences. On the far right of the words Notifications Preferences, you will see a View/Change link. By clicking on this link, you are taken to a page where you will see all the notifications available on eBay (you may be asked to sign in again). Can you imagine having all of these notifications enabled? Some people do.

## Notification Services

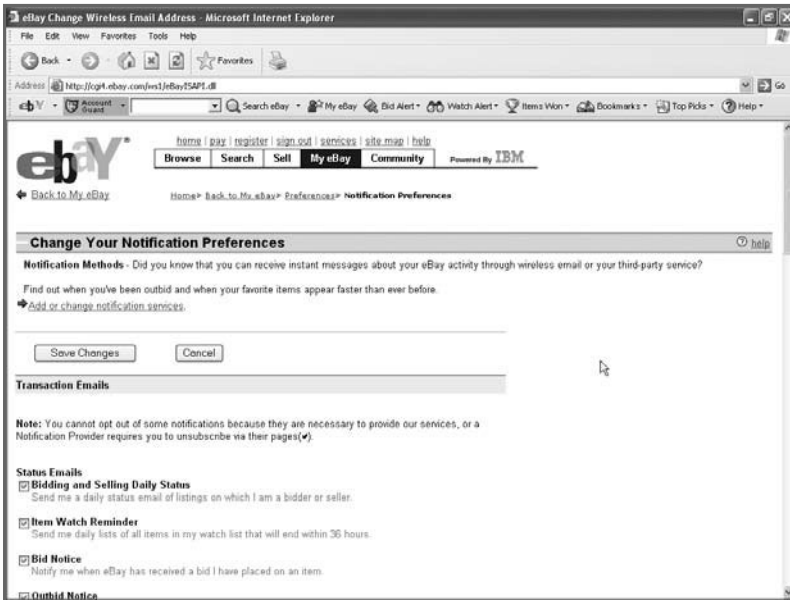
Jordy introduced me to this feature, and now I'm introducing you. At the top of the Change Your Notifications Preferences page, you will see an Add or Change Notification Services link, as shown in Figure 9.1. Click on this link, and you are entering the future of eBay technology.

## eBay Wireless E-mail

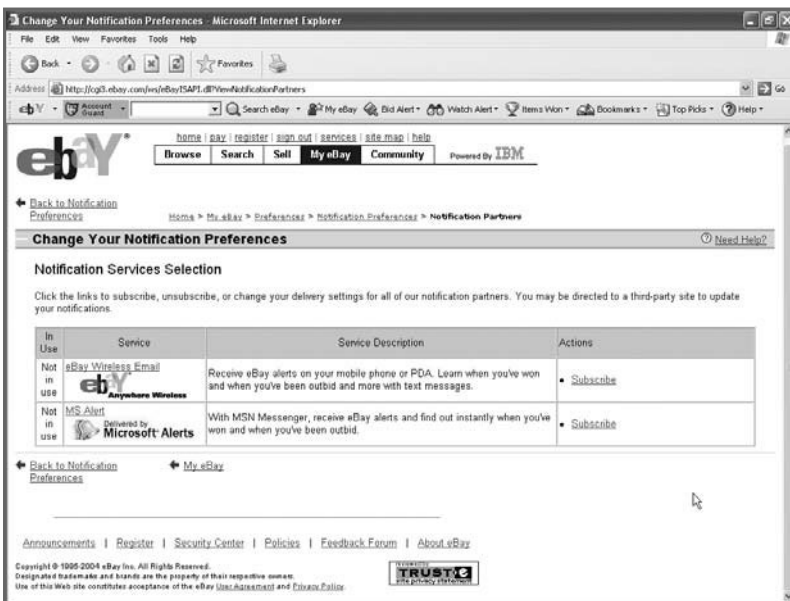
As shown in Figure 9.2, you have the option of subscribing to two services: eBay Wireless E-mail and MS Alert. The e-mail service will allow your cell phone or PDA to automatically receive eBay alerts. Can you imagine? You're eating lunch at the local tavern and your phone beeps, letting you know that you've won the tambourine you were bidding on. Or your PDA chimes, alerting you that you've been outbid on Slash's signed top hat.

Let's go through the initial steps in subscribing to the Wireless E-mail service. Click on the Subscribe link. On the page that follows, select the Send Wireless E-mail Alerts to the Address Below radio button. As you can see in Figure 9.3, below this option you can enter your wireless e-mail address.





**Figure 9.1**  
Change notification services.



**Figure 9.2**  
Two services available:  
Wireless E-mail and MS Alert.



Figure 9.3

Subscribe to wireless e-mail!

Once you've entered your address, proceed by clicking on the Save Changes button. You're done! Well, you're almost done. Now, you have to check or uncheck the alerts or notifications you want to receive. Otherwise, you are set up to receive all your notifications—wireless on your cell or PDA.

## MS Alert

If you're an MSN Messenger user, you can receive eBay alerts by subscribing to this service. Enough wasting time chatting with friends. Now you're going to get messages that really matter via your MSN Messenger screens.

To subscribe, return to the Notifications Services Selection page and click on the Subscribe link in the Action column. As shown in Figure 9.4, you will now be greeted by the Microsoft Alerts page.

On this page, there are several steps to follow to get hooked up properly to this amazing feature. Once subscribed, you will receive two different types of alerts from eBay:

- **Bidding Alerts.** Always stay on top of the bidding game with eBay alerts, letting you know when you've been outbid.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



Figure 9.4  
Sign up for MS Alert!

- **End of Auction Alerts.** An eBay alert notifies you of the end of an auction for an item you've bid on and whether you won or lost, as shown in Figure 9.5.

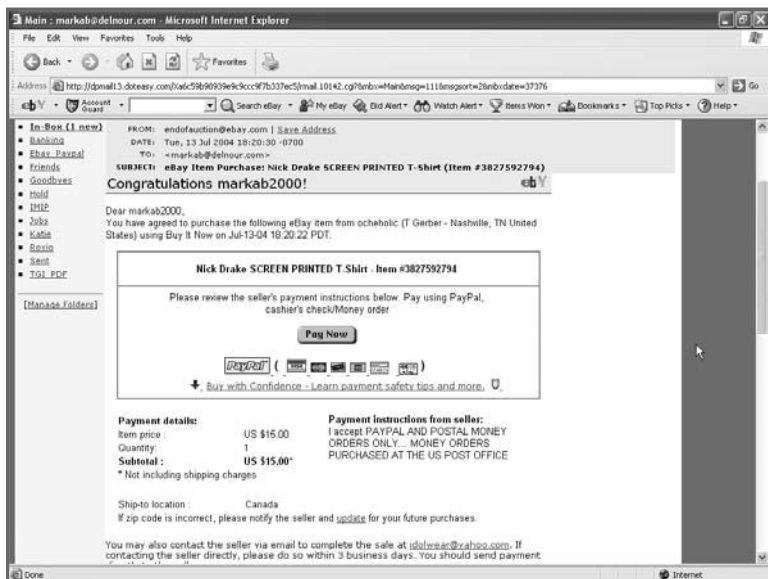


Figure 9.5  
End of auction—you've won!

Now that you're connected through your wireless e-mail and MS Alert, let's look at the rest of the notifications eBay provides to help you monitor your auction activity.

## Transaction E-mails

There are several types of transaction e-mails on eBay, and each has its place and value. Some can and will waste your time, while others are imperative to your very eBay existence. Let's take a look at each so that you can make an informed decision.

### Status E-mails

- **Bidding and Selling Daily Status.** With this option enabled, you will receive a daily status log of all the listings on which you are either a bidder or a seller.

*The Verdict*—unless you are bidding on several items at once, this can become a real annoyance, in my opinion. My panel of experts and I voted 3 to 1 against enabling this option.

- **Item Watch Reminder.** If you're not familiar with this feature, you will be once you get to the next chapter. My eBay gives you the ability to add certain items that interest you to your Watch list. You haven't committed to anything by doing this. It's just a quick way to access those items you'd rather watch than buy at that point in time. With this feature enabled, eBay sends you a reminder notice via e-mail telling you that items you are watching will be ending within 36 hours. You can decide at that point if you want to take action on them.

*The Verdict*—if you aren't using the Watch feature, then you don't know what you're missing. When you do start using the Watch list feature—if you're not already—then we strongly recommend that you use this reminder. We voted 4 to 0 in favor of keeping a big fat checkmark next to this one. It's so easy to forget those items you've assigned to your Watch list. With this feature enabled, you will forget no more.

- **Bid Notice.** Anytime you place a bid on an item and you are the current high bidder, eBay will send you an e-mail notification. Think of it as a confirmation that you bid on the right item and at the right price. The e-mail will provide all the information regarding this item as well as how high you are willing to bid.

*The Verdict—This one was an even split. Two of us have this feature enabled. One camp suggests using My eBay instead to stay on top of things. The other camp says it doesn't hurt to get that reminder and information for your records. You'll have to make the call on this one.*

- **Outbid Notice.** This is the goldmine of all notifications. If you disable this one then you may as well give up, pack it in, and call a taxi. Simply put, you receive an e-mail from eBay the moment someone outbids you on an item. This gives you the chance to jump right back in and make another bid if you want.

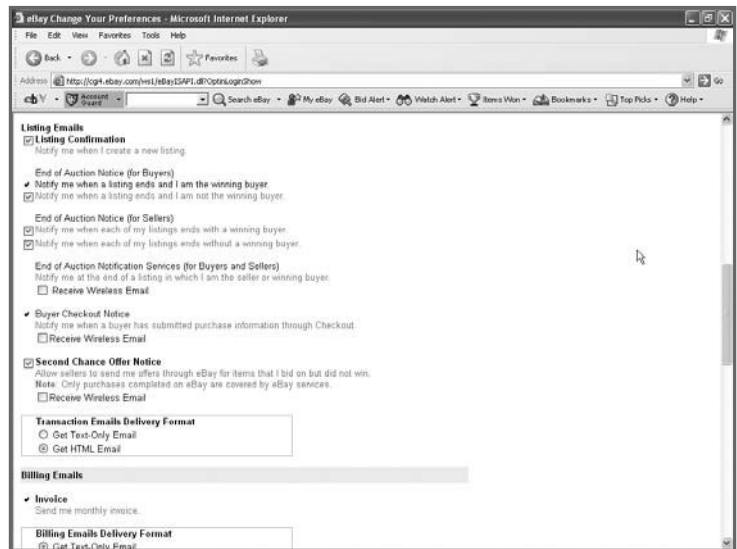
*The Verdict—Hands down, this was a unanimous favorite. Not one of the experts would think of disabling this feature. My eBay will show you when you've been outbid, but you'd have to actually go there each time to check. To stay in the game, this e-mail notification is an absolute necessity.*

- **Feedback Notification.** With this notification activated, you will be alerted instantly when someone leaves you feedback—good or bad. In order to actually receive this message, though, you must be a Notifications Service subscriber.

*The Verdict—3 to 1 in favor of this one. The more feedback points you get, the better. It's a lot of fun to check out what other people write about you. Instead of checking My eBay constantly to see if someone has left you feedback, wouldn't it be easier to get an alert from eBay?*

## Listing E-mails

Figure 9.6 displays the section of the Notifications page that covers anything to do with listings you would create as a seller.



**Figure 9.6**

Listing e-mail notification options.

- **Listing Confirmation.** If you're a seller and you've posted a new listing, eBay will send you a notification with all the trimmings (item details, starting bid, payment methods accepted) included.

*The Verdict—Drop it. Unless you are an absolute novice, this e-mail will simply pollute your already overstuffed Inbox. The panelists voted 3 to 1 in favor of disabling this feature. You don't need it. My eBay will keep perfect score for you.*

- **End of Auction Notice (for Buyers).** As a buyer you have two different options for this type of notification. Do you want eBay to notify you when a listing ends and you are the winning bidder? You better believe it. How about the reverse? Do you want to be notified when a listing ends and you are not the winning bidder? Your call. Let's hear what our panel experts say.

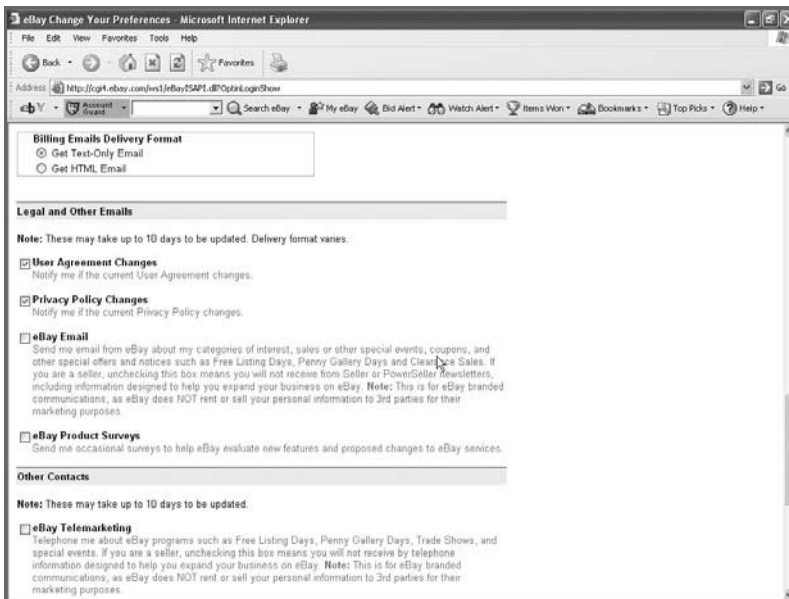
*The Verdict—Everyone was in favor of activating the winning side of this notification feature. And it seems that eBay agrees. You aren't given the choice to activate or deactivate this option. It's enabled for good. On the losing side, no one felt this notification was necessary. You're already being notified when you've been outbid. If you choose to ignore an outbid notification and you lose the auction, you don't need another e-mail rubbing it in your face. It just makes sense.*

- **End of Auction Notice (for Sellers).** As a seller, these notifications will alert you when a listing you've posted ends with or without a winning buyer.

*The Verdict—“A must-have for sellers!” screams the panelist group. This is especially helpful for very active sellers. If the auction ends with a winning buyer, as a seller you can be proactive and contact the winner immediately and rack up the positive feedback points. If your auction ends without a winning buyer, you can just as easily reassess your situation and potentially relist your item.*

## Legal and Other E-mails

If you like extra clutter, this section of the Notification page is for you. Figure 9.7 displays the four options contained within this grouping.



**Figure 9.7**

Legal and other e-mail notification options.

- **User Agreement Changes.** The eBay User Agreement is a very important document that I bet many people have not read. If you recall, during the registration process you were asked to read and agree to it. If you've actually read it and you agree with everything in it, then you may be interested in knowing when it changes.

*The Verdict*—Enable this option if you did actually read the User Agreement. If not, disable it and let your Inbox breathe a big breath of fresh air.

- **Privacy Policy Changes.** Like the User Agreement, eBay's Privacy Policy is another bit of reading most people skip. Did you? During the registration process, you were asked to read and agree to it as well.

*The Verdict*—If you actually did read the Privacy Policy, you may be interested in hearing when it changes.

- **eBay E-mail.** Debate ahead! With this feature enabled, eBay will send you e-mails containing information on special events, sales, and coupons. eBay will also attempt to send you e-mails that contain their best guess as to categories that may interest you. Special offers and notices will also find their way to your Inbox. eBay will not sell your information to third parties for marketing purposes. These are all strictly eBay communications.

*The Verdict*—The panelists were split on this one. Two of them stated that it was a waste of time and Inbox space. The other two had a completely different experience. Jordy loves getting them and says he's actually learned new things, gotten great deals, and attended special events due to those e-mails. He even convinced me to activate this feature. Thanks, Jordy!

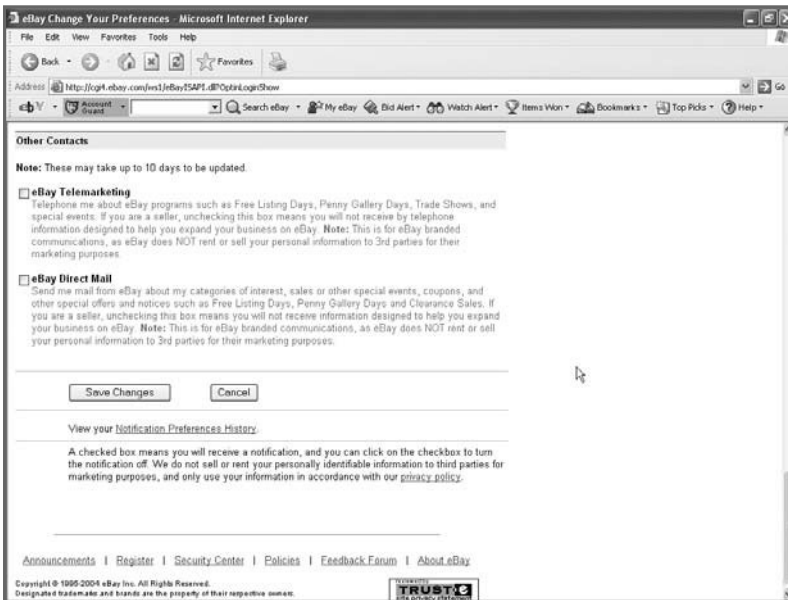
- **eBay Product Surveys.** With this feature enabled, eBay will send you surveys by e-mail. These surveys help eBay evaluate its new features and services. If any changes are going to occur, eBay will sometimes solicit feedback via surveys as well.

*The Verdict*—Should you get involved in these surveys? What do you think? You better believe it! How else do you think you'll be heard? If you love eBay as much as the rest of us, completing a survey is the way to go. I've participated in several and will continue to do so.



## Other Contacts

If you've ever wanted to get phone calls or actual mail from eBay, then these two options are for you. Figure 9.8 displays both the Telemarketing and eBay Direct Mail features available in this section of the Notifications page.



**Figure 9.8**

Telemarketing and eBay Direct Mail notifications.

- **Telemarketing.** Would you believe that if you enable this option, eBay will call you directly with information about trade shows, special events, and free listing days? Basically, instead of sending you an e-mail as discussed in the eBay E-mail section, eBay will call you! If you're a seller, you may be interested in enabling this option.

*The Verdict—No one on the panel enjoys having his dinner interrupted. Instead, all of us opted for the direct mail piece discussed next.*

- **eBay Direct Mail.** Get the same information as the telemarketing option, but instead receive it by mail.

*The Verdict—Surprisingly, everyone on the panel had this feature activated.*

Once you've decided which way you want to go with the notification options, don't forget to hit that Save Changes button located at the bottom of the page. If you want a quick recap of the changes you made, you can click on the View Your Notification Preferences History link. On this page, eBay will list all the changes you've made to your Notifications page.

## Using the eBay Toolbar to Monitor Your Activity

In Chapter 4, "Seek and You Shall Find," we covered installing the eBay Toolbar, and I'm going to assume you did. This toolbar is yet another must-have in the world of eBay. Our panel of distinguished experts are all die-hard users. Let's take a look at the options available on the Toolbar that can help after the bid.

### My eBay on the eBay Toolbar

The My eBay button located on the eBay Toolbar will transport you right to your personal My eBay page. Even if you're currently surfing on another website, clicking that button will send you right back to the mother site and into your My eBay page. My eBay is explained in great detail in Chapter 10, "My eBay Explained." Suffice to say, My eBay is an excellent way of ensuring you are up to speed on all your auction activity. Coupled with the notifications you'll be receiving, nothing should slip by you—especially a pesky bidder on the snipe move.

### Bid Alerts

The Bid Alerts button is a real humdinger of a feature on the eBay Toolbar. Whenever you are the current high bidder, the item will appear in the Bid Alerts drop-down list in the Toolbar. Figure 9.9 shows an example of this. If you click on the CD in the drop-down list, it will immediately send you to the Item page in eBay.

Once an auction has ended, the Bid Alert is removed from the list in the eBay Toolbar.

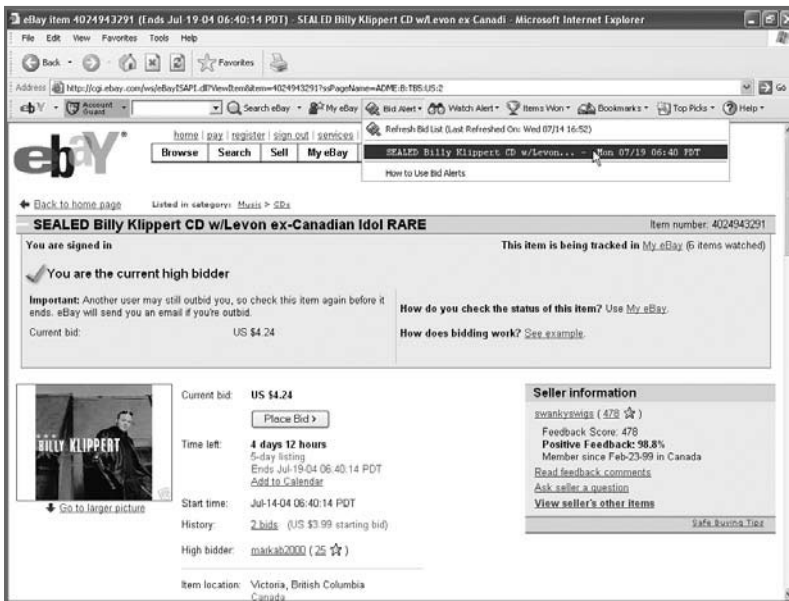


Figure 9.9

Bid Alerts drop-down list in the eBay Toolbar.

The Bid Alert button will also alert you 10, 15, 30, 60, or 75 minutes before the auction ends for that item. You have complete control over the duration through the Toolbar settings.

## Watch Alerts

When you assign an item to your Watch list, it will also appear in the Watch Alerts drop-down list in the eBay Toolbar. Figure 9.10 displays the items on the Watch list. If you click on the item in the list, you will be taken to its Item page.

If the auction ends prior to any action being taken, it is automatically removed from the drop-down list in the Toolbar.

Similar to the Bid Alerts feature, Watch Alerts will also send you a notification 10, 15, 30, 60, or 75 minutes before the auction ends for that item. Figure 9.11 shows an example of a Watch Alert. You can control the timing by adjusting the Toolbar settings for this option.

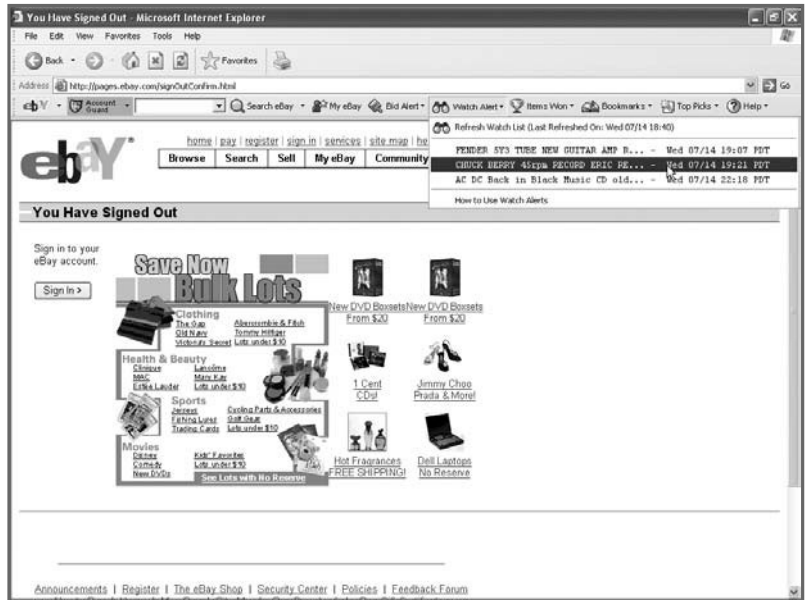


Figure 9.10

Watch Alerts drop-down list on the eBay Toolbar.

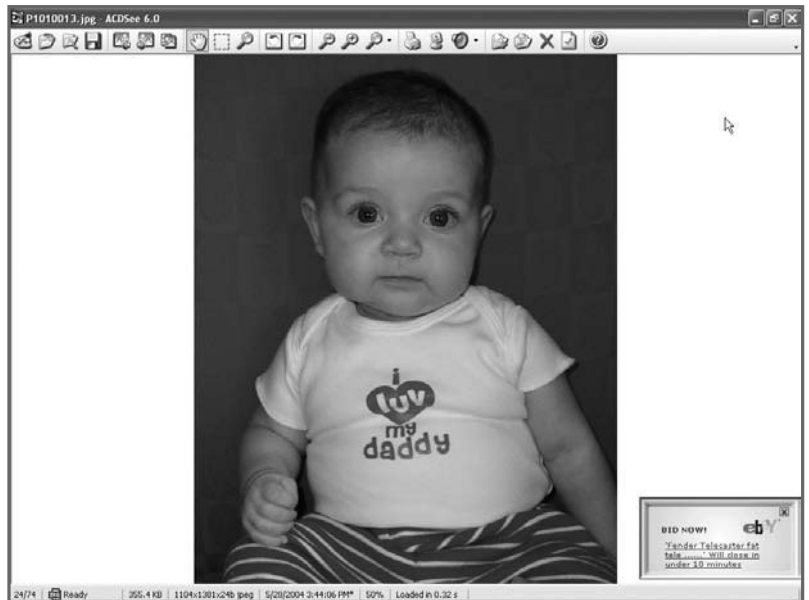
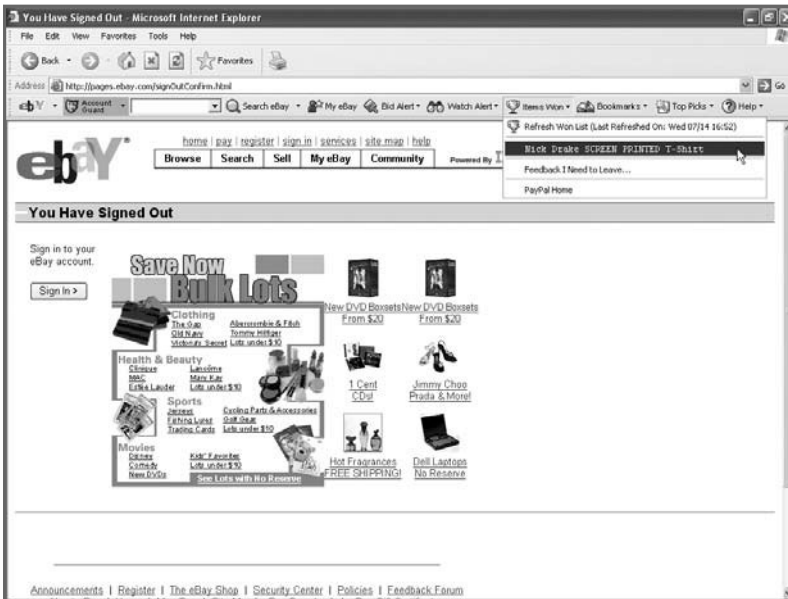


Figure 9.11

Watch Alert for the Fender guitar I was watching.

## Items Won

The Items Won button on the eBay Toolbar allows you to see all the items you've won in an easy to find drop-down list. Figure 9.12 displays the drop-down list which lists a Nick Drake t-shirt that I recently purchased.



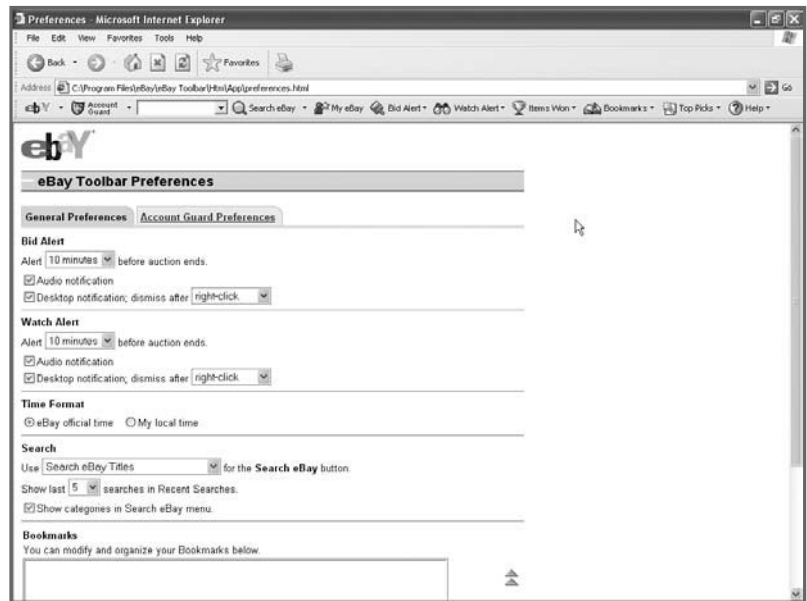
**Figure 9.12**

Items Won drop-down list in the eBay Toolbar.

## eBay Toolbar Preferences

The eBay Toolbar Preferences page gives you complete control over how the Toolbar behaves in your browser. Figure 9.13 displays the options available for your customization.

For both the Bid Alert and Watch Alert preferences, you can choose the time from the auction-end that you would like to be alerted from the drop-down list. You can also decide if you want an audio notification. To be honest, mine always scares the stuffing out of me so I disabled my audio setting. Once a notification appears on your desktop, you can also decide how you want it removed. There are timing and right mouse-clicking options available for both alert types.



**Figure 9.13**

Customize your  
Toolbar preferences.

## Stick to Your Guns

Let me set this up properly. You locate the DJ equipment you've always wanted and you enter a fair bid. A bidding war ensues. Sweat drips from your brow as you continue to bid. Ultimately you end up winning this auction but paying way more than you initially wanted to. What's wrong with this picture?

As a rule, you should always mentally note the highest you want to pay for an item—and never exceed it. Remember shilling? Shillers will keep bidding against you in hopes of getting you to keep raising the selling price. Stay aware and stick to your guns. That item will appear again on eBay and you know it.

## Did You Lose the Auction?

If you lost the auction and you're feeling down in the dumps—don't. That exact item will most likely be back on the auction boards before you know it. What are some things you should do after bidding and losing on an item?

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Contact the Seller

I remember back when I started on eBay, there was an item I really wanted to win. I bid and bid and bid until I finally lost. In haste, I contacted the seller, asking if he had another copy of that item. He did and asked me to pay him via PayPal. Excited and overjoyed, I sent him payment through PayPal and sat waiting for the item to arrive. I must have missed 23 days of work waiting in my house for a package that never came. eBay will not safeguard any transactions done outside of its walls.

On the other hand, you can still contact the seller for copies, but ask if he wouldn't mind listing the item again on eBay.

## Contacting the Winning Bidder

There are different schools of thought on this one. Depending on how badly you wanted this item, you can sometimes contact the winning bidder to see if he is willing to give it up in another auction. Again, you're not asking him to sell it to you outside of eBay but to list it as an eBay auction for you to bid on. To ensure you win the auction, agree ahead of time to a Buy It Now price and bid on the auction the moment it appears.

## Why Did You Lose?

Always review these situations carefully. There aren't that many reasons why you would lose an auction.

## Snipers

If someone slipped in at the last minute and sniped the item from you, read Chapter 8, "Bid to Win," again and practice, practice, practice. Sniping is an art that pays big rewards.

## Auction Ended

If an auction's end catches you off guard, then your monitoring system is for the birds. No auction you're bidding on should ever slip by you and close without you knowing. Re-read this chapter and ensure that your eBay Toolbar is **TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

installed. On top of that, ensure all the right notifications are enabled and read Chapter 10, “My eBay Explained.” Chapter 10 will give you a good idea of how you can use My eBay to really monitor all your auction activity.

### **Price Went too High**

Understood. There isn't much you can do here except get back into the game and run a search for that same item. I bet my Cat Stevens guitar pick collection that you'll eventually find it. Always pull out of a bidding fray if numbers are exceeding your personal limit. Stop bidding so you can bid another day. No one likes wearing a barrel and suspenders to work.

## **Did You Win the Auction?**

---

When you win an auction, a wave of euphoria passes through you. There is nothing more rewarding than a good win on eBay. The big question—now what? Will the seller contact me? Should I contact the seller? How will the seller know where I live? What are the shipping costs? Help!

### **E-mail the Seller**

Never hesitate to e-mail the seller once you've won an auction. I always do. Keep in mind that eBay notifies both the seller and the buyer the moment an auction is won. Typically, the seller will contact you with payment instructions, shipping charges, and any questions he may have. There is no reason why you can't e-mail the seller first. Always provide your shipping address, any questions you have, and confirmation of how much you owe.

### **Paying the Seller**

Once you receive the information you requested regarding payment methods, shipping charges, and so on, you must pay the seller. Do it and do it fast. There is no reason to delay paying a seller unless you feel there's a dupe going on. Paying quickly will get you positive feedback, and ultimately, you'll get the item sooner. PayPal is usually the fastest way to get your payment to the seller. If a seller accepts credit card payments, this is another quick



method you could use. Checks and money orders are the slowest and will most likely be held once they are received, further delaying the shipment of your item.

## Leaving Feedback

The item is in your sweaty little hands and it's exactly what the doctor ordered. What comes next? Please say you already knew the answer to that question and you've already started entering a feedback rating and comment for that seller. The rule of thumb for buyers is that you should never leave feedback until you've actually received the item. I don't care how nice a seller may be in your communications, wait until the very end of the transaction before leaving kind words.

Feedback is very important, and if you want the seller to leave you feedback, leave him some first. In most cases, the moment you pay, a seller will leave you feedback. If the transaction went without any serious hitches, by all means leave positive feedback and boost that seller's rating. That's the way eBay works. What goes around comes around—always.

You place your bid. You sit anxiously and await the verdict. Hopefully now, with this chapter's information stored in your memory banks, you feel more confident and prepared when bidding. You have to stay on top of your bids, and above all, always remain organized. Chapter 10 will cover in detail all the different features My eBay provides. Believe me when I say your auctions will never be the same with My eBay in your corner.

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 10



## My eBay Explained

---

Think of My eBay as the air-traffic control center of a busy international airport. Without it, there would be mass confusion and chaos in our friendly skies. My eBay is a central location or hub where you and only you can manage and track all your eBay activities.

Many online vendors share a similar feature where the customer can create customized individual pages. On these pages, you can set up favorite themes, wish lists, top 10s, and receive recommendations.

My eBay is similar, but also completely different. It shares some of the same features but is less gimmicky. Using My eBay to manage your day-to-day transactions will make you a better, more effective seller and buyer. It will keep you organized, structured, and on top of everything as events unfold.

Let's take a look at My eBay in action and explain along the way how this tool can help you out on the music scene.

## Accessing My eBay

---

To access the My eBay page, you must first be a registered member. Once you've registered and signed in, you are off to the races and ready to set up your page. From the main toolbar, simply click on the My eBay button. Welcome to My eBay—your new home away from home (shown in Figure 10.1). For the following exercises, I am going to use one of my old user IDs so that we can run through as many examples as possible.



Figure 10.1

Welcome to My eBay!

## All Buying

On the left side of the page, in the All Buying section, you will see several links. Each has something to do with bidding or buying on eBay. Let's define each.

### Watching

The Watching feature under the All Buying section is a very popular tool with our panel of experts. If you ever wanted to track a certain item you found on eBay, you could add it to your Watch list and there it would stay until you decided what you wanted to do with it.

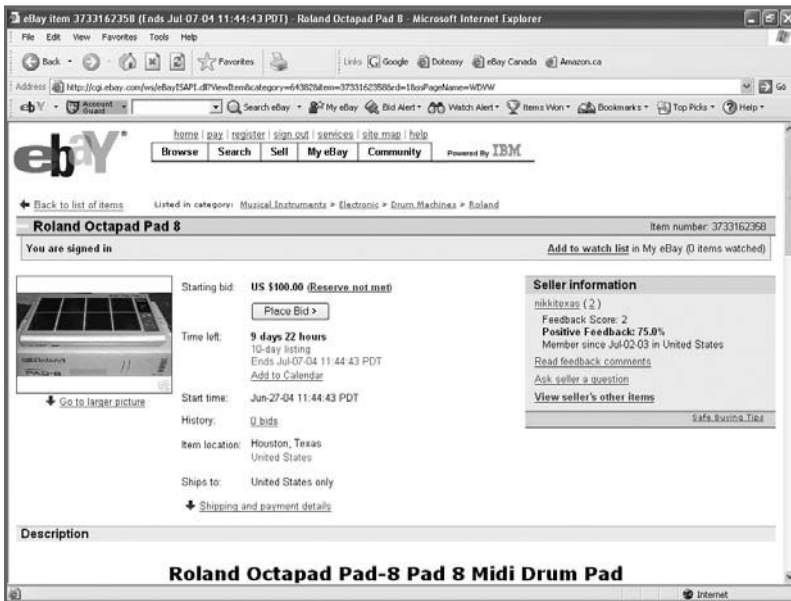
### Adding an Item to Your Watch List

To add an item to your Watch list, you must first locate something that you want to track.

I finally located a Roland Octapad Pad—8 Midi drum machine (shown in Figure 10.2) after a long, drawn out search. At that point there were no bidders,

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

the reserve had not been met, and the auction had 9 days and 23 hours remaining. That left me a lot of time to see if there were any others available. Instead of throwing it back in the water and continuing my search, I chose to add this item to my Watch list so I wouldn't have to repeat my search.



**Figure 10.2**

Roland Octapad to watch.

In the top-right corner of the Item page, there is an Add to Watch List in My eBay (0 items watched) link. By clicking on this link, I've added this item to my Watch list.

As shown in Figure 10.3, the Roland Octapad has been added to my Watch list and will be easily tracked from this location on the My eBay page.

## Adding Notes

Now, just imagine a Watch list full of items and then forgetting why you were watching them in the first place. eBay allows members to watch up to 100 items on their Watch lists. That's a lot of items to keep track of. Adding notes to your Watch items is really easy and a definite must for those of you who plan on watching a lot of listings. To add a note, simply select the item in the Watch list. A check will appear in the checkbox next to it. From there,

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

click on the Add Notes button. A new page will appear, as shown in Figure 10.4, where you will have the opportunity to type a reminder for this item.

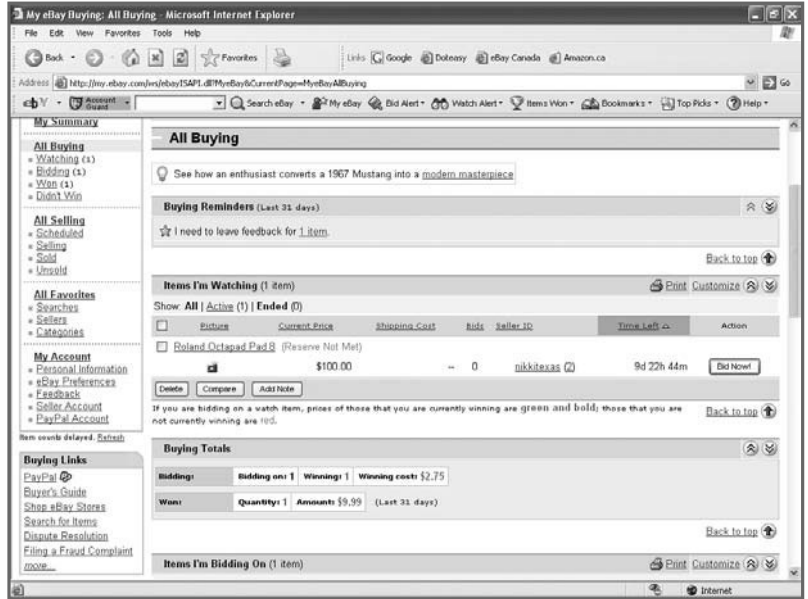


Figure 10.3

My updated Watch list.

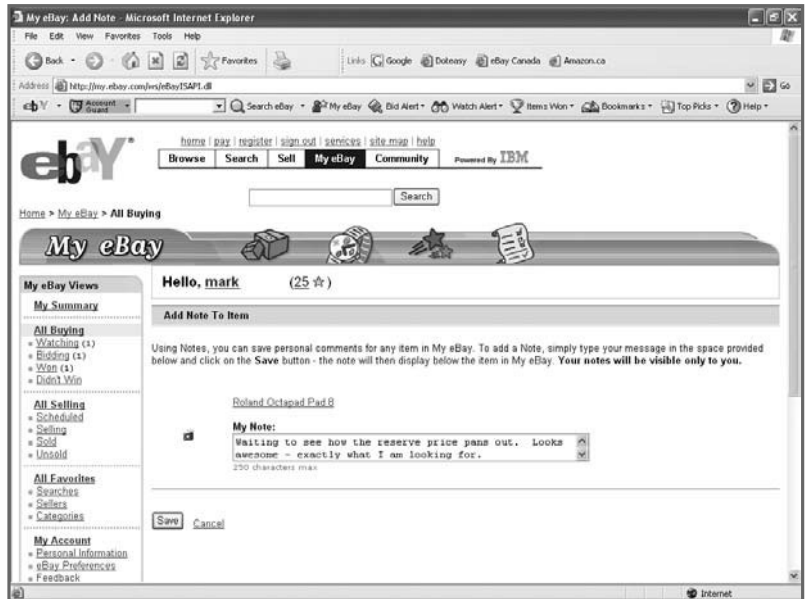


Figure 10.4

Add notes to your Watch list as reminders.

## Comparing

Another handy feature that exists within the Watch list is the ability to compare items you are watching. If you have many of the same type of items being watched in your list, and you want to line them up side by side to compare, then look no further—this feature is for you. I am currently watching three different drum machines. To see how they compare, I first select all three in my Watch list. Then, I click on the Compare button. Figure 10.5 displays how these three items compare, side by side. This is yet another way to save time and make informed decisions regarding potential purchases on eBay.

The screenshot shows the eBay 'Compare Items' page in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The page title is 'Compare Items' and the URL is 'http://sg.ebay.com/ww/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItemBuyISAPI.dll?CompareItems'. The browser's address bar shows the URL, and the search bar contains 'Search eBay'. The page features a 'Sort by: Order Selected: recent first' dropdown menu. Below the menu, there are three columns, each representing a different Roland Octapad drum machine. Each column includes a 'Remove Item' button, a product image, a 'Bid Now!' button, and a 'Tracking in My eBay' link. The table below compares the items across various attributes: Time Left, Bids, Price, Seller, Shipping, Ship From, and Payment Methods.

	Remove Item	Remove Item	Remove Item
Item	Roland Octapad Pad 8	Roland OCTAPAD 2 Pad 89 with case	Roland OCTAPAD II PAD 89 REDUCED!!
	<a href="#">Bid Now!</a>	<a href="#">Bid Now!</a>	<a href="#">Bid Now!</a>
	Tracking in My eBay	Tracking in My eBay	Tracking in My eBay
Time Left	9 days 22 hours	1 days 23 hours	1 days 19 hours
Bids	0 bids	8 bids	0 bids
Price	US \$100.00	US \$128.50	US \$125.00
Seller	nickdxxxx (2) 75.0% Positive	tonmid (61 ★) 98.4% Positive	nurseall180_0 (0)
Shipping	--	US \$20.00 (within United States) (including insurance)	US \$20.00 (within United States)
Ship From	United States	United States	United States
Payment Methods	Money order/Cashiers check	Money order/Cashiers check	Money order/Cashiers check

**Figure 10.5**

Side-by-side comparisons.

## Bidding on a Watched Item

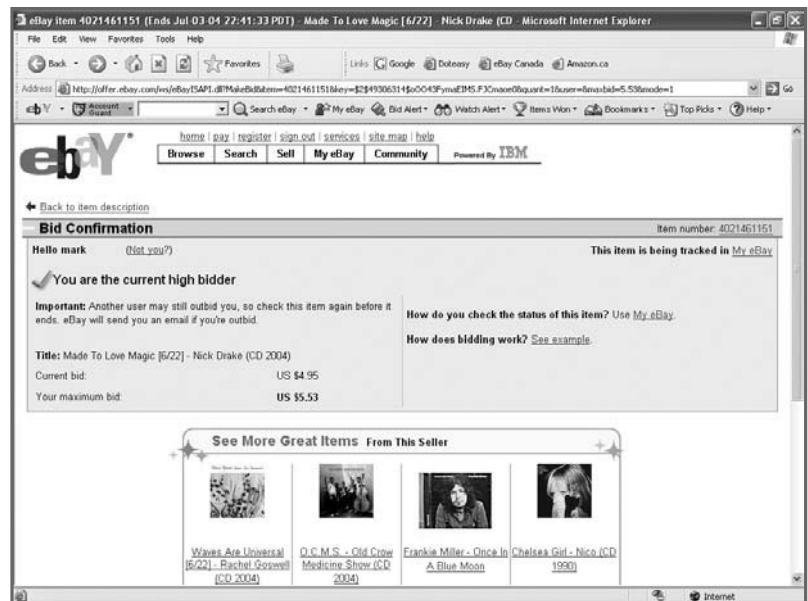
Once you've decided that you want to bid on an item you are watching, you can click on the Bid Now button for quicker access. By clicking on this button, you will be brought directly to the Item page where you can enter your bid amount as you would normally. Alternatively, if you choose not to bid and instead wish to delete an item from your list, you can simply select it and then click the Delete button in the Watch list area.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Bidding

Once you've watched some items, it only makes sense that bidding will follow. The Bidding link works much the same way as the Watch list. Each item you bid on will be tracked here, making it very easy to get an overall view of all your bidding activity.

When you bid on an item, you will notice that the Confirmation page, shown in Figure 10.6, states that "This item is being tracked in My eBay." This is simply indicating that it has been added to your Bidding list, where you will be able to track it.



**Figure 10.6**

This item is being tracked by My eBay.

On the My eBay page, your bids are tracked, and each item in your Bidding list displays valuable information. Prices of items you are currently winning are green and bold, whereas those that you are not currently winning are red. You will also find links not only to the Item pages, but bid prices, photos, shipping calculators, and time remaining for the auction. Figure 10.7 displays the current bidding activity.



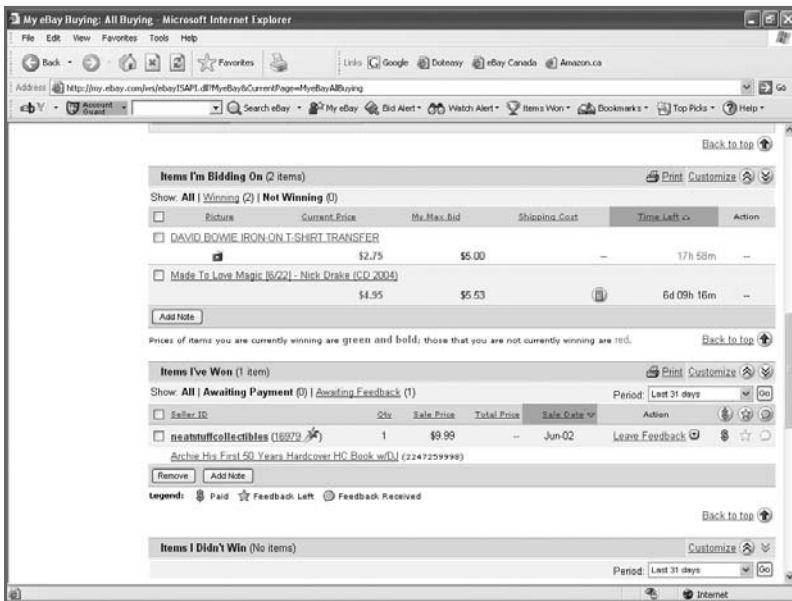


Figure 10.7

Check out the bids.

## Won

Whenever you want to see how successful you've been on eBay, check out the Won list on My eBay, as displayed in Figure 10.8. You will see all the auctions you've won, along with the price you paid and the item number. More importantly, though, it displays a reminder to leave feedback for the seller once you've received the item. At the top of this page, a running total is kept, showing both quantity and money spent on the different items you've won on eBay.

## Didn't Win

Whenever you want to see how unsuccessful you've been on eBay, look no further. To add insult to injury, the Didn't Win list will show you all the auctions you've lost. Like the Won list, it will total the quantity of losses, as well as the money you saved by not buying the items. The Didn't Win list is a good way to remember which items you may want to search for again in the future and potentially start the whole bidding process again.

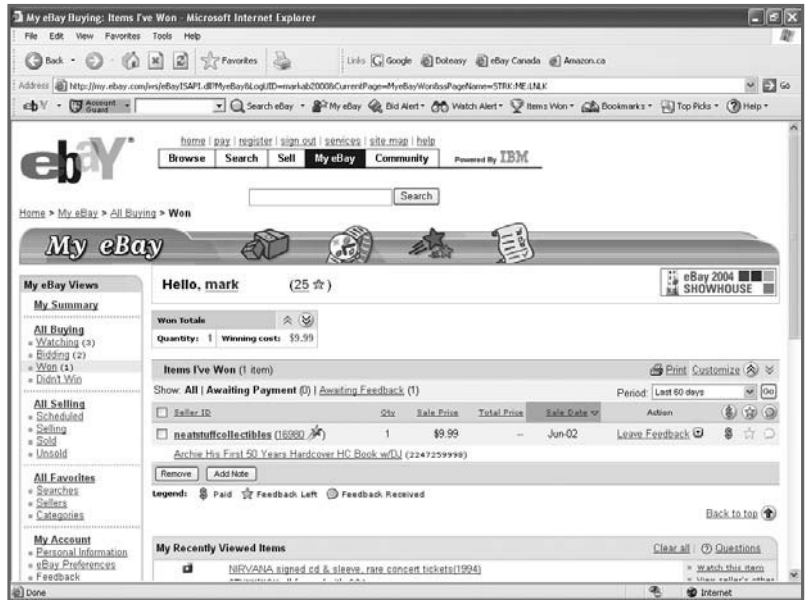


Figure 10.8

Winning auctions.

## All Selling

The All Selling link, located just below the All Buying section, gives you complete tracking control over all your selling activity. Although selling topics are covered in more detail in later chapters, let's review each option, one by one.

### Scheduled

When selling items on eBay, the seller has the option to select a date in the future to have that listing run. This gives the seller the ability to create his ad and then pick a date up to three weeks from that time to have it actually appear on eBay. Think of it as a delayed posting based on a seller-specified date. The Scheduled list displays all those items that are on a posting schedule.

### Selling

Like the Buying list, the Selling list displays all the items a seller is selling. A running total is displayed at the top of this page to track the money potentially made as well as the quantity of items sold.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Sold

When an item is sold, it appears in this list, displaying all the successes you've had as a seller. Like the Selling list, quantities and amount sold are totaled for tracking and financial purposes.

## Unsold

When an item doesn't sell, it appears in this list, displaying all your failures as a seller. Try and learn from these items and see if you can identify any trends. Were they all priced too high? Did they share any commonalities, like reserve pricing or high shipping costs? This is a great list to track for re-posting purposes. Can you make changes so that it does sell the next time around?

## All Favorites

---

This area of the My eBay page is a definite crowd favorite. When your business is eBay, saving time is paramount. Using these Favorites, you can cut down on the mouse clicks and get to where you want to go much faster. Let's set up three different Favorites to illustrate these points.

### Favorite Searches

If there is something you bid on a lot on eBay, setting up a Favorite search is the way to go. If there is something you are always looking for but can't find, setting up a Favorite search is, again, the right path to take. To save you time, eBay allows members to save search criteria in their My eBay page for quick access at any time. Figure 10.9 shows my current list of Favorite searches.

Let's add an additional Favorite search to my list. There are two ways of performing this action.

### From the Search Results Page

When you conduct a search, you are always given the option to add it to your Favorites right from the Search Results page. The link is located in the

top-right corner of the page and, when it is clicked, you are given several options from which to choose, as displayed in Figure 10.10.



Figure 10.9

My Favorite searches.

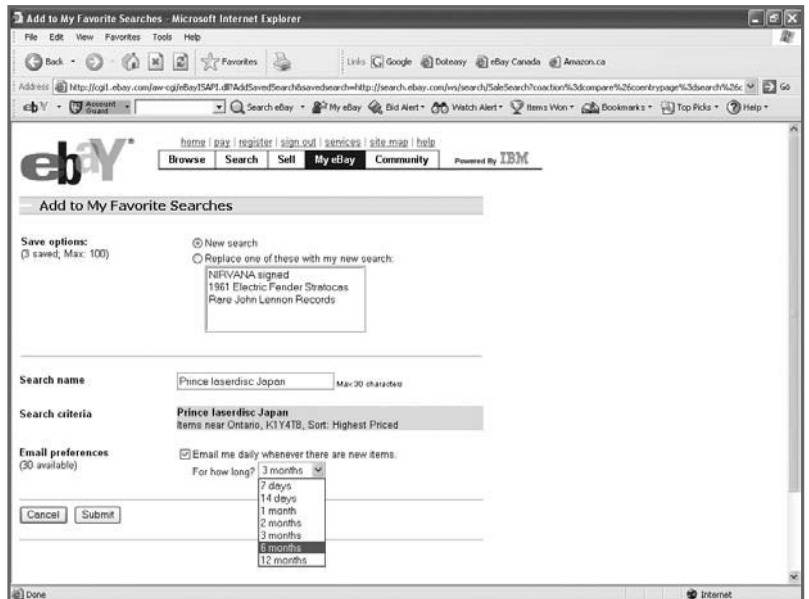


Figure 10.10

Adding new Favorite searches.

The window that appears displays all the saved searches that you currently have, as well as the search name you want to use, search criteria, and e-mail preferences. The e-mail preferences are important because this is where you decide how you want to be alerted when this item is actually found. There is no better feeling than getting a surprise e-mail from eBay, telling you that the item you've been looking for is now suddenly available for bid. I will typically enable the E-mail Me option only when it's something important. Depending on how many searches you have saved, your e-mail Inbox can be hit pretty hard if this option is enabled for each. In the For How Long drop-down list, I always select the maximum time, which is 12 months. If the search for this item is tied to any timeline, you can select the appropriate option from the list.

## From My eBay

From the My eBay page, you can also simply click on the Add New Search link located on the right side of the page.

## Favorite Sellers

Everyone has favorite places to shop. Think of those stores where the service is fantastic, products are high quality, and the location is superb. That's a place you'll go back to over and over. This is no different on eBay. If there's a seller you really enjoy dealing with, you can save that seller as a Favorite and access his or her listings a whole lot quicker. A seller can be an individual or a store, and in both cases can be added to your My eBay page.

With a limit of 30 sellers or stores allowed, Figure 10.11 shows my current list of Seller Favorites, with much room to grow.

Let's add another Favorite to my list of sellers and stores. To do this, I must first click on the Sellers link under Favorites on the My eBay page. In the top right-hand corner of the page, you will see the Add New Seller or Store link. Once you click on this link, you are given the options of either entering a seller's user ID or a store name. Make your entry and click the Save Favorite button. Your Favorites list will be updated to reflect this new addition.



Figure 10.11

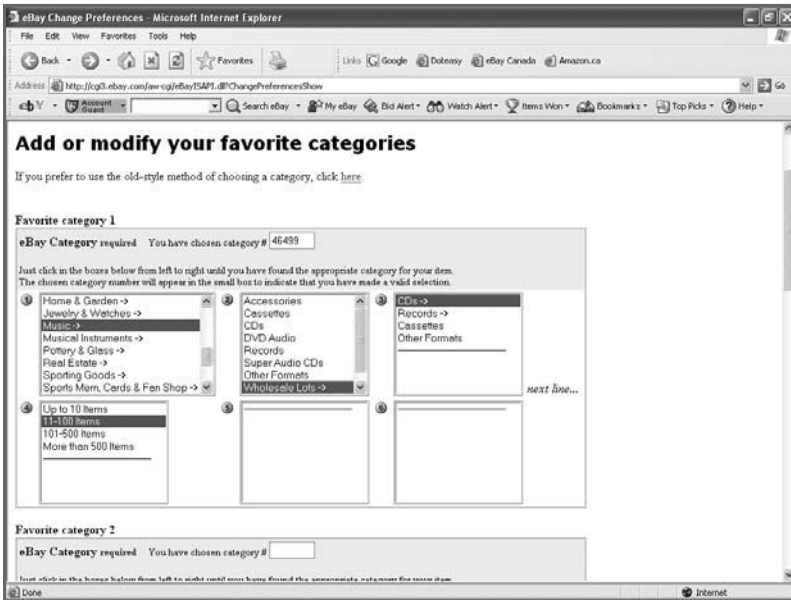
My current list of Seller Favorites.

## Favorite Categories

This is probably one of the most underrated features on eBay. For those of you who read Chapter 8, “Bid to Win,” there was a bidding technique called the last-minute shopper, or the vulture. Buyers who use this method of bidding have to drill down through different categories and then filter the results to those auctions ending the soonest. They’re called last-minute shoppers because they prey on those auctions that are minutes from closing in hopes of getting a good deal. With the ability to set categories as Favorites though, eBay made their lives a whole lot easier.

Let’s go through the steps necessary to set up a Favorites category for a last-minute shopper who buys music CD wholesale lots. From the My eBay page, click on the Categories link under All Favorites. Click on the Add a Favorite Category link. As shown in Figure 10.12, several options appear, allowing you to filter through categories for your selection. By clicking on Music > Wholesale Lots, CDs > 11-100 items, I was able to really define with detail which category I wanted to save. Once I knew I had what I wanted, I clicked on the Submit button at the bottom of that page.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

**Figure 10.12**

Choosing a Favorites category.

Upon returning to the My eBay page, I clicked on the Categories link under All Favorites to see my new addition to the list. Figure 10.13 shows the new category, along with several links below it. Each link allows you to see items that are Current, New Today, Ending Today, or “Going, Going, Gone” (ending within 5 hours). The last-minute shopper could select the “Going, Going, Gone” option and get where he wants to go a lot quicker.

## My Account

The My Account area of the My eBay page is the place where you can look at all your personal information as it pertains to your preferences, feedback, seller, and PayPal accounts.

### Personal Information

The Personal Information link is listed first in the My Account area, and it includes pretty much everything you entered when you registered. This includes your user ID and passwords, as well as your address information



**Figure 10.13**

My new category Favorites with options.

and your financial information. This is the area you need to go to when you need to make changes. For example, if you need to update your password, change your address, or add a credit card number, this would be just what the doctor ordered.

## eBay Preferences

There's a lot to cover in this section. When you click on the eBay Preferences link, you may be surprised by the amount of customization and available options. Figure 10.14 displays all the options and settings currently enabled and disabled on my system.

## eBay Notifications

If you're ever going crazy due to all the e-mails you are receiving from eBay, you can turn them off by visiting the eBay Notifications page in the eBay Preferences area. Figure 10.15 shows all the different e-mail notifications eBay will send you that you can either enable or disable based on your preferences.



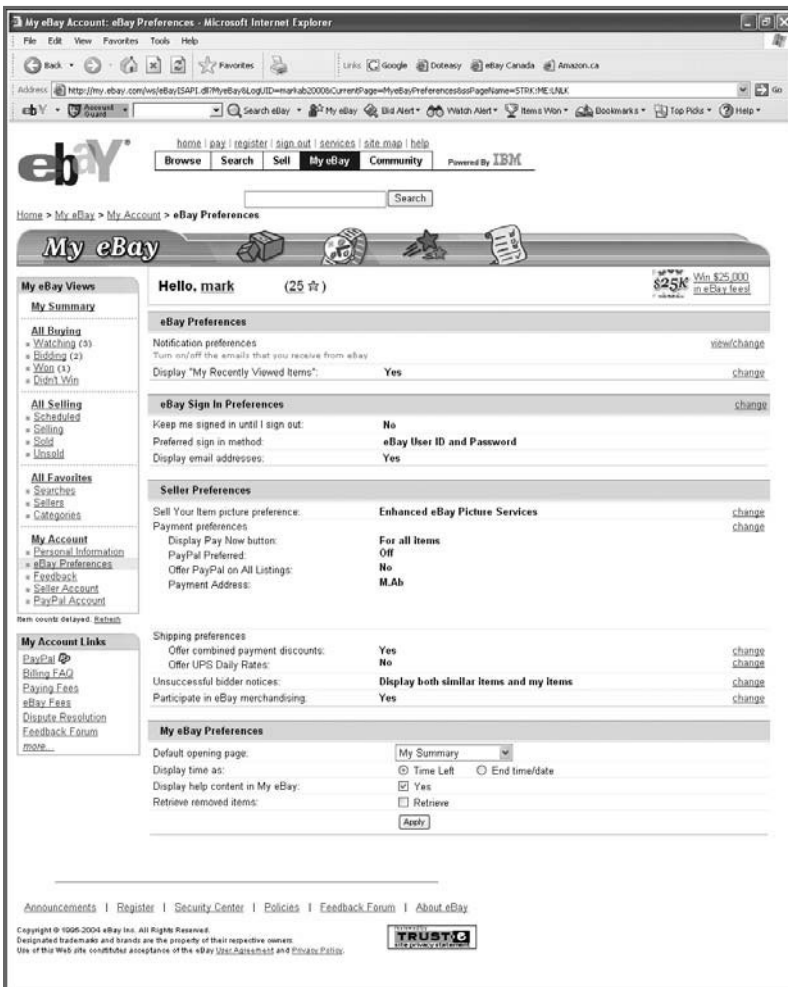
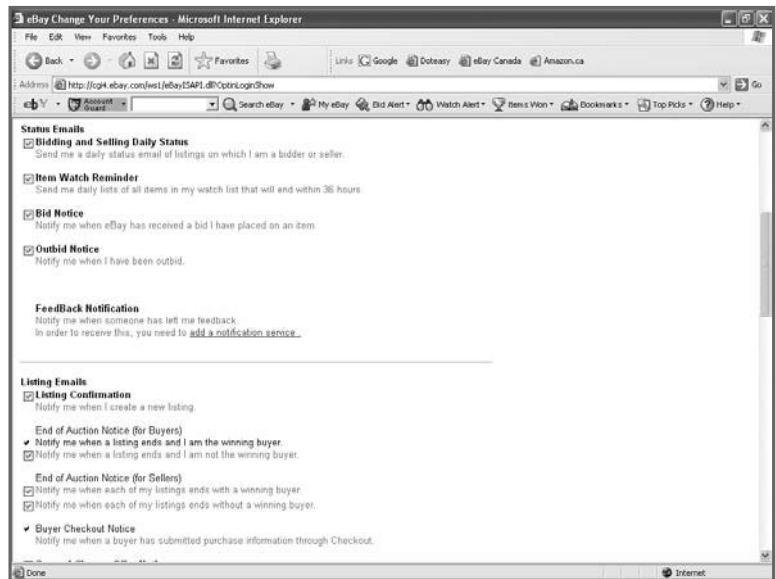


Figure 10.14

eBay preferences.

## Default Opening Page

The only other option within the Preferences area that I want to bring to your attention is the Default Opening Page drop-down menu. Here you can control which part of My eBay you will see first when you click on the My eBay link. You can select from all the links we discussed in this chapter including Watch list, Buying list, and Favorites.



**Figure 10.15**

Control your eBay e-mail notifications.

## Feedback

The Feedback link is also located in the My Accounts section of the My eBay page. From this link, you can see all your feedback comments, scores, and item numbers for your past transactions. You also have the ability to leave feedback for others.

## Seller Account

If you set up a Seller account on eBay, all the information you entered will be stored here. You can click on the Seller Account link to review your information or to make changes to the information that is currently there.

## PayPal Account

If you set up a PayPal Account, all the information you entered when you registered will be stored in this section of the My Accounts page. Like all the other account areas, you have complete control to make any changes to the information.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Introduce My eBay to all your eBay activity. By understanding all the features available within this powerful tool, you'll find yourself miles ahead of the competition. The next chapter will introduce you to two eBay sites called The Half Zone and Half.com. Leave it to eBay to provide you with even more places to buy and sell music-related items.

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 11



## The Half Zone on eBay

---

It is now time to enter the Zone. This is my home away from home when I'm not at my main home. Does that make sense? What I'm really trying to say is that the Half Zone is a place I visit quite a bit, second only to eBay itself. You can use the Zone to buy books, music, movies, and video games—quicker and easier than anywhere else. Once you've entered the Zone, you can also access eBay's sister site—Half.com. Half.com is another site powered and owned by eBay that looks a whole lot like Amazon.com. Anyone who is familiar with online shopping will feel very comfortable buying and even selling on Half.com. Let's take a closer look at both the Half Zone and Half.com and see what kind of musical madness we can uncover searching, buying, and selling a musical item.

### Buying on the Half Zone

---

To access the Half Zone, click on the The Half Zone on eBay link located on the eBay front page. The Half Zone is split into two distinct areas, as shown in Figure 11.1: Buy and Sell. Let's begin by looking at the Buy section of the Half Zone page. Similar to eBay, there are two different ways to search for your desired items. You can either enter a search keyword or browse through categories.



Figure 11.1

The Half Zone's two distinct areas: Buy and Sell.

## A Real Search and a Half

Searching using the Search field shouldn't be new to anyone at this point. The Half Zone offers a Search keyword field like eBay but with one significant difference. A drop-down menu, shown in Figure 11.2, filled with very convenient options is available just below the Search box.

In this example, I was looking for the latest hardcover book on Jim Morrison. I had no idea what it was called but I knew I wanted it. It had come out sometime in 2004 and I knew the author's name was Davis. Using the Search field, I typed in **Jim Morrison** and the word **Davis**. Then, I selected Books from the drop-down menu. I then clicked on Search and the rest is nothing short of magical.

As shown in Figure 11.3, several Jim Morrison books were displayed, but strangely enough, they were pretty much all the same book—with a twist. One of the versions was an audio book. If you drive a lot like me, audio books are the way to go. For now though, I wanted the good old-fashioned paper version.

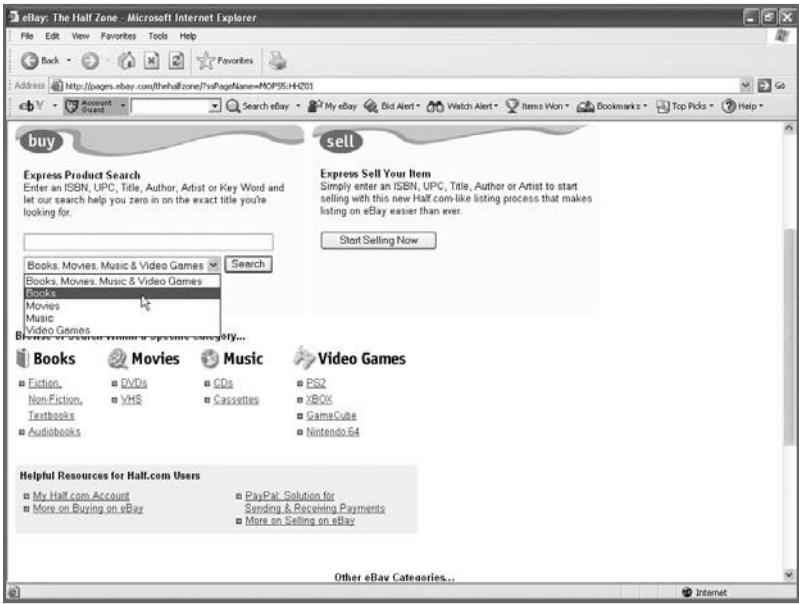


Figure 11.2

Dropping down the drop-down menu.

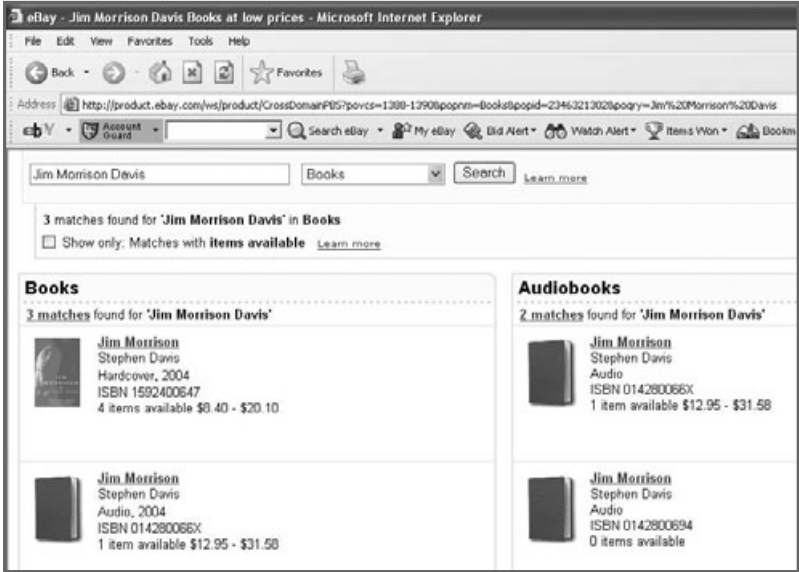


Figure 11.3

The goods on Jim Morrison—book and audio.

In the Books section of this page, the results state that there are three matches based on my search criteria. The first option displays a picture of the book and also lists some relevant information:

Jim Morrison  
Stephen Davis  
Hardcover, 2004  
ISBN 1592400647  
3 items available \$10.00 - \$20.10

As you can see, the information regarding this book includes the title, author, format, year, and ISBN. The ISBN comes in really handy in a later example where we will attempt to sell an item from the Half Zone. Last but not least, this information blurb also includes how many are available and in what price range.

Price range may seem a little foreign to some of you coming from the eBay way of thinking. Here in the Half Zone, price ranges are the way it works. Sellers list their items, and if multiple sellers are selling the same item, a range is created, benefiting the buyer. You'll notice as you play around in the Zone that price range sometimes dictates the condition of the item and should be looked at quite closely.

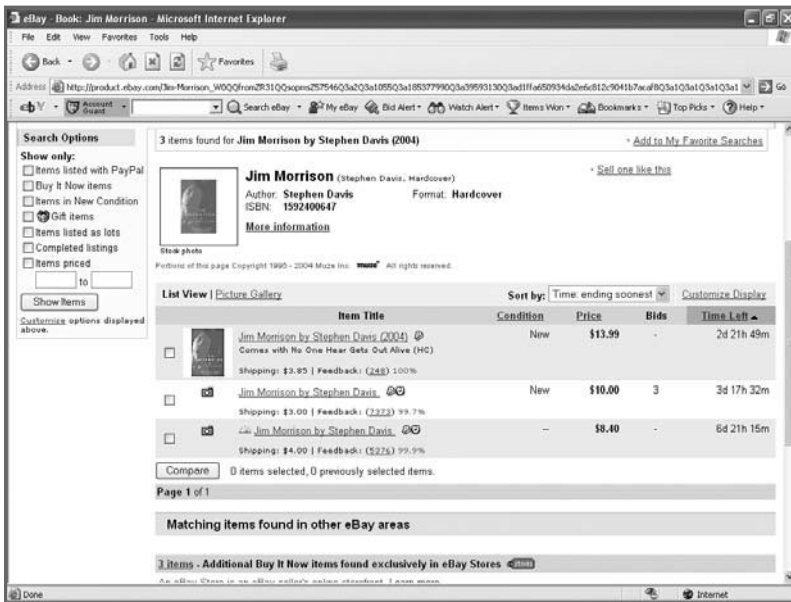
Upon further review I noticed that the two options below the first were actually audio books listed on the wrong side of the page. This wasn't the Zone's fault but rather the sellers'. When listing their Morrison book, they most likely accidentally or purposely selected the Book category rather than the Audio Book category. Why do you think they would purposely select the wrong category? You have to put yourself into the mind of a buyer. Most people wouldn't know that an audio book of this title exists. By assigning the Book category to an audio book, sellers hope that they will hit more buyers and increase their sales. Regardless, as you've probably already noticed, the Half Zone lists both types of books side by side anyway. Sellers always cover their bases.

I clicked on the first Jim Morrison link to enter another Search Results page.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



As shown in Figure 11.4, all three items are displayed sharing the same image file of the cover of the book. The range of prices comes into view as well and I am able to click on each of the items to see which I prefer.



**Figure 11.4**

Sharing an image file, showing a price range.

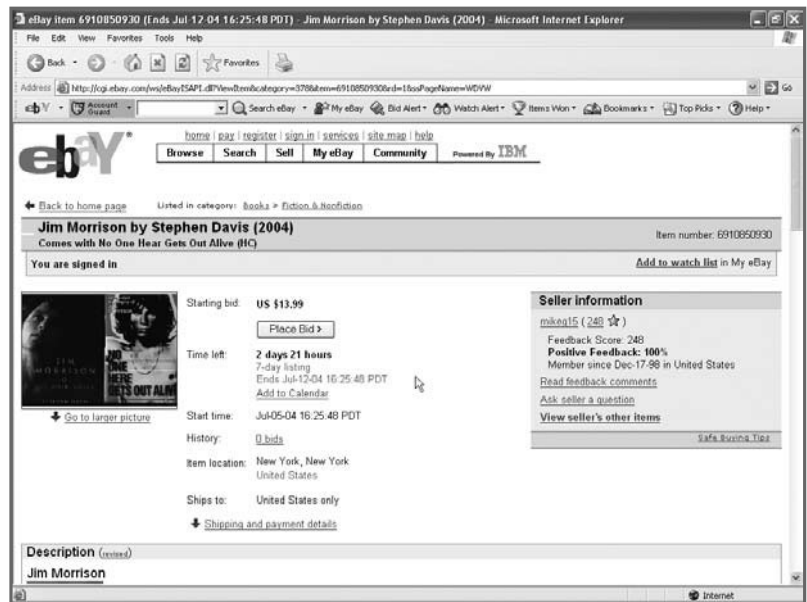
The rest, my friends, should be fondly familiar to you. Breaths of fresh air all around, you've now magically re-entered eBay and its familiar surroundings. As you click on the items on this Results page, you will quickly notice that everything looks and works exactly as it did on eBay. Do you want to know why? You are on eBay. Check out the eBay logo in the top-left corner, as shown in Figure 11.5. Think of the Half Zone as a thin layer of features that lies on top of eBay's massive underbelly. Once you find what you are looking for using the Zone's convenient search features, you're thrown right back into the fray where you'll continue your dealings on eBay.

Let's get back to the three items that were displayed in the search results for the Morrison book. There are several criteria I would evaluate in deciding which I would bid on.

- Condition of the books (very good or better)
- Seller's feedback rating (no negatives)

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

- Seller's location (hopefully somewhere near where I live so shipping costs won't be high)
- Available payment methods (remember—I work only with sellers who offer PayPal)
- Shipping costs (Am I getting ripped off?)
- Price (Can I get it cheaper somewhere else?)



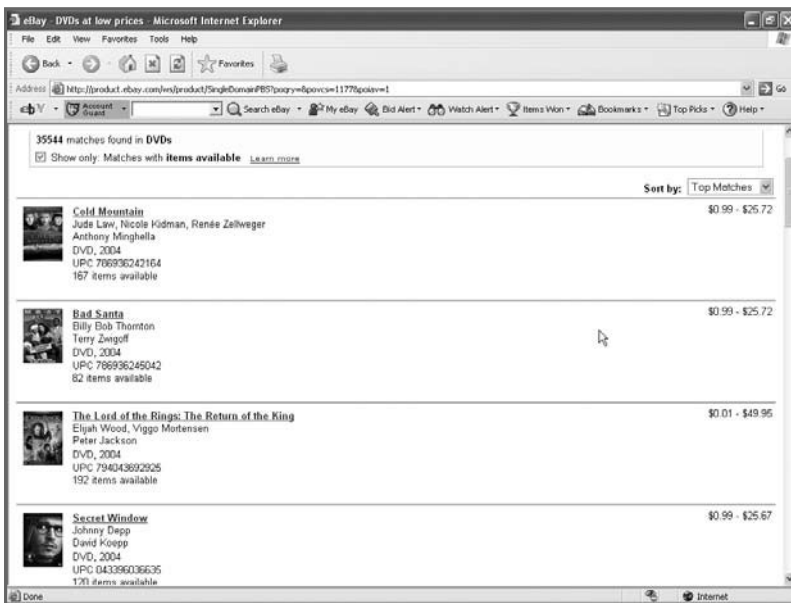
**Figure 11.5**

Shades of eBay—  
on the Half Zone!

With my mouse pointer inches from the Place Bid button, I hesitated. Did I really want to bid on an item? Not really. For this Morrison book, I knew I wanted it, and I knew I wanted it right away. This was the time that I actually wished eBay was more like an online store where I could just buy the item outright and not waste my time in a bidding war. Unfortunately, though, there wasn't a Buy It Now option available for any of the items listed. What's a guy to do? I know what to do. I will keep you in suspense for now as we explore other search methods and how to sell an item using eBay's Half Zone.

## Category Searches

Although using the Search box is by far the most popular way of searching for items on eBay and the Zone, there are category options available as well. Like on eBay, people who use the Categories method of searching are typically browsers who are not looking for anything specific but rather a certain *type* of item (for example, DVDs, PlayStation games, or comics). Once you enter the category, you are presented with pages and pages of listings that you can further define by entering keywords in the Search box. Figure 11.6 shows the Results page that appeared when I clicked on DVDs. As you can see, over 35,000 items fall within that category.



**Figure 11.6**

Category listings for DVDs on the Half Zone.

Knowing my mom loves musicals, I thought I would peruse the DVD category in the Zone and see if anything caught my eye. I typed **musical** in the Search box and was surprised to see over 5,000 results. Everything from *Grease* to *Beauty and the Beast* to *Dirty Dancing* showed up in the list. I quickly found the one I wanted, the 2003 smash hit *Chicago*, and clicked on the link. As you can see in Figure 11.7, I'm back on eBay again with over 50 sellers selling the *Chicago* DVD.

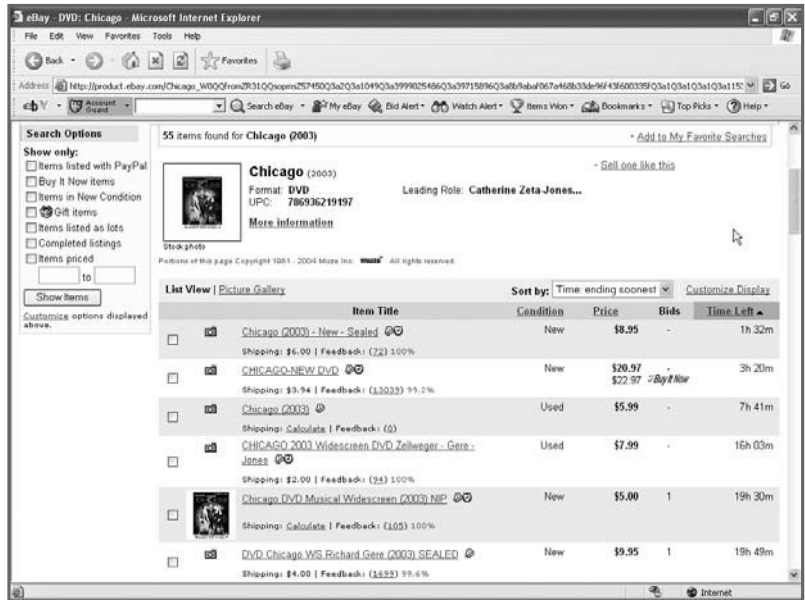


Figure 11.7

*Chicago DVD—over 50 sellers!*

## More Information

On the Results page, you will notice that a [More Information](#) link is displayed just below the DVD's UPC code, to the right of the cover image. By clicking on this link, full information regarding this movie is displayed. When I say full, I mean full. It's pretty incredible. As you can see in Figure 11.8, the Zone doesn't pull any punches when ensuring you get all the information you need about a title. You get everything from credits to reviews to story descriptions. The Zone even goes as far as listing any awards the movie has received. The key to this feature is that each listing from each seller shares the same information page for that DVD title. No one has a leg up on anyone except those sellers who have stellar feedback ratings, fair shipping prices, and convenient payment methods.

## What's Your Condition?

Pop quiz! What other difference can you see when comparing this Results page and the one you normally see on eBay? Give up? Nestled between the



Figure 11.8

Even more information—  
shared across listings.

Item Title and Price columns is a new addition called Condition—available for auctions only. By clicking on the Condition column heading, the results are sorted so that all the new DVDs are listed first, followed by those that are used.

Well, after doing some research, I find the one I want, take the plunge, and snipe my bid. The Zone strikes again and I win the auction. *Chicago*, here I come, and Happy Birthday mom!

## Selling on the Half Zone

Wait a minute! I thought selling in the later chapters. You're absolutely right, but I thought I would keep all the Half Zone content together in one chapter. If your plan is buy and buy alone, skip this section and read on.

Earlier, I mentioned that the front page of the Half Zone is split into two distinct areas—Buy and Sell. We are now going to look at the Sell area of this wonderful site and see just how easy it is to list items on the Zone.

Jordy has an item he would like to sell using the Zone. Let's follow the CD King as he guides us through the ins and outs of listing an item using the Zone's express method.

## Start Selling Now

Have you ever seen a button that's more engaging? Probably, but this one will draw you in over and over once you see how it easy it is to list an item. Most people are intimidated by the whole act of creating a listing on eBay and going through the selling process. In later chapters we will explore the conventional method of selling on eBay in greater detail, but for this chapter, I will outline how the Half Zone simplifies the process and makes selling even easier.

Jordy wants to sell his *Moulin Rouge* DVD. A new version came out on the market this year, and he bought it as well. Now he has two copies of *Moulin Rouge* and he's hoping to unload the original.

Using the Zone as his sell vehicle, he clicks on the Start Selling Now button, and his voyage begins.

## To Bid or Fix It—That Is the Question

Before you begin, you must choose a selling format, as shown in Figure 11.9. When listing items on the Half Zone, you are really given only two choices: Sell Item at Online Auction or Sell at a Fixed Price. Translation—do you want this to be a bidding situation or do you want to sell it using the Buy It Now feature? Jordy likes bidding situations, so he chooses the Online Auction option and continues along his merry way. The conventional way of selling on eBay differs in this section by providing more selling format options. We will explore those options in the selling chapters later on in this book.

## What Are You Selling?

Hit the brakes, because this is where things get incredibly easy. This is the section where you will see larger differences between the Half Zone's way of listing an item and eBay's. Here you will identify to the Half Zone exactly what it is you are selling.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



Figure 11.9

Choosing your selling format.

## Item Type

First thing Jordy did when he hit this section was select DVDs from the drop-down menu. As you can see in Figure 11.10, there are several options to choose from but a lot of potential categories missing too. Where are the options for musical instruments, albums, concert tickets, sheet music, and so on? Remember—the Half Zone’s primary purpose and focus is on books, music CDs and cassettes, DVDs, and video games. If your goal is to list other types of music-related items, then you may want to skip over to the eBay selling chapters and leave the Half Zone behind.

## Search By

This is where things get even better. The section just below the DVD option allows sellers to type in the very item they are trying to sell. In this example, Jordy is creating a listing for his *Moulin Rouge* DVD. Figure 11.10 also shows us that there are three options to select from when searching for items: Title, UPC, and Director. This is where the UPC that I mentioned earlier in this chapter comes into play. If you know the UPC of the item you

are selling, you can punch it in here, select UPC from the drop-down menu, and you are off to the races. The Zone will pull all the necessary information regarding that UPC from its database and populate your listing automatically. You won't even break a sweat.

Jordy selected the UPC option, typed in the UPC found on his DVD, and the result is shown in Figure 11.11.

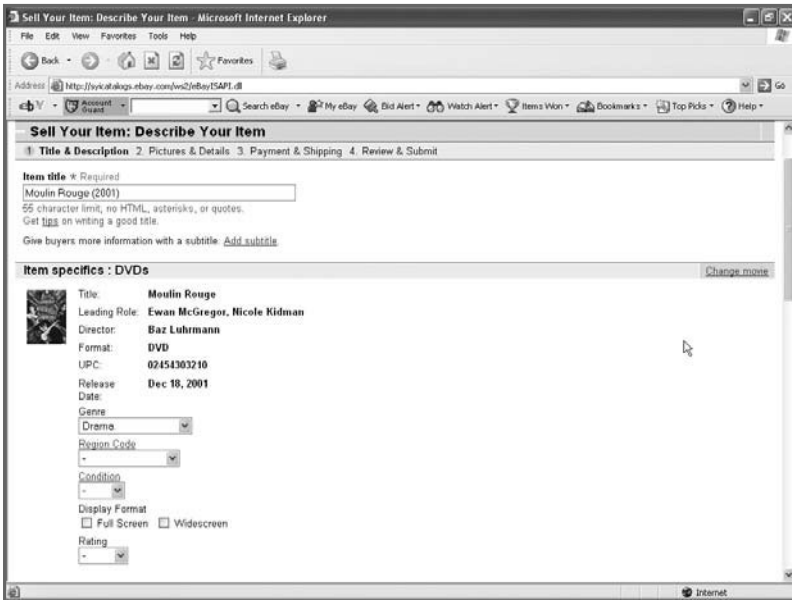


**Figure 11.10**

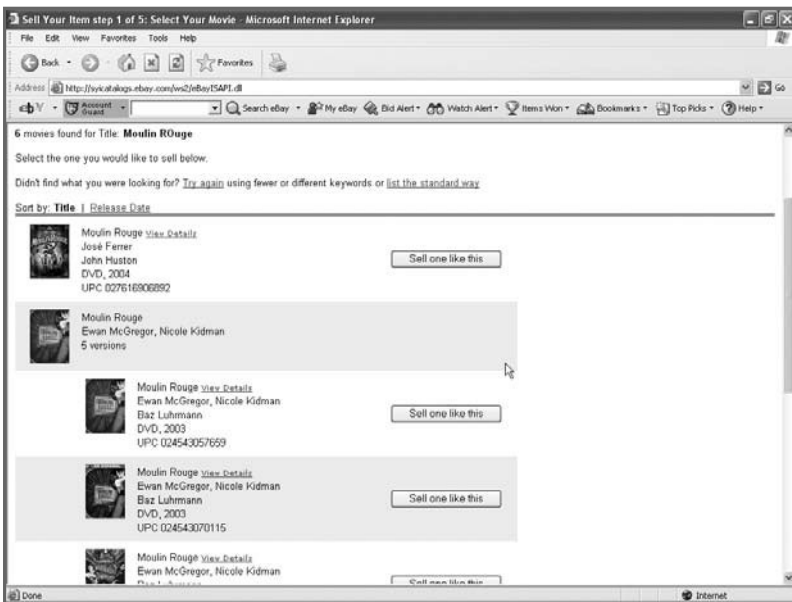
Choosing your item from the drop-down menu.

If Jordy had chosen the Title option instead from the drop-down menu, he would have seen all the DVD versions of *Moulin Rouge* for sale on eBay. Figure 11.12 displays the six different versions available on the Half Zone. Jordy would then go through each of the versions listed to locate the one that best matches his copy. To determine the best match, Jordy would click on the View Details link and a window would appear, displaying all the information regarding that specific version. Once he finds that perfect match, he would simply click on the Sell One Like This button to move to the next step.





**Figure 11.11**  
Using UPC can really save you time.



**Figure 11.12**  
Title option finds multiple results of *Moulin Rouge* DVD.

## Describe Your Item

A lot of the work has been done for you, so at this point you are asked to enter all the relevant information regarding the item specifics. Here you will select from Genres, Regions, and Condition options. You will also be given the opportunity to enter a description of your own for this item and your selling particulars.

The Half Zone process of listing your item continues from here and now follows the same steps as eBay's. To avoid duplication of information, refer to Chapter 15, "Titles and Descriptions," where you can proceed and complete the listing steps and post your item for sale.

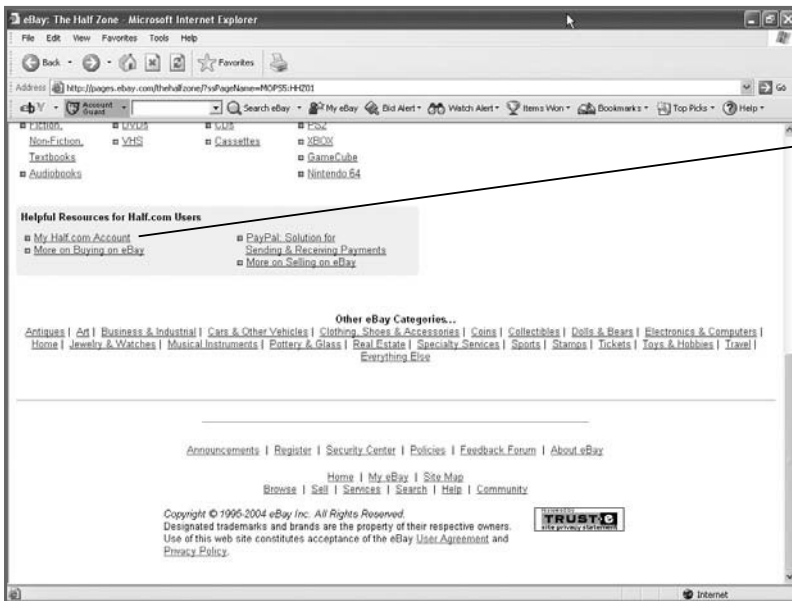
## Introducing Half.com

Half full or half empty? On Half.com, the glass is always half full. Do you remember a little earlier, I mentioned that I was looking for that Jim Morrison book by Stephen Davis? I didn't want to enter a bidding fray. I wanted the book at that instant and didn't want to wait. I wished that eBay was more like a store, where I could buy my items outright. Enter Half.com: the smartest place to buy and sell books, music, movies, games, and more.

Half.com is a website owned and operated by eBay that allows you to sell and buy items at fixed prices rather than bidding on auctions.

## How Do I Get There?

There are two ways to get to Half.com. The first way involves simply typing **<http://www.half.com>** into your browser's web address bar and voila! The second way is a little more involved, but nonetheless important to note. From eBay's front page, select the Half Zone on eBay link as we did earlier in this chapter. From there, you will see the Half Zone front page and some links lined up along the bottom of the page. Click on the My Half.com Account link, as shown in Figure 11.13.



My Half.com Account link

**Figure 11.13**

Getting to Half.com—click on the My Half.com Account link.

## Signing In

Once you've clicked on the My Half.com Account link, you will be asked to log in. You must think we missed a step, right? When did you register on Half.com and create your login name and password? You already did. Half.com uses the same account information you entered when you registered on eBay. This obviously saves a lot of time and makes it easier for you to get right into the action without having to repeat yourself from one site to the next. After entering login information and clicking on the Secure Sign-in button, you are greeted by the Half.com front page.

All my information is shown on this page, further reinforcing its tight integration with eBay. Near the top is a greeting—Welcome markab2000 (25)—as shown in Figure 11.14. This displays my user ID as well as my feedback rating and star symbol. Feedback achieved on eBay and Half.com will be displayed here as one number. You won't have separate accounts with different feedback ratings for each. This really makes things less messy and a whole lot more convenient, allowing you to shop or sell in the different environments but still keep the same point system and account information.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



Figure 11.14

Half.com seems to know who I am!

## My Personal Information

In addition to the feedback rating, user ID, and greeting, the integration between the two websites goes oh so much further. You will notice that the following items are also available on Half.com, giving you complete control over your personal account information without having to re-enter it or return to eBay to make any changes or updates.

## Purchases

From the Purchases link, as shown in Figure 11.15, you can select a time frame from the drop-down menu and see all your activity during that period.

## Buying and Checkout

From a buying and checkout perspective, you can edit or review all your personal settings and information for the following items:

- Credit cards
- Shipping addresses

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

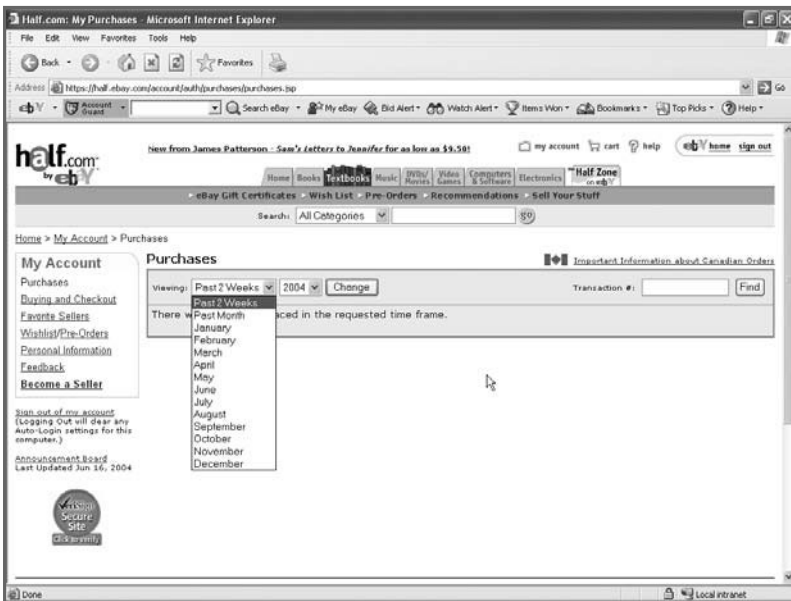


Figure 11.15

See all your activity on all eBay sites from Half.com.

- Speedy checkout set up
- Wish list
- Pre-ordered items

## Favorite Sellers

If you recall from Chapter 10, “My eBay Explained,” we discussed the concept of saving favorite sellers in your My eBay forum. Half.com recognizes those saved Favorites and allows you to access, modify, and delete them. Last but not least, you can also choose to shop using these Favorites, all from Half.com.

## Personal Information

As mentioned earlier, you can also view and change your personal information settings from Half.com. All changes will be made at both Half.com and eBay. You have complete control over the following items:

- eBay user ID
- eBay e-mail address

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

- eBay registration information
- eBay password
- eBay password hint
- eBay sign in options
- eBay notification preferences

## Feedback

We all know how important feedback is. Well, on Half.com, it's no different. It works the exact same way as eBay, and from Half.com you can leave feedback for other members, review feedback, and respond to comments that were left for you.

## Searching All Over Again

The Half.com website looks a lot like the popular online stores you are used to shopping at. That was done on purpose to make people feel comfortable and at home when buying and selling.

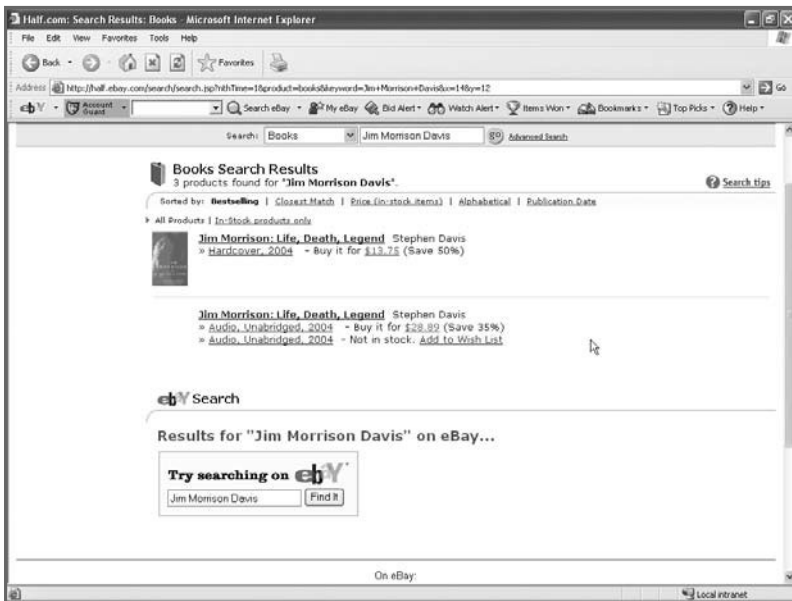
Okay, I want to buy that Jim Morrison book, and Half.com is looking like my best option.

Using the Search box and the Category drop-down menu, I select Books and type the following keywords: **Jim Morrison** and **Davis**.

Figure 11.16 displays the results of this search. Half.com displays three options at fixed prices, as well as a link to results coming from eBay. The results from eBay will involve bidding on auctions (if a Buy It Now option is not available) so I decide I want to stay with Half.com and click on the first link entitled, *Jim Morrison: Life, Death, Legend* by Stephen Davis.

## All the Results

Figure 11.17 displays all the results that were pulled from Half.com's database of products for sale. As you can see, it's the same book but at different prices, formats, and conditions. This page is broken down into four distinct

**Figure 11.16**

Fixed price options  
on Half.com.

areas of listings: Brand New Items, Like New Items, Very Good Items, and Related Items on eBay. If you click on the question mark symbol located to the right of each condition section, you will get a better idea of the ratings available for books. The last section of the Results page is the Related Items on eBay listings. That's some true integration, wouldn't you say?

## Making the Purchase

I'm ready. After reviewing the options, I decide on a Like New condition edition from a store with over 14,000 positive feedback points. I click on the Buy button located just next to the price, and I am presented with my shopping cart containing the item. Shipping details, costs, and totals are displayed on this page just before checkout.

## Checking Out

Once I click on the Proceed to Checkout link, I am that much closer to owning the Jim Morrison book. My shipping address and credit card information

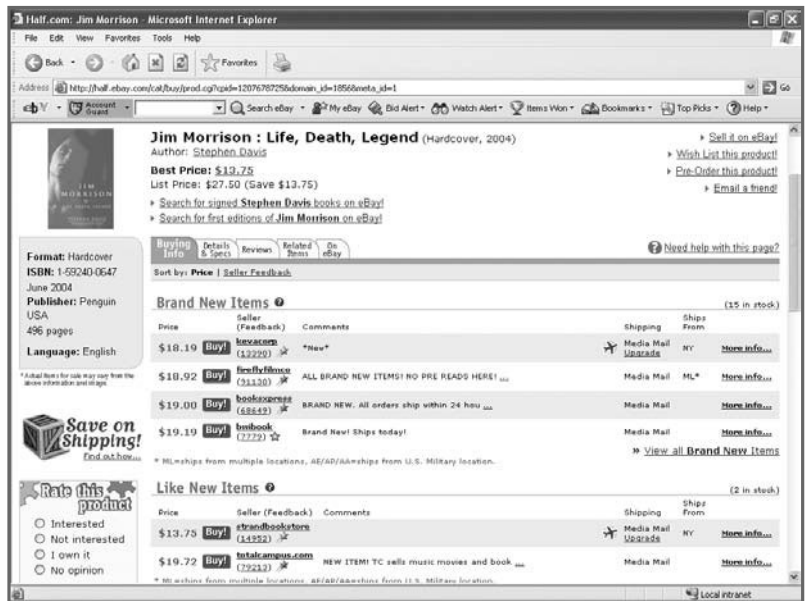


Figure 11.17

Results list on Half.com.

are already inputted from my previous transactions on eBay. I simply click through the easy-to-follow guides as I complete the purchase—Half.com style.

It's now time to exit the Zone and Half.com and move to the next chapter, where we'll hit you over the head with tips and tricks, words from the wise, and nuggets of wisdom. We want to help you avoid the scammers out there, so pay special attention to the content ahead.



# chapter 12



## Avoid the Scam—Music Tips from the Experts

---

Again, I've rounded up the experts, my blue panel of guests, and raked their minds for the best tips they have. How do I keep my readers safe from the menacing and marauding snipers, scammers, and snakes holed up in eBay's cozy bosom? Jordie, Swifty, and Phats had much to share. They've been doing this a long time. Buying and selling music on eBay has been good to them. Through the bad, they took their knocks but they got through it. They are here to help, and help you they will with their guiding words of eBay buyer and seller wisdom.

### Who Came Before You?

---

Interesting question, but here's an even more interesting answer. This was a new one for me and definitely one I will use in my future dealings on eBay. It began when Jordy spotted a huge lot of Led Zeppelin CDs for sale. Ten of Led's best, and they were priced to sell. With six days remaining in the auction, Jordy could afford to wait. He decided to use this time to get the straight goods on the seller. He clicked on the Search Result item for this CD lot. He was presented with the Item page. There, he proceeded to the Seller Information box. He then clicked on the seller's user ID. As we all know, this took Jordy to the seller's Feedback and Member Profile page. This is like finding a mine full of diamonds, Jordy tells us.

The diamonds on this page were the wealth of potential customer testimonials, if you knew what you were doing. Jordy did. Using his eBay prowess, he clicked on the From Buyers tab. All the buyers who had left feedback for this seller came into view. His goal was simple: Contact previous buyers for this seller and ask them directly what kind of experience they had in their transactions. This tip produces first-hand, straight from the horse's mouth, unadulterated customer testimonials. To do this, Jordy clicked on random item numbers in the Item # column. Anytime an Item page appeared displaying a similar product to what he was about to buy, he clicked on it. This took him to that Item page displaying the winning bidder. Jordy then clicked on the winning bidder's user ID, and then clicked on the Contact Member button. The rest you know how to do, so let's leave it at that. Tip understood and acknowledged. Next.

## Serial Numbers

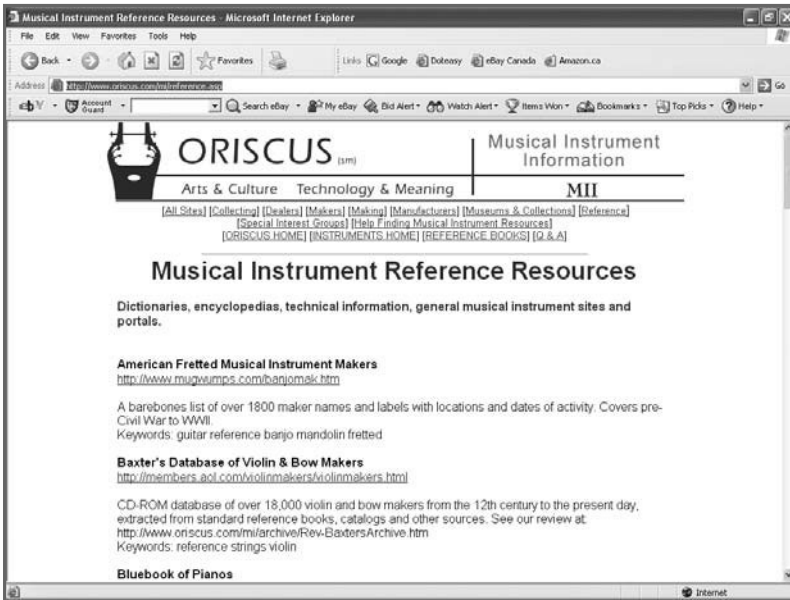
---

The next tip comes from Phat Matt: When buying musical instruments on eBay, always ask if the item has a serial number.

Serial numbers tell you that in most cases you have a real instrument and not an imitation. Musical Instrument Reference Resources are all over the web and they typically include serial number lists for your favorite types of instruments. Figure 12.1 shows a great example of a reference resource site that you can use. Using these lists, you can verify the serial number and ensure you are bidding on an original manufacturer edition of that instrument.

Many of the instruments that do not have serial numbers are not worth buying due to their shoddy workmanship and construction. If you have problems with it, good luck finding someone to repair it, and you'll need even more luck finding parts.

Ask the seller to send you a picture of the serial number so that you have something real to reference and, if possible, ask the seller if he's willing to play the instrument over the phone for you so you can determine for yourself if it sounds healthy.



**Figure 12.1**

Serial number reference resources online.

## Check Out Discussion Rooms (Outside of eBay, Too)

Every instrument out there has a discussion group set up somewhere on the web. You would be hard pressed not to find one no matter the instrument you are using. Matt loves guitars, as we all know, and he's a member of several discussion groups. Within these groups, similar to a sewing circle, these people gather 24 hours a day to gab about that instrument. If you ever need expert advice or just need another opinion, do not hesitate to search the web for a discussion group related to that instrument. To mix things up a little, Matt also likes to visit the Banjo Hangout site, shown in Figure 12.2. There he reads through the posts in the banjo discussion group. There are several threads that currently address eBay scammers attempting to sell non-existent banjos to unsuspecting buyers. If you're considering buying a musical instrument on eBay, joining a discussion group should be one of the things you do to safeguard your purchase.

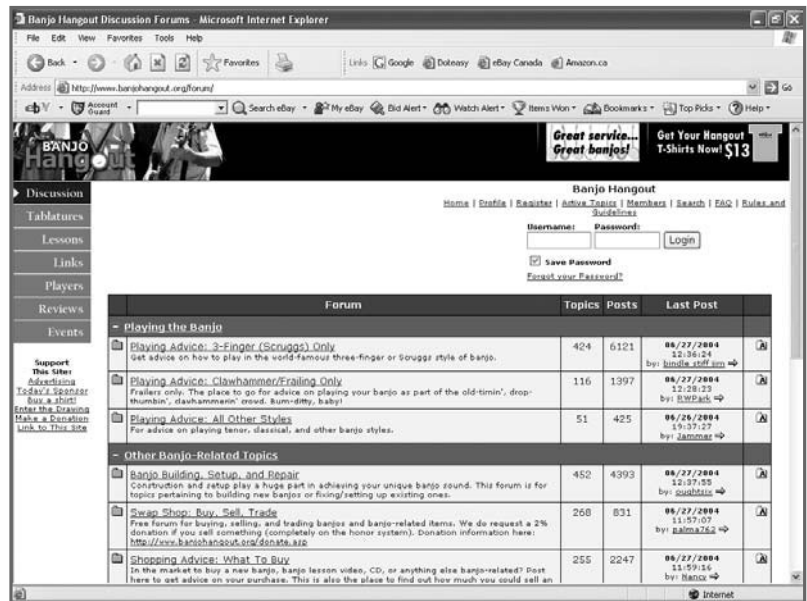


Figure 12.2

Banjo Hangout  
discussion rooms.

## Find an Expert

Many of the experts on my panel strongly recommend not buying musical instruments on eBay unless you have the guidance of an expert for that specific instrument. For a book like this, it is far too difficult to give specific expert buying instructions for every instrument ever created, but we can provide tips and advice that apply to all instruments in a generic sense. In Chapter 7, “Before You Bid,” we mentioned that calling stores, the old brick and mortar types, and speaking to experts is always a wise thing to do. Bone up on the different brand names and do your research. What’s good? What’s bad? When you come across one that you’ve never heard of, call a store. Ask them their opinions. They buy and stock their shelves with musical instruments. Who better to ask?

Use the experts that are all around you, as they come in all shapes and sizes: music teachers, band members, discussion rooms, e-stores, brick and mortar stores, books, organizations, and online resources.

## Check Repair Costs

Before buying any instrument on eBay, always inquire about its condition. This is a given with any item on eBay but is further reinforced here for musical instruments. Due to the complexity in the construction of certain types of instruments, it is very important that you are crystal clear on what works and what doesn't. Even when sellers are being honest about certain repairs that are required, you must be careful to ensure that the repair doesn't cost more than you're paying for the actual instrument.

If it's an instrument that is currently out of production, you may have tremendous amounts of trouble finding someone qualified to repair, let alone finding any parts for it. Small cracks in wood instruments are not easy to fix. Loose or slightly warped necks on guitars are not something to take lightly. Dents and pings on a sax can be really serious and render the instrument useless. Understand that many of the sellers on eBay may not have any idea if pieces are missing or damaged. All this to say, if you don't do the proper amount of research before buying on eBay, you could end up with a lemon of an instrument—leaving a very sour taste in your mouth.

## Quiz the Seller

Quizzing the seller is a great way to get a feel for what the seller really knows about the instrument. If after reading the item description you feel like you are dealing with a pro, feel free to e-mail the seller and ask questions. Little does he know that you are really quizzing him to ensure he knows and actually has the instrument in question. For example, with the bass guitar Matt was thinking of bidding on, he e-mailed the seller first. In his e-mail, he wrote the following:

*“How do the first four frets of the E and A string sound?”*

Most bassists know that some basses have dead spots. So a knowledgeable seller would respond, “Well, it's a little dead on the 3rd fret of E” or “Great, it sounds even right through.”

Here is the actual response from the seller:

*“Sorry but the guitar is at my other place in Houston so I wouldn’t be able to test that for you, but I’m told it plays awesome.”*

This was not the response Matt wanted, especially since the listing stated that the seller played this guitar all the time and was really sorry to have to sell it.

Don’t underestimate the power of the quiz.

Graciously, Matt offered up more quiz questions that you can use when testing a seller’s description boastings. These questions are mainly for people hoping to buy guitars on eBay, so feel free to modify where you have to.

If it’s a five string, you could ask:

*“How does the low B sound?”*

A knowledgeable seller might say, “tight and punchy, especially through my XYZ amp and cabinet setup” or “honestly, it’s a little dead on my ABC combo.”

*“How’s the intonation?”*

*“How is the bass set up?”*

A knowledgeable seller might say, “I like it low, so its setup is really low right now” or if the seller is really knowledgeable, he might send you measurements like those shown in Figure 12.3.

*“What kind of strings are on it?”*

Every bass player (and I mean every bass player) is particular about strings and knows what strings are on his or her bass. If the item is stolen, or a scam, the seller won’t have a clue.

There will always be those cases though when a seller may be selling a perfectly fine guitar that he acquired through a relative, inheritance, or garage sale. He may know nothing about the instrument he is selling. This obviously does not make the seller a scammer. Feel out the seller with quiz questions, but it shouldn’t be the only technique you use in rooting out the con artists.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

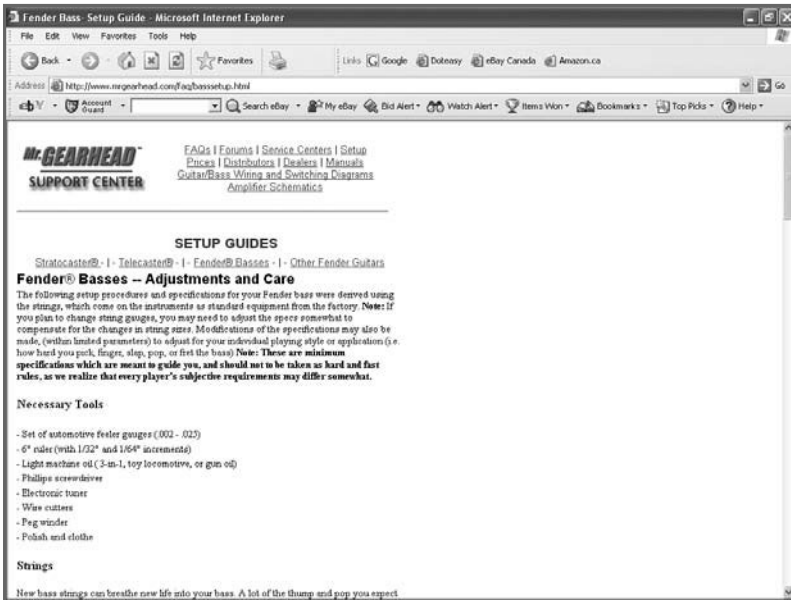


Figure 12.3

Mr.Gearhead.com and the bass setup page.

## Refund/Warranty

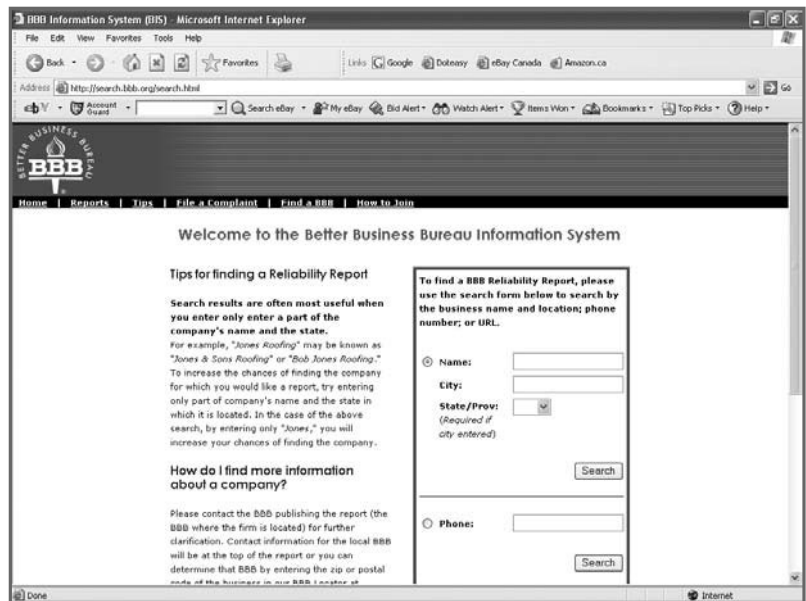
Would you normally buy something expensive or electronic without some sort of refund or warranty plan? I wouldn't, and neither should you. Many of the listings on eBay come with these policies and plans attached. Don't hesitate to contact the seller to confirm the details of these plans.

If the seller doesn't offer either plan, then you may want to continue your search for this item. Musical instruments are not items you want to take chances on, especially if you are paying a lot of money and the item is used.

For all the potential sellers out there, increase your sales by including one or the other or, better yet, both. Put yourself in the buyer's shoes whenever you can. Imagine how you would feel dishing out your cold hard dollars to someone you don't know who isn't even offering some sort of assurance that this item works. A refund/warranty tells the buyer that he has nothing to worry about and he can purchase without fear because the seller stands behind the product. Think about it.

## BBB: Better Business Bureau

If you are ever dealing with a store on eBay and you feel any sort of skepticism as to its validity, simply contact the Better Business Bureau in the United States or Canada or other similar organizations in your neck of the woods. As shown in Figure 12.4, visit the BBB website for immediate assistance and get BBB Reliability Reports for the store in question. Those reports will give you everything you need to know about that store and increase your confidence when bidding. If the store doesn't show up at all when searching on the Better Business Bureau website, don't fret. Contact the seller and ask why. There may be a valid explanation, but make sure you're the one in the driver's seat holding all the information and not the other way around.



**Figure 12.4**

Better Business Bureau website.

## Are You Ready for Your Close-Up?

Although I've mentioned this before, it does bear repeating. If you are ever in doubt as to the validity of a certain photograph shown in a seller's listing, do not hesitate to contact the seller requesting additional pictures. Better yet, a  
**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



trick Swifty uses a lot, especially since he deals primarily with music collectibles such as old vinyl, statues, and memorabilia, is to request close-up shots of the item for sale. For example, when Swifty saw vintage Elvis concert tickets for sale on eBay, he e-mailed the seller asking for close-ups of the actual seat numbers and price on the actual ticket. Strangely, he did not get a response. Two days later, the auction was removed from eBay before its actual close date. That's never a good sign. When in doubt, ask for close-ups. If the item is real, the seller will have no problem providing them. If the item is a fraud or the seller stole the photos from another site, the seller will reject or ignore your request. In the end, though, you'll be that much wiser, moving on to the next item in your search results and leaving that seller in the dust.

## Completed Items Strikes Again

Here's a great example of when completed items can help you when placing bids. Matt, in his hunt for the perfect bass guitar, started looking at the Warwick Streamer brand. He wanted a six string, and he wanted it in good condition. To get a better idea of how much these things typically sell for on eBay, he used the Completed Items search that we discussed in Chapter 4, "Seek and You Shall Find." Here's how he did it. He clicked on the Search button in the main toolbar, and if you recall, on this page is a Completed Items Only option. He placed a check in that checkbox. With this option enabled, he then typed **Warwick Streamer guitar** in the Search box and clicked on the Search button. Five results were returned, as shown in Figure 12.5. The prices did vary, but Matt got a good idea as to what he was most likely going to have to pay.

Always do what you can to avoid going into a bidding situation blind. See what others have paid and use that as a guide. Feel free to contact some of these buyers as well. They may have some product feedback you want to hear.

## Go to Trial

This one may feel like a stretch, and you may even think I'm off my rocker, but it worked, and Matt is living proof. If you are bidding on something but you have some doubts, get the seller to agree to a trial period before he or

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

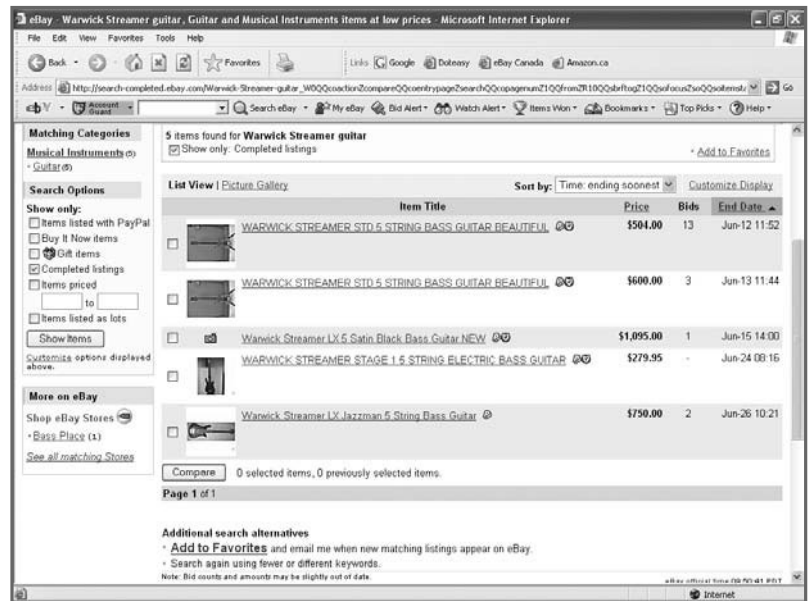


Figure 12.5

Completed Items—  
valuable insights.

she cashes in your payment. What does this look like, you ask? Before you bid, e-mail the seller. The last thing you should do is ask after you bid or once you've won the item. Some buyers won't be comfortable with this trial request and may reject it. Some may not respond at all. Either way, it's definitely worth a try if it makes you feel more comfortable bidding on the item.

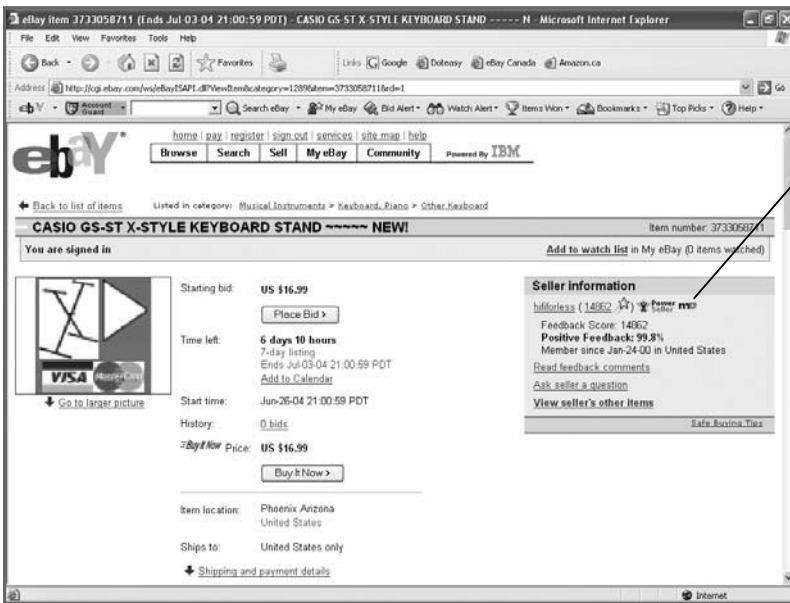
In Matt's case, he was bidding on an amplifier. Before he bid, he e-mailed the buyer asking for a 10-day trial on the amp before the seller cashed his check. The seller agreed to this deal. When Matt won the item, he sent the seller a post-dated check. When the buyer received his check, he shipped the item. Matt tried the amp, and it was to his liking. Ten days later, the check was cashed and everyone was happy.

Buying on a trial period is absolutely ideal for buyers, but not necessarily for sellers. This puts a lot of the risk on them, considering you could cancel the check once you receive the goods. Be realistic and be honest when dealing this way. It worked for Matt; it may just work for you, too.

## Its All About Me

eBay has an option for its members to create an About Me page. This is an opportunity for sellers and buyers alike to introduce themselves to the eBay masses. With an About Me page, members become a more active part of the eBay community. Think of it as an entire page dedicated to you. A place where you can tell everyone more about yourself.

Sometimes when you are bidding on an item, you may notice a ME graphic icon next to the seller's user ID (see Figure 12.6). This icon will link you to the seller's About Me page.



About Me icon

**Figure 12.6**

The ME icon indicates that this member has an About Me page.

Think of it as an extra layer of comfort, getting to know this individual a little better by reading her profile. Personally, I haven't created one yet, but I will soon. Did I mention that it's free?

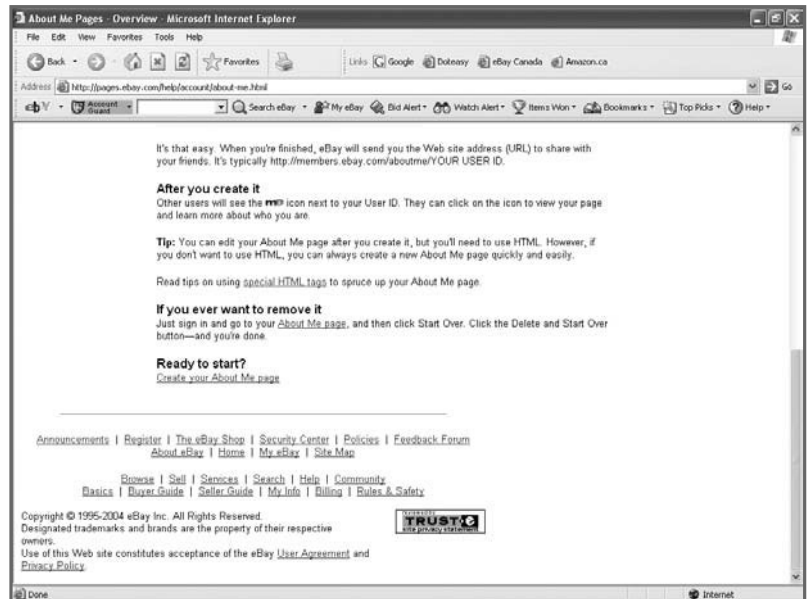
Let's go through the steps of creating an About Me page for Jordy.

## How Do You Access the About Me Page?

I have to be honest with you. At the time that I am writing this book, there is no intuitive way to get to this feature. Jordy—keep your eyes open on this one and follow along.

1. Click on the Help link just above the main toolbar.
2. Scroll to the bottom of the Help page.
3. Click on the My About Me Page link, located just under the Your eBay Account section.
4. Help topics will appear. Click on the Overview link. Give it a read if you have the time; otherwise, scroll down the page to the very bottom where you will see a Create Your About Me Page link, just below the Ready to Start? header. Figure 12.7 displays this link for your convenience.
5. Click on the Create Your About Me Page link.

In the next section, we'll continue the process.



**Figure 12.7**

Accessing the About Me Pages link.

## Creating Your Own About Me Page

Now, we are on the About Me page where Jordy can begin the creation of his profile. Jordy proceeds by clicking on the Create or Edit Your Page button, as shown in Figure 12.8.



Figure 12.8

Creating your own About Me page.

On the pages that follow, Jordy will be presented with three easy steps:

### Choose a Layout

This is definitely one of the easiest wizards I've worked through. For the first option, Jordy selects his choice of layout from the list of three options. He then clicks in the radio box next to the layout he likes and clicks on the Next button near the bottom of the page.

### Enter Page Content

Here's where Jordy can get really creative. This is the page where Jordy can let the world know everything there is to know about him, and then some. He

has the option to include photographs, web links, and even feedback comments people have left for him. Remember, the goal here is to create a page that will further instill trust in Jordy as a buyer or seller. Once he's entered his content, Jordy can click on the Continue button to move to the next step.

## Review and Submit

On this page, Jordy is given the option to review and check over what he's done, as displayed in Figure 12.9. eBay will preview his page, and if Jordy's happy with what he sees, he can simply click on the Continue button. Otherwise, to make changes, he would click on the Back button and make his edits.



**Figure 12.9**

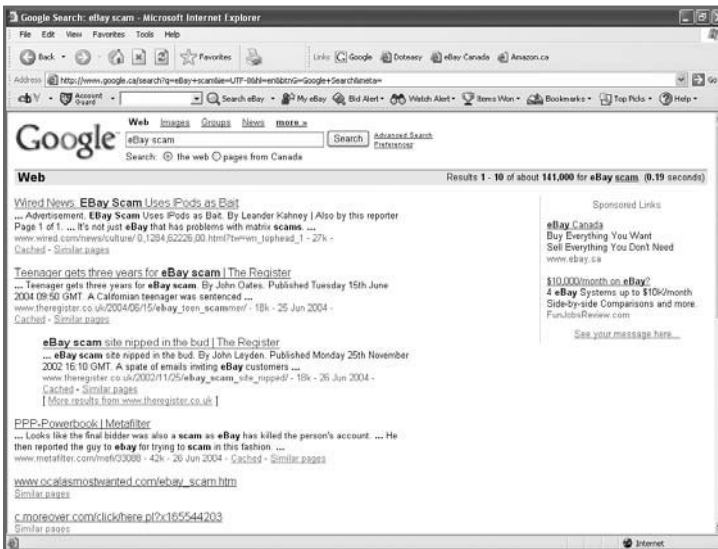
Review and submit your About Me page.

That's it. Jordy is done. Now, a ME icon will appear next to his user ID and other members can access his About Me page. Feels a little like a dating service, but nevertheless, a valid tip for building buyer and seller confidence on eBay.

## Google It

I cannot say this enough. Google can be your best friend if used properly. Whenever my panel of experts considers bidding on items that they aren't 100 percent familiar with, they go to Google for further information. Searching on Google for an item you are bidding on will give you a wealth of information, which can include customer testimonials, magazine reviews, store item descriptions, warnings, manufacturer recalls, and a whole lot more. You may even find it cheaper out there and from a more reputable source.

Last but not least, use Google to stay on top of the latest scams and frauds on eBay. Figure 12.10 shows you the results of a Google search for “eBay scam.” Searching on “eBay fraud” will also return a large number of hits. It's a great way to stay current and protect yourself.



**Figure 12.10**

Google it! Looking for scams and frauds.

## How Will You Be Paying for That?

Scammers love wire transfers. If a seller is offering only this payment method, then we all strongly recommend you run, not walk, away from that item. In some cases, if the only option is check or money order, that too can be risky.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

These days most sellers support PayPal, credit cards, or some other online payment method. Those are the types of sellers we deal with almost exclusively. No payment method is 100 percent safe, so explore all your options and understand all the risks.

## Is Feedback Alone Good Enough?

Readers, I may have misled you, and for this I apologize. Although reading a seller's feedback comments is an excellent way to judge his character, it is not the be all and end all of the research you need to do. These chapters have included several ways to ensure you won't get ripped off by a seller. It is important that you do a whole lot more than just check a seller's feedback and trust him if the numbers look good.

Scammers are now finding ways of faking their feedback numbers. Although there are no solid stats or facts to back this accusation, I've seen enough activity in the forums and discussion rooms to say that some people on eBay are buying feedback from others in hopes of increasing their points. How do you buy points? Sell something, anything, for a really low price (for example, 99 cents) in return for positive feedback. Usually this will happen between a group of people who know each other.

You can usually detect if this is happening by checking the feedback comments and, specifically, the item numbers. Check to see what items are actually being sold. Is the same buyer's name listed several times? Feedback is very powerful, and I am not discrediting this system. I am simply warning you that feedback and feedback alone is not secure enough anymore. You have to use all other safeguards and tips in conjunction with feedback to get a true and more secure picture before bidding.

Feeling safe yet? You should! With all these tips, scammers will be hard pressed to squeak one by you. Let's leave the whole idea of buying behind us now. We are now ready to enter the wonderful world of selling on eBay. Hold on to your hats—lots of tips and tricks ahead!





---

# part 3

---

## Selling the Music

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

Welcome to my favorite part of the eBay experience—selling! Forget the fact that you're most likely going to make some cash, it's all about the rush you feel when you make the sale. eBay becomes your personal storefront for all the items you want to sell. Forget having to create your own e-store. eBay makes it easy. Unfortunately, many are intimidated when it comes to selling on eBay. My job is to make this as pleasurable an experience as possible and in the process turn you into an eBay music selling maniac—with a great success rate.

# chapter 13



## Before You Sell

---

Selling, much like buying, requires a fair bit of preparation before you take the plunge. Where the two differ though is in the amount of time it takes to do them. Buying is a whole lot easier and faster than listing an item and selling. For all the trouble, it really pays to do your homework and follow the simple guidelines listed in this chapter.

## Introducing the Music Collector

---

Are you like me? Do you have lists for everything? I certainly do, and when I'm working on eBay, it's no different. Before I sell anything, I check my list—not once but twice—to ensure I haven't missed anything. Where did I get this valuable list of “before you buy” tips and tricks for selling musical items on eBay? Mark Swift provided me with his genius in the form of a four hour interview. Swifty, as his friends call him, is a PowerSeller on eBay, specializing in the purchase and sale of music-related collectibles. His collections include rare vinyl, statues, concert memorabilia, and vintage instruments. In this chapter, I've compiled all his wizardly tips and tricks so that you, like me, can follow a checklist of “to dos” prior to listing any of your own items to sell.

## Be Organized

---

Before you begin selling anything on eBay, organize yourself. Even if you are only selling one item, it is still important to keep your workspace in order. You can use built-in eBay resources like My eBay to help you, but nothing can replace a proper filing system, folder structure, and strong e-mail etiquette. Some simple setup instructions include keeping separate e-mail folders for your eBay communications, creating file folders on your computer for eBay information, and maintaining hard copy backups of your filing system. As your eBay business grows, you'll find it's easier to stay on top of things and the results will be much more positive feedback.

## Surfs Are Up

---

Simply put—get a feel for what's already out there. When Swifty was selling a copy of the John Lennon, Yoko Ono, *Wedding Album*, he knew he would have to do some research. First, he did a simple search to see what others were doing on eBay.

He checked out his competition to see what he could learn.

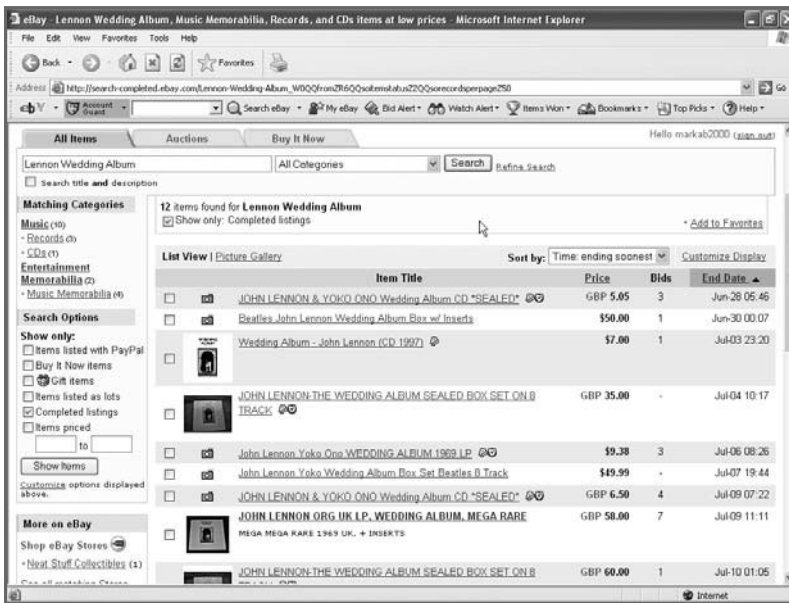
### Do the Simple Search

Swifty typed **John Lennon Wedding Album** in the Search box and let eBay work its magic. Five results were displayed and already Swift learned something that was very important. There were at least three versions of the album being sold—a US, UK, and Japanese version. Swift's was the UK pressed version, so he now knew to include that bit of information in his description and title. From the results listed, Swifty reviewed all the starting bid numbers, bid history, and item details. There's a lot you can learn if you know what to look for. Know your competition before you list on eBay.

### Completed Items

As you know, you can go even further than just a simple search on eBay. You can also search on completed items, which is exactly what Swifty did. It wasn't

good enough that he found five items currently for sale on eBay. He wanted to see if this item had ever sold in the past and what he could learn from those listings. He clicked on the Search button in the main toolbar, enabled the Completed Items Only option, and typed **Lennon Wedding Album** in the Search box. As shown in Figure 13.1, twelve items were displayed, providing Swifty with a world of information.



**Figure 13.1**

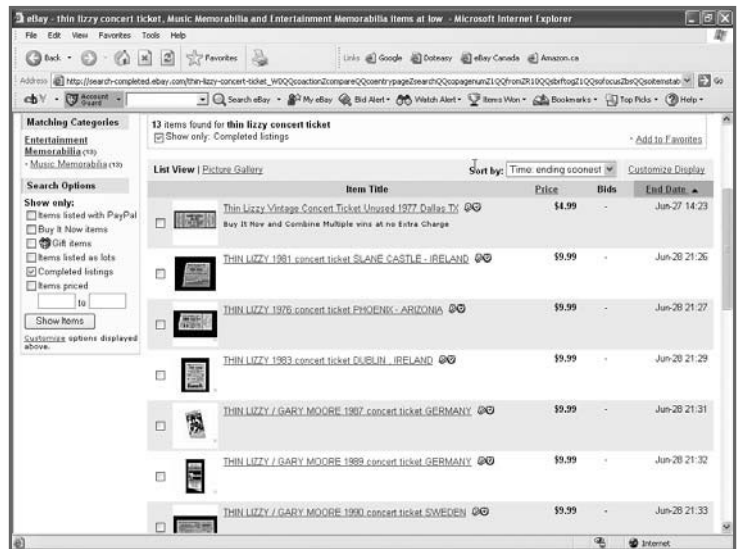
Completed Items provides a wealth of information to the savvy seller.

Here are some of the things you should look for when researching completed items.

## Did the Item Sell?

Simple enough, right? Wrong. What percentage actually sold? You may be surprised. In one case, Swifty had vintage Thin Lizzy tickets that he hoped to sell on eBay. After doing a Completed Items search, he found over 10 different listings selling that same item. Not one had sold. Before you sell, always check to see what kind of track record that item has. You can learn from those items that haven't sold as well. Figure 13.2 shows the results of a Completed Items search where no sales were made.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 13.2**

Completed Items search shows no sales made!

## What Do the Losers Have in Common?

“Losers” may be a little bit harsh, but I’m actually referring to the losing bids, not necessarily the sellers themselves. Why did these ads do poorly? In the cases where there are no bidders, no sales, and sometimes very few views (based on counters), the item title may have been spelled incorrectly, categorized inappropriately, or so obscure that no one even knew it existed. For those items where some sold and some didn’t, this is where you will find a treasure trove of helpful information. Look at those listings where no bids occurred. You’ll probably notice a trend based on the following listing issues:

- Starting bid too high
- No photo(s)
- Limited payment methods
- Terrible item description
- Not enough information
- Outrageous shipping charges
- Low or negative seller feedback ratings
- Not an item worth selling in the first place

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST and GENUINE !**

## Selling Price

For those items that did sell, you will also find a lot of valuable information, such as is it worth your while? You can always use this information to set reserve prices, minimum bids, and even fixed prices for Buy It Now auctions. In the case of the Lennon *Wedding Album*, Completed Items showed that this item had sold at prices ranging from \$100 to \$230. In Swift's opinion, this did make it worth his while.

His next step was to analyze those listings to see what kind of information he could glean so that his ad would be just as successful.

## Learning from the Winners

After performing a Completed Items search and finding a number of successful sales, Swifty proceeded to review and analyze each of those successful listings for tips he could apply to his own. The following is a list of things Swifty recommends you look at very closely when sizing up the winning ads.

### Item Description

Sometimes the item description alone can make or break a sale. Learn from those that are successful. What keywords did they include? Remember that when buyers are searching for items, it all comes down to them being able to find what they're looking for. In the Lennon *Wedding Album* example, the successful sellers had all included the following keywords in their item descriptions: JOHN LENNON ORIGINAL UK WEDDING ALBUM RARE APPLE BOX LP.

You can't use them all because of the character limitations, but you can string together your own based on what you find.

### Photo(s) Used

Did the seller use a stock photo or an actual shot of his album for sale? You can usually tell. In this case, all the winning listings included an actual photograph of the seller's item and not a store or distributor image. People buy

what they can see. Learn from those that have sold before you and fork out the cash for a digital camera or scanner—it's worth it.

## Starting Bid

Where you start your bidding makes a huge difference in the success or failure of an ad. What did these successful ads use as a starting bid? Too low and you will sometimes scare away serious bidders who feel the item is either fake or stolen. Too high and you'll scare away those who feel they can find it cheaper somewhere else, considering this would only be the starting bid and would definitely go up from there.

## Feedback Ratings

Did these sellers have extremely high feedback ratings? Were they all 100% positive? Again, you may be surprised. If the item is rare enough, buyers will forego high feedback ratings and take the risk. In this case, the sellers had between 3 and 25 positive feedback points—no negatives.

## Descriptions

Wow! This is where Swifty learned a truckload. In all the winning ads, the seller had provided exhaustive detail as to the contents, credits, and condition of the album. For those people collecting vinyl, condition is important, and the more objective that rating is the better. These ads followed a grading method that screamed of confidence and credibility for this category of collectibles. For example, here are some popular grading ratings for album condition. Next to each rating is an abbreviation contained within parentheses. These are the abbreviations you may see in item descriptions on eBay.

- Mint (M)
- Excellent Plus (EX+)
- Excellent (EX)
- Excellent Minus (EX-)
- Very Good Plus (VG +)
- Very Good (VG)

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST and GENUINE !**



- Good Plus (G+)
- Good (G)
- Fair
- Poor
- Awful
- Bad
- Terrible
- Garbage

There are several websites that offer grading systems that you can follow. Use Google to find the one that works best for you.

Bottom line—when it comes to descriptions, do your best to anticipate questions buyers might ask and make sure the answers are in your ad. Clean and simple.

## Category

For those people who browse on eBay rather than going directly to the Search box to find what they are looking for, it is important that you list the item in the proper category. Learn from those who were successful selling the item by checking which category or categories they used. For a small additional fee, you can list your item in more than one category. All of the winning sellers had listed their items in the following category tree: Music > Records > Albums/LPs > Pop & Beat: 1960s > The Beatles. This was yet another tidbit Swifty picked up for his posting.

## Payment Methods

I won't beat this one to death, but suffice it to say that the more options you offer, the more sales you will make. All the successful ads had at least three different payment methods, with one always being PayPal. You can never overdo it when offering buyers pay options in your listing. Many include everything from credit cards to online payments to bartering fish and animal pelts. Just kidding about the fish and pelts crack, but I think I've made my point.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Feed the Feedback Meter

---

Many buyers on eBay are hesitant to purchase items sold by sellers with low feedback ratings. I'm not talking about negative feedback, but rather low numbers of sales in general. Every seller has to start somewhere, and it can sometimes be difficult to make sales when you have only one or two transactions under your belt. To overcome this concern, do what you can to build or feed your feedback meter by selling and buying smaller, low-cost items on eBay. Once you have five to ten feedback points under your belt (all positive of course), you will see that more and more people will begin bidding on your items.

On another note, keep in mind that many buyers will look very closely at a seller's feedback ratings. As you know, by simply entering a member's feedback forum, you can see who has left feedback, the comments themselves, and if the member was a seller or a buyer for that transaction. Sellers who have feedback mainly for buying items may not have as much credibility as those who have a balance between the two. Do what you can to collect feedback on both sides of the fence—as a buyer and a seller.

## About Who?

---

In Chapter 12, “Avoid the Scam—Music Tips from the Experts,” we discussed the importance of creating an About Me page. As a seller, Swifty strongly recommends you do so. An About Me page allows a member to introduce himself to the eBay masses by developing a personalized web page. Members can access this page at any time and see exactly what you are all about. As a seller, an About Me page further reinforces an image of trustworthiness and credibility—especially if the right information is included. Believe it or not, the About Me page allows members to attach and display a photograph of themselves for the eBay populous to see. Seem kind of creepy? It shouldn't. Buyers feel a whole lot more confident that a seller isn't a fraud when they see a real person and not just a user ID. Don't forget to floss and give us all a big smile!

You can also use the About Me page to advertise and post website links for other non-eBay businesses you may be involved in. If you are selling a guitar on eBay and also own a music store—out in the real world of brick and mortar storefronts—you can place a link to your store on your About Me page. Again, from a confidence standpoint, buyers will see other businesses you are a part of and feel that much more comfortable in their dealings with you. Not to mention, a little free advertising never hurt anybody—right?

## Talk to Your Neighbor

---

The cool thing about this online community is that everyone is your neighbor—no matter what country you're from. Before you sell, do not hesitate to visit the numerous online community resources available—free to all eBay members. The chatrooms and message boards are filled with people who have sold similar items before and have numerous tips to share. If you have specific questions, you can also find your answers within these forums. People on eBay want to help and share their expertise. Use them. There's a world of knowledge for you to tap into waiting around every corner on eBay.

I encourage you to re-read Chapter 2, “Flattening the Learning Curve,” where I cover, in detail, the different support options available to members on eBay.

## Talk to Experts

---

Just as it is important when buying, it's just as important when selling. Talk to someone who knows what he is talking about. These types of people are available everywhere—in person. For example, when Swifty was getting ready to sell his John Lennon album, he visited the local vinyl shop. There, he spoke with the owner—a man by the name of Sparky, a die-hard record collector since the early seventies—about his upcoming selling venture. Sparky shared with Swifty all sorts of insights regarding this Lennon piece and went even further by showing him what the other versions of the album looked like. Sparky also spoke to the various successes and failures he had experienced selling this album and others like it. These insights were gold to Swifty, and he incorporated what he could in his eBay listing.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Google—Again?

---

Google always seems to rear its beautiful head in all the chapters of this book. I think you're probably getting the message that this website is an incredible resource for eBay sellers and buyers alike. For sellers, use Google to see what other sites may be offering your item for sale. What kind of prices are they charging? What does their description of this item look like? What are they charging for shipping? Is the market saturated with this product or is it extremely hard to find?

Depending on the item, you can also find all sorts of reviews and customer testimonials searching on Google. If you are able to get permission from the site or customer posting these reviews, try to include links or quotes in your listing.

## Collectibles, Tradeshows, and Conferences

---

If you've ever been to a collectibles show, you know what I'm talking about. If you haven't—you don't know what you are missing. Tradeshows and conferences seemingly exist for every type of item for sale on eBay—from cars to comics to music to antiques.

The people who sell and buy at these shows are usually fanatics and really understand the business—inside and out. By attending these shows, you can get a good idea of what kinds of items sell, speak to experts, and purchase original, sometimes hard to find items. Learn from the pros and incorporate what you can in your own listings on eBay.

## Pass the Spelling Bee

---

Why is spelling important on eBay? Well, if a seller spells John Lennon's name with one n (as in John Lenon) in the listing, the chances of a potential buyer finding this ad are slim to none—and slim is out of town. The only chance this seller would have is if a buyer misspells Lennon's name the same way when searching, or if the buyer browses using categories instead. Those aren't great odds for this seller's items.

On the other hand, many savvy sellers will include common misspellings of words to attract the spelling-challenged to their listings. For example, when Swifty was selling a Ringo Starr picture poster, he listed his item with the following title:

*Ringo Starr Star Picture Poster 70s*

From his research, Swifty noticed that many people on eBay were misspelling his name, not including the second “r” in his last name. Make a list, if applicable, of all the potential ways a buyer could misspell your item’s name. Where possible, and space permitting, include the most popular errors in your item title or even your description text. At the very least, if someone is searching within both title and description, he will find it there.

## Bonus Goodies

---

Everyone loves something that’s free. How many times have you attended a tradeshow where you went booth to booth collecting the freebies they were doling out? eBay is no different. Can you offer something for free as a bonus with your item to the successful bidder? When Phat Matt sold an old guitar a couple of years back, he included five picks for free. When Swifty sells Elvis-related items, he always throws in an Elvis pin or sticker. Comb your home for anything you can add to the sale to sweeten the deal. If it’s between your item and someone else’s and yours includes a free brownie—you tell me which one you would go for. If you guessed the brownie-enhanced item—you’re right. Next tip, please.

## Is It Still Fee-sible?

---

Do some math. Keep in mind that there are always costs that go into selling an item on eBay. Some are obvious, while others can be somewhat hidden. When determining a starting bid, reserve price, or Buy It Now value, always consider your costs and incorporate them. Is the item still worth selling after you’ve tabulated the results?

Here are some costs you should consider:

- Your time
- PayPal fees
- eBay fees
- Credit card fees (if applicable)
- Bounce check fees (if applicable)
- Admin fees (if applicable)
- Storage fees (if applicable)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party eBay management fees (if applicable)

Ready or not—you are ready to sell! Let's move to the following chapter where we get things started by kicking off the selling process.

# chapter 14



## Kicking Off the Selling Process

---

Drum roll, please. The moment you've been waiting for has finally arrived. *eBay's* here and the time is right for *selling* in the streets (sung to the tune of "Dancing in the Streets" by Mick Jagger or one of the many other singers who have tackled this tune). All this to say, let's sell something on eBay and make some money in the process.

### What Can I Sell on eBay?

---

What can you sell? Is that what you're asking me? You obviously haven't read Chapter 1, "Music on eBay? Like What?" yet. Instead of regurgitating the entire chapter, I'll provide you with a short summary response to this rather important question: almost anything. When it comes to selling music-related items on eBay, the list is truly endless.

### Personal Anecdote

To be honest, the first place I went in my quest for music items to sell was to my parents. I asked them if they had any old vinyl. They did. I placed it in my wagon and continued my search. My next stop was my grandma's pad in Longueuil, Quebec. My grandma had all sorts of old Elvis concert tickets that she kept next to her bed in a hope chest. She was fine with me selling them on eBay as long as she received 20 percent of the take. I thought

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

that was fair considering they weren't mine in the first place. She was also a big fan of Tino Rossi. Any of you know who he is? Born in 1907, this guy was gifted with an operatic voice, a "Latin Lover" persona, and a knack for crooning. Over his career, Tino Rossi made hundreds of records and appeared in more than 25 films. Well, my grandma had all sorts of magazines and movie programs for his musicals and concerts. Into the wagon they went, and my cross-Canada journey for music items continued.

I was building up quite a stash of musical items with one more stop to go—my brother Mike's place. Getting stuff from him wouldn't be as easy as my parents or my grandma. He'd want the lion's share of what I pulled in on eBay. Depending on what he had, we could most likely work something out that was favorable to both parties involved. (He hates it when I speak to him like that.) He had some of the old felt rock posters from the early eighties—the ones you'd get at the local fairs. He also had some rock pins, patches, and bumper stickers. La piece de resistance, though, were his crates and crates of vinyl. He had it all. From T-Rex to Motorhead to the Rolling Stones, my excitement was hard to contain as I salivated all over my Iron Maiden t-shirt. I didn't leave his place with everything, but he did give me a fair sampling of each. With a fair adieu and my wagon in tow, I headed home to rest. I had a big day, and a bigger day would surely follow as I dreamed of the many sales eBay would surely bring me.

## **Solace—Signed, Not Sealed, and I Will Deliver**

If you recall, Solace is a very successful indie rock band with a really bad habit. They blow the roof off everytime they play. With Phat Matt, their bassist, on my panel of experts for this book, I thought I would push my luck. I asked him for a band autographed copy of their latest CD—*The Mirror*. I told him that my goal was to sell it on eBay and chronicle the steps I took to get it there. He agreed. The rest will soon be history.

This chapter and those that follow will look at the eBay selling process step by step in great detail. Instead of confusing the content by selling many different items, I thought it would make more sense to follow the sale of one music-related item and share as many tips as possible along the way. Many



of the steps and tips covered in these chapters are completely transferable to other music-related items that you may be selling during your own eBay exploits.

With the band-autographed CD in hand and Swifty, our music collectibles expert, by my side, we were ready to attack and sell on eBay.

## Pre-Steps

If you've skipped some chapters to get here, then you may not be aware of a couple of things that are integral to selling on eBay.

First and foremost, you must be a registered member of eBay before you can even get to the starting gate. Once you're registered, you have to register yet again to get your seller's license. Chapter 3, "Getting Started," details the registration process in detail. Does this registering cost you any money? Nope. Register with eBay and leave your wallet at home. You won't need it—yet.

If you haven't read any of the buying-related chapters, I recommend you do. Understand your customers before you attempt to sell to them. In these chapters, I cover bidding strategies, ways to avoid scams, and the importance of feedback. As a seller, you can really learn from these lessons and position your listings accordingly.

Lastly, read Chapter 13, "Before You Sell." Contained within that chapter are several tips and tricks that will best prepare you for the eBay selling experience.

## Starting the Selling Process

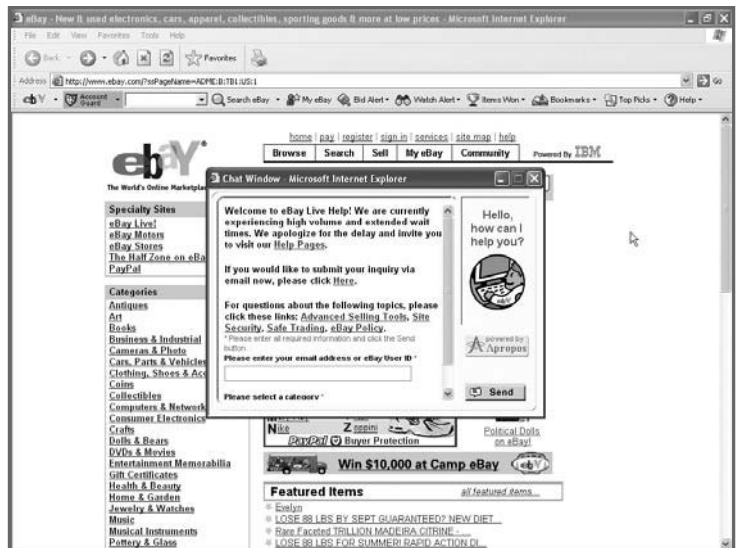
From the main toolbar, click on the Sell button. You will be greeted with a Start Selling Now page. To kick start the process, you have to click on the Sell Your Item button. From there, you will most likely be asked to sign in using your user ID and password. That's it. You're as good as ready to go.

Welcome to the first step in the selling process on eBay.

## Note



Need help? Feeling a little scared? You can also click on the Get Help Buying or Selling link located on eBay's front page. Still can't see it? It's right below the Find It button on the right side of the page. Once you click on that link, you may be surprised by what's waiting on the other side—eBay Live Help, as shown in Figure 14.1. Enter a live chat room with an eBay customer service representative. He or she will help you with any questions you may have regarding searching, bidding, buying, registering, and of course, selling. At the time I was writing this book, the live help was not available due to high volume traffic and extended wait times, but it might be now.



**Figure 14.1**

eBay Live Help is available for those of you who feel you can't do it alone.

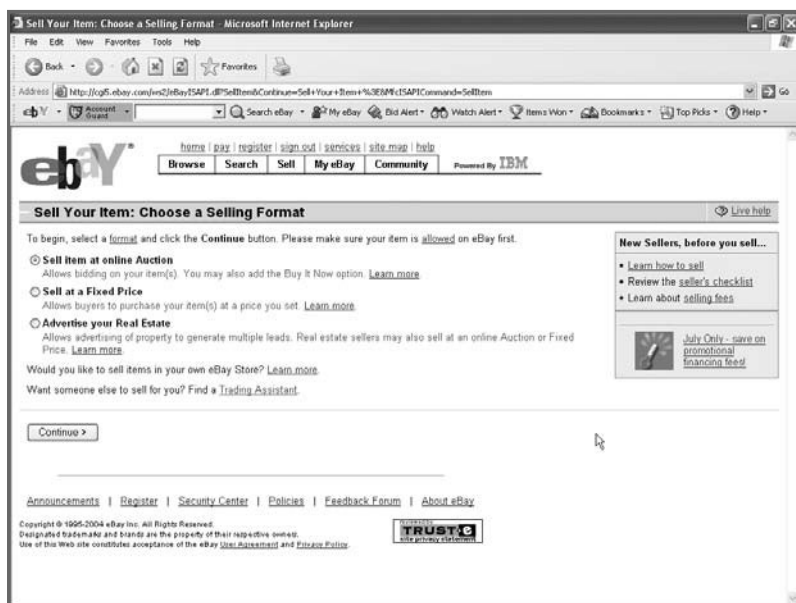
## Choosing a Selling Format

You'll see five choices when you arrive at this page, as shown in Figure 14.2. They are discussed in the following sections.

### Sell Item at Online Auction

This is the classic format. This is the format that started it all. By choosing this format, you are allowing bidding on your item. You can also incorporate the Buy It Now feature into your auction using this format choice.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 14.2**

Choose your selling format from a list of five choices.

## Sell at a Fixed Price

If your desire is to sell your item at a set price rather than allowing members to bid, you can select this format option. In this type of auction, your listing will show a Buy It Now option, and no bidding will be allowed.

## Advertise Your Real Estate

This type of format is not really relevant to this book but still deserves an explanation. By selecting this format, you can generate leads for advertised properties.

## eBay Stores

If you have feedback of 20 or higher, you can open an eBay store. If you're a serious seller, and your goal is to make muchos profits on eBay, then a storefront may be the way to go. Like a real store, you're in charge of marketing, driving your brand awareness, and the look and feel of your space. eBay helps you out by providing a free search engine for your store, driving traffic to

your site, and delivering reports on your business. If you feel you're ready, then I strongly suggest you push your wares via an eBay store. To get a good idea of the kinds of music-related stores that currently exist, visit eBay's front page and click on the eBay Stores link. From there, click on either the Music or Musical Instruments category link on the left side of the screen.

## Trading Assistants

Don't be such a chicken! Just kidding. If you feel that you just aren't a seller, for a fee you can actually have someone sell your items on your behalf. If this is the way you want to go, you can click on the Find a Trading Assistant link. There, you can search for a trading assistant by either ZIP or area code. Figure 14.3 shows you the results of a search for a trading assistant in the 613 area code. Depending on what you're selling, you should be able to find an experienced seller to assist you.

For the band-autographed Solace music CD, I selected the Sell Item at Online Auction option. I wanted a bidding war over this item, and only an online auction would do the trick. I then clicked on the Continue button at the bottom of the page. Swifty was happy.

User ID	Feedback	Contact Info.	Zip Code	City	Category Specialty	Accepts Calls
hack_copies	9950	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K1J9C3	Ottawa & Eastern Ontario	All Categories	✓
7thheavenfurs	4188	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K0E1G0	delta ontario	All Categories	✓
innapm	2928	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K1Z5Z7	Ottawa	All Categories	✓
thegreatestone99	2608	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K1G6E5	Ottawa	All Categories	✓
center3	2355	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K7A4S5	Smiths Falls	All Categories	✓
urdish1	1454	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K2A3T6	ottawa	Consumer Electronics, Everything Else	✓
diecastmike	1029	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K0C1E0	Bainville	Toys & Hobbies, Collectibles	✓
eurofin	858	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K1Z6R3	Ottawa	Toys & Hobbies, Collectibles, Antiques	✓
crebanil	832	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K2B6N5	Ottawa	All Categories	✓
pocketlines	590	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K0V7C6	Brockville	All Categories	✓
tunn_of_toys	489	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K0K3M0	Wooler/Trenton/Brighton...	Toys & Hobbies, Collectibles	✓
philis_books	402	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	3199	Melbourne	Books	✓
honniethebird	359	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K2L2Y1	Kanata	All Categories	✓
patman	328	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K2K2V4	Ottawa	Sporting Goods, Cameras & Photo	✓
truenorstrading	320	<a href="#">Get Info</a>	K2C2S8	OTTAWA / GATINEAU - Ess.	All Categories	✓

**Figure 14.3**

Hire a trading assistant to sell on your behalf.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Categorically Speaking

There are several ways you can select the most appropriate category for your item. Swifty tells me that this is one of the most important parts of the selling process. Let me try and put it in perspective based on previous chapters. As a potential buyer, I may be browsing categories instead of searching by keyword for an item. If I browse, then I typically browse in the categories that interest me. From a seller's perspective, you must assign the appropriate category to your item so that browsers actually find it in the right place.

Swifty provided me with the following example of an incorrectly categorized item that didn't sell for that very reason. When Swifty was selling his KISS clock, he had trouble finding an appropriate category for this item. After much deliberation, he finally ended up choosing the Collectibles category. The item did not sell. In fact, he tells me no one even bid. Not a man to give up too easily, Swifty relisted faster than you can say, well, relisted. This time though, he chose a different category: Entertainment Memorabilia. This category made more sense and from what his eBay expert colleagues had told him, this was a high-traffic area. Were they ever right. Many people bid and the item eventually sold at a great price.

### Previously Used Categories

To save you time, eBay allows you to select from previously used categories. This feature is especially useful if you are selling many of the same types of items over and over. For example, someone who is always selling music DVDs may use the same category each time he creates a listing, saving some steps.

Figure 14.4 displays the Previously Used Categories drop-down menu. There, you can see an option for Computers and Networking: Software: Graphics & Multimedia: Other. This was a category I used for a previous item I sold on eBay. Obviously, this category was not relevant to my autographed Solace CD. Swifty directed me to my next category search option—Keywords.

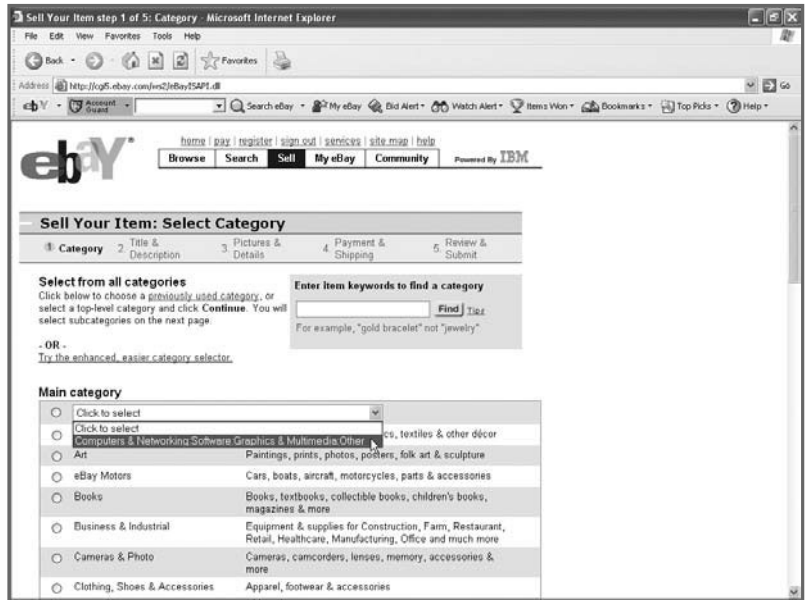


Figure 14.4

Save time and use  
Previously Used Categories.

## Category by Keywords

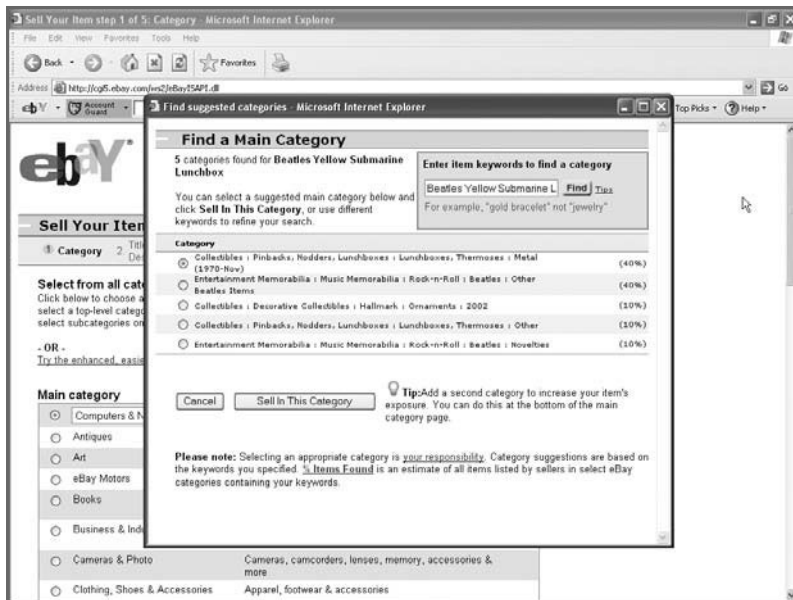
This feature is extremely helpful in assisting a seller in finding the best category for an item listing. I've said it once, and all of you know, I will say it again—put yourself in the shoes of a potential buyer. Buyers have needs. They come to eBay. On the front page, they decide to do a search. They type some words into the Search box and click on Find It. A list of items appears, and the buyers begin their bidding and buying process. Guess where you come in? Those words that the buyers type into the Search box are of the utmost importance. They are the Holy Grail. Understand the consumer. Understand your customers. Understand the buyers.

How this feature works is by allowing you, the seller, to enter keywords you think a buyer might type in for your item. Once you've entered those keywords into a Search box, eBay will suggest one or more categories that match up. You are then free to select the best category fit for your item. To help you make your decision, the far right column displays the “% of items found” information. This is eBay's estimate of all the items listed by sellers in eBay categories using the keywords you selected. To make this point clear, let's look at an example.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

I typed in the following keywords to find the best category: **Beatles Yellow Submarine Lunchbox**.

Figure 14.5 displays the results of this search for a category. You will notice that the first two results are listed at 38% each. This means that in these two categories, 38% of the items selling share those same keywords. Is 38% good enough? Maybe. You have two options at this point. You can select from the list of suggestions and take the one that best fits your item, or you can enter different keywords to get higher percentages.



**Figure 14.5**

Find the best category for your item by using keyword searches.

Easy enough, right? Let's try it for the Solace CD.

In the top-right corner of this page, you will see an Enter Item Keywords to Find a Category header. In this text box, I type the following keywords: **Solace Mirror music CD**.

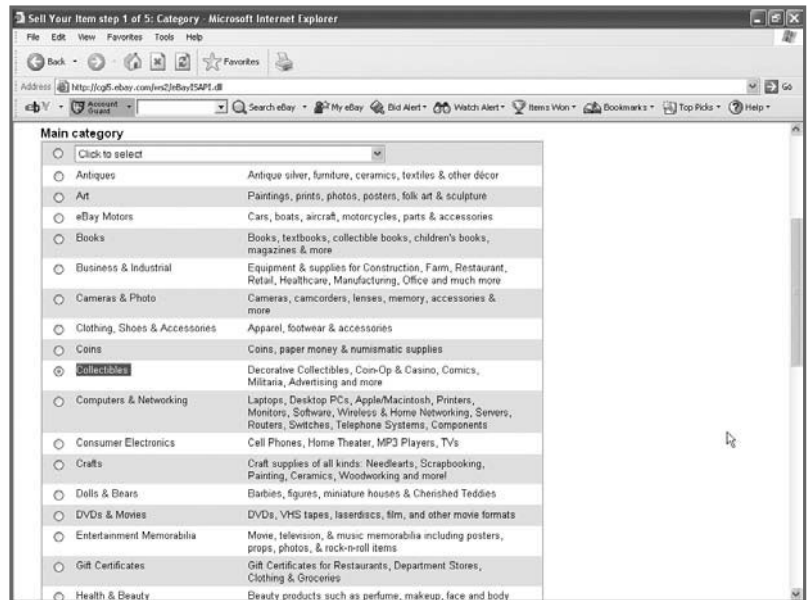
Being a CD shopper, this one was easy. Usually, when someone is searching for a music CD on eBay, he will minimally enter the band's name and album title in the Search box. The results of my search returned a 100% match for the category Music: CDs. Translation—100% of the items sold in this category contained at least one of the keywords I had specified. Good

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

sign. This is the category I select. Case closed. It was at this point that Swifty screamed, “Not so fast!” The case was obviously re-opened.

## Main Street Categories

Although I picked the best category for my item, Swifty wanted me to explore the other available options as well. In the Main Categories section of this page, sellers can also select the best category from a list of high-level choices. If we return to the Beatles lunchbox example presented earlier, I would have selected the Collectibles category, as shown in Figure 14.6.



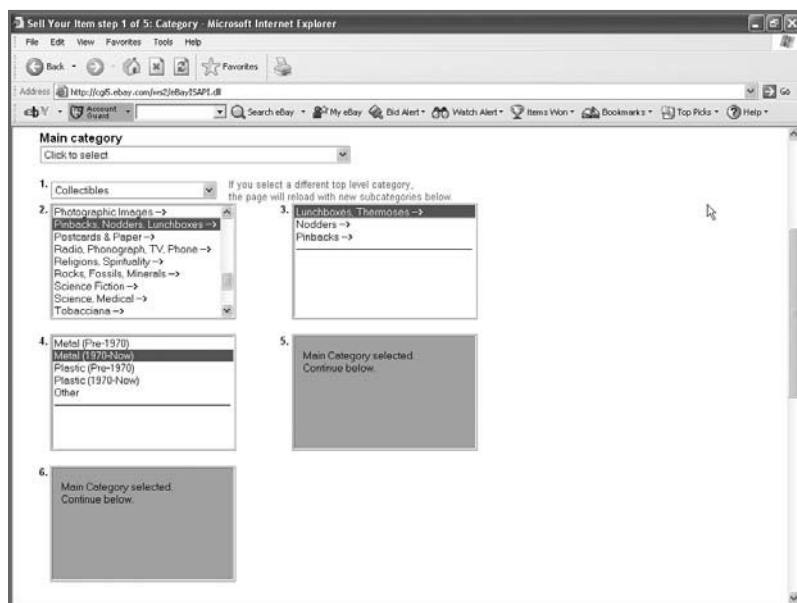
**Figure 14.6**

Choosing a category from the Main Category List: Collectibles.

I would then click on the Continue button in order to drill down further into the category choices for this item. In drop-down menu 1, you can see that Collectibles is listed, showing the first category you selected. Drop-down menu 2 displays a list of subcategories to choose from. Depending on the one you choose, drop-down menu 3 will populate with related subcategories. The categories will continue to drill down until there are no more suggestions eBay can make based on your selections. Figure 14.7 displays the selected categories for the lunchbox item.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 14.7**

Categories drill down into subcategories, providing more and more choices.

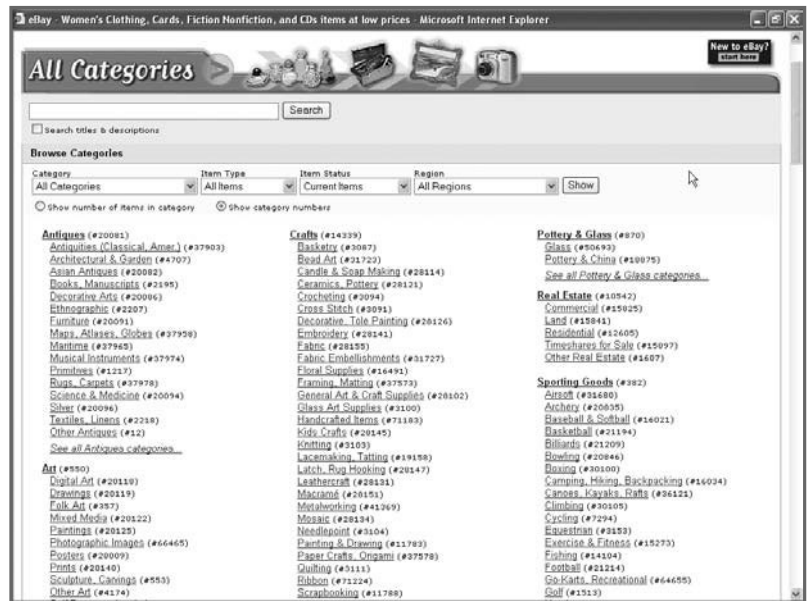
Returning to the Main Categories page, just below all the categories in the list, Swifty points me to a link he uses quite often—the Main Category # link. Each category on eBay has an associated category number. If there's one you use a lot, you can simply enter it here and move on to the next step, saving you time. If you don't know the category number off the top of your head (like most of us), you can instead click on the Category # link. Figure 14.8 displays the results of clicking on this link. eBay will list all the available categories with their associated category numbers. Swifty encourages me to peruse these listings to get a good idea of the available categories—especially under music.

Exhausted but informed, I felt I knew which category I would select for my Solace music CD. Time to move on, right? Wrong. Swifty had one more lesson to share.

## Seconds Anyone?

At the bottom of the Categories page is yet another category selection option. This one allows you to select an additional category to assign to your item. This will obviously double the chances someone will find your item when browsing.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 14.8**

All the categories eBay has to offer and their associated category numbers.

You can type in the category number (if you know it), click on the Category # link, or select from a previously used category to choose your second category.

Does adding a second category to your listing cost anything extra? You better believe it. Your insertion and most upgrade fees will be doubled. The insertion fee is the cost you pay eBay for actually placing your listing. Upgrade fees refer to any of the special features you may apply to your listing, such as bolding, gallery, or boxes. Now, picture doubling those fees in order to be linked to another category. To put it in perspective, the insertion fee for my Solace CD would come out to 35 cents. If I were to add another category though, my insertion fee would climb to a whopping 70 cents.

In the case of the Solace CD, Swift agreed that I didn't need a second category. My item is very straightforward and most buyers who browse will most likely go to the Music: CDs category anyway.

Really think about it before you choose to add an additional category for your item. These extra costs can really add up. Use your money wisely when listing an item. Again, put yourself into the heads of potential buyers. Swifty provided the following example of an item he had sold that truly deserved two categories.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

It was a Beatles Sgt. Pepper puzzle sealed in its original package in mint condition from 1999. There were two categories Swifty ended up using:

- Entertainment Memorabilia : Music Memorabilia : Rock-n-Roll : Beatles : Other Beatles Items
- Toys & Hobbies : Puzzles : Modern (1970-Now) : Other

If I were a collector of Beatles paraphernalia, I would most likely browse for this item using the Entertainment Memorabilia category and drill down from there. Many Beatles lovers search this category all the time for those hard-to-find items. However, if I were a puzzle collector, I may not even know that a Beatles puzzle exists. By browsing in the puzzle category, I could come across it and be interested in making a purchase. See?

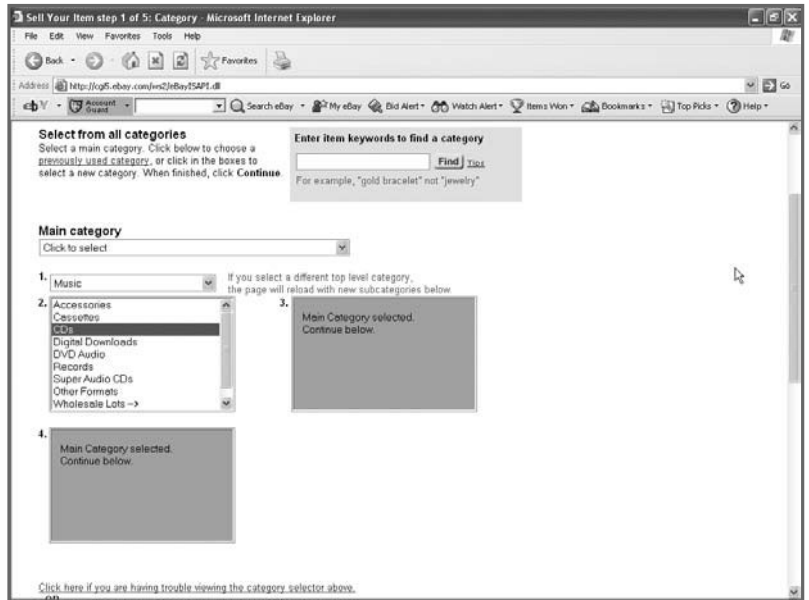
## On to the Next Step

Let's get back to my item now—the signed Solace music CD. On the Main Categories page, I quickly find the category that makes the most sense: Music: CDs, records, and other music formats.

I click on the Music category option, followed by the Continue button located at the bottom of the page. On the following page, I select the CDs subcategory in drop-down menu 2. As displayed in Figure 14.9, drop-down menus 3 and 4 go gray, indicating no other subcategories exist.

eBay takes the opportunity to ask me again if I'd like to assign a second category to my item. My response to this offer does not change as I click on the Continue button and move to the next stage in the selling process.

We are off to a rip-snorting start into the eBay selling process. Let's move to the next chapter, where we continue with the listing of the Solace music CD by tackling the topics of titles and descriptions.



**Figure 14.9**

Selecting the Music: CDs category and subcategory. No other subcategories exist.

# chapter 15



## Titles and Descriptions

---

Now, where did we leave off again? Oh yeah! We just selected the format and category placement for the signed Solace CD. We selected the Sell Item at Online Auction option and the Music: CDs category. We are off to the races now, minutes away from creating a title and description for this CD. Swifty had lots of insights to share for this chapter. When it comes to writing titles and descriptions, Swifty fancies himself the king. Well, the proof will be in the sale. Swifty—show us what you got!

### **The Unimportant Item Title**

---

Fooled you! Of course the item title is important. How could it not be? It's the very thing a potential buyer will search on. It's also one of the things that draw buyers to view your item in the first place. The title is of paramount importance, so don't pay attention to my shameless way of getting your attention. You have only 55 characters to play with, so make them count.

### **Creating the Perfect Title**

There are some simple rules to creating the perfect title. These rules are easy to follow, straightforward, and some would say downright obvious. But, nevertheless, many sellers continue to write ineffective titles that rarely get their products sold. When will they learn? Read on readers, read on.

### Rule#1—Think Like They Think

Think about it. That's all I'm saying. Don't rush it. You'll get it just right—eventually. When I say think like they think, what I'm really saying is know your customers. If I were selling an antique violin on eBay, it would be important for me to know how a person who buys these instruments thinks. Knowing very little about violins, I would seek out the information on the web. On Google, I would do a search for this instrument and see what kind of details are listed. I would visit chat rooms, groups, and message boards. Bottom line—I would learn what I can about the instrument and from there formulate a title that makes sense to a potential buyer.

*Bad Title:* Beautiful Old Antique Violin

*Better Title:* Antique Violin German 1716 Very Good

*Best Title:* 1716 E.R. Pfretzschner Antique Violin German VG

Do you see what we did here? Can you see the difference?

By understanding my customers, I was able to put together some keywords that I think they would most likely search for. On every site I visited, violins were listed with their make, year, country of origin, and condition. That's all I needed to know. From there, I put together a title that would appeal to someone searching for these types of violins. All this to say, think like they think, and the sale will follow.

### Rule #2—Avoid !!!!\$\$\$@@@

There are many schools of thought on this one. So, here's where I went to school: Do not use these annoying characters in your title. If you have space to burn, use it more wisely. I refuse to believe that you absolutely ran out of things to say about your item and had to resort to meaningless symbols. The argument is that these types of symbols bring attention to a title and draw in more buyers. This may be true, but at what expense?

If your title is too vague and includes all sorts of these useless characters, many buyers won't find your item in the first place. Use the space you have to include information the buyer will want to see. Even if it means not using keywords and including condition acronyms or model years, instead these

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

would be better than dollar signs, exclamation marks, and the like. Let's look at some examples.

*Bad Title:* !!!@@@Apple Soundtrack Software@@@!!!

*Better Title:* Apple Soundtrack Software MIB OSX music!!!

*Best Title:* Apple Soundtrack Software MIB OSX music royalty free loops

Look at all the additional information I was able to include that could be very important to a potential buyer. Even if the buyer wasn't looking for the Apple Soundtrack product, by searching on royalty free loops, he would come across my item and potentially jump all over it.

Bottom line—use the space you are given.

### Rule #3—Follow the Title Model

Reluctantly, Swifty gave up one of his most treasured tips. It's a tip he affectionately calls the Title Model. Here's how it works. Pretty much any item he posts follows a certain model or template that makes creating titles really easy. Here's what it includes:

**(manufacturer, type, model/title, condition, extra)**

OR

**(album name, band, format, condition, extra)**

Let's apply the Title Model system to the Solace CD I am selling. Here's what we would get as a title if I followed his line of thinking:

**(album name, band, format, condition, extra)**

**The Mirror, Solace, CD, Mint, Autographed Signed by band**

Hey! That was really easy and that title rocks. If you did a search for Solace CD on eBay, you would definitely come across mine.

Let's look at another example using the Title Model system. A couple of weeks back, Swifty was attempting to sell an 8-track player. Using his Title Model, he quickly strung together the following title:

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

(manufacturer, type, model/title, condition, extra)

**Panasonic, 8-track player, RS-80 US, VG, 10 free tapes**

Thanks Swifty. We all owe you one for that. Save yourself time and avoid all the common mistakes by using the Title Model for your musical items on eBay.

### **Rule #4—Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire**

Didn't your mom ever tell you that it's wrong to lie? Then why do people on eBay do it all the time? In fact, you may be lying without even knowing it. When you're creating a title for your item, if you ever feel the need to include words or phrases like "rare, hard to find, or priceless," think twice. Make sure the item really is one of those things before you include those words in your title. These are some of the most overused words on eBay, and in most cases they don't apply at all. Use the space wisely. Buyers are getting smarter and smarter and are able to detect when they are being misled or lied to. Keep your nose clean and your titles true, and sales will surely follow.

### **Rule #5—OOP MIB LOL WYSIWYG**

With a 55-character limitation, acronyms are truly welcome in your item title. Without overdoing it, acronyms can save you character space and allow you to say so much more.

As a general rule, Swifty and I use acronyms only for condition ratings. Most people are familiar with the more popular condition rating acronyms, and if they aren't, we simply define them within the description of our item. Never make up your own acronyms.

Table 15.1 describes acronyms you may want to use in your music-related item titles.

### **Rule #6—Completed Auction History**

What's stopping you from searching through completed auctions to see which titles worked best? Absolutely nothing. By viewing the completed auctions, you can check to see which items had the most bidders and then



**Table 15.1** Description of Commonly Used eBay Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
NR or N/R	No Reserve	NRFB	Never Removed From Box
OOP	Out Of Print/Production	NRFSB	Never Removed From Sealed Box
PP	PayPal	NW	Never Worn
BIN	Buy It Now	NWOT	New Without Tags
HTF	Hard To Find	NWT	New With Tags
MIB	Mint In Box	OB	Original Box
MISB	Mint In Sealed Box	OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
MIBP	Mint In Blister Pack	OF	Original Finish
MIMB	Mint In Mint Box	R	Reprint
MIMP	Mint In Mint Package	WOB	Writing On Back
MIP	Mint In Package	WOC	Writing On Cover
MOC	Mint On Card	WOF	Writing On Front
MOMC	Mint On Mint Card	WOR	Writing On Record
MONMC	Mint On Near Mint Card	U	Used
NIB	New In Box	PC	Poor Condition
NIP	New In Package	F	Fair Condition
NM	Near Mint	G	Good Condition
NOS	New Old Stock	VG	Very Good Condition
NP	Not Packaged	EX	Excellent Condition

see what kind of item title the seller used. There is a lot to learn from other members, so use the resources and tools that are available to help give you that edge.

Follow these six rules and you'll have item title success, which always leads to bids and more bids and ultimately—a sale!

## eBay's Item Title Faux-Pas

eBay has five rules that must be adhered to. If you stray, you are at risk of your auction being closed prematurely or membership termination, depending on the gravity of the offense. Let's review what eBay calls inappropriate for inclusion in an item title.

### Illegal Items for Sale

Titles that include any of the following words: prohibited, illegal, outlawed. If you plan on using a word that even hints to the legality of an item you're selling—don't. Keep your item titles on the up and up, and eBay will keep its nose out of your auctions.

**#\$^%&#^\$@**

Any profane or obscene language that finds its way into your auction item title will be immediately removed. Sure, it may get your item some attention, but what good is an item that gets shut down fast? When in doubt, say it a different way. And don't try to get tricky by using symbols instead of the real thing (d@mn, sh!t, and so on). eBay's filters are extremely thorough and will find you. Believe me—they will find you.

### www.auction-closed.com

Keep website URLs, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers out of your titles as well. You are selling an item on eBay, not your own store outside of the eBay umbrella. By pointing people to other sites, e-mail addresses, or phone numbers, you are buying yourself a one-way ticket to Yahoo! Auctions. Don't say you weren't warned.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## What Is It?

eBay frowns upon those item titles that don't really tell you what the item is. Not much more to say on this one. Why would someone do this, I wonder? Hmmmmm.

## Name Drop, Bait and Switch

If you aren't selling a certain brand, don't include that brand name in your item title. Sellers will sometimes do this to lure unsuspecting buyers to their listing, hoping that once they get there they will bid on their item.

Here's how this one works. A seller is selling a Yamaha electric guitar. Here's what the item title looks like:

Yamaha Electric Guitar Not Fender Gibson Ibanez Dean

Do you get it? If I were searching for a Gibson electric guitar, I would get this item title. Luckily, eBay feels the same way I do about this type of practice—goodbye, Yamaha man!

## Choose a Listing Option

Once I clicked on the Continue button after selecting the appropriate category—CDs—for the Solace CD I was selling, I was confronted with the screen shown in Figure 15.1. It displays the Choose a Listing Option page where I am asked to enter a UPC, album title, or artist name to help me create my listing. This screen appears only for certain items you may be selling, such as music CDs and cassettes. After trying on all three counts, the Solace CD did not appear as an option. Instead I clicked on the Continue button so I could list the standard way.

## Describe Your Item

Here's where we actually enter the information discussed so far in this chapter. I now enter the title we developed earlier for the Solace CD. Figure 15.2 shows the completed section of this page with the new title already entered in the Item Title section.

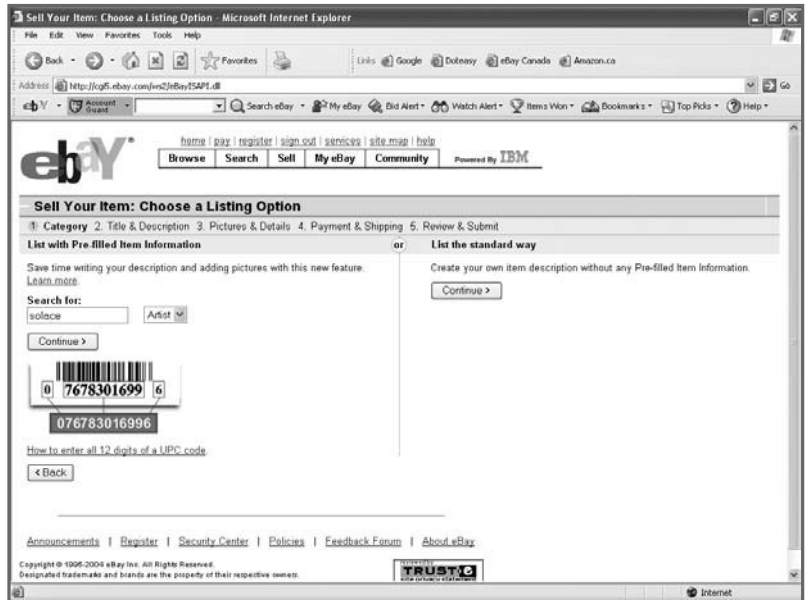


Figure 15.1

Enter a UPC, album title, or artist name to help you create your listing.

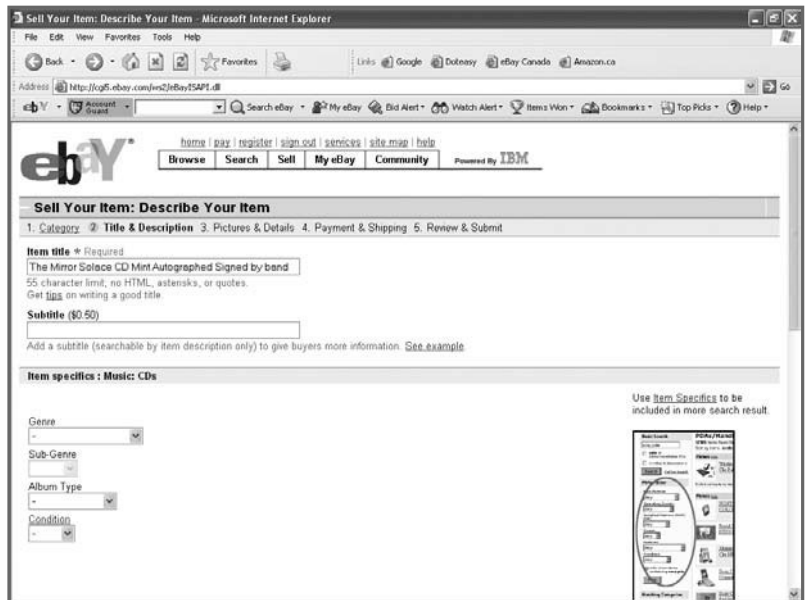


Figure 15.2

Solace item title entered in the Item Title text field.

## Subtitles

Subtitles? Why didn't you tell me about that earlier? Can you imagine? That means I can add an additional 55 characters to my item title! How can you go wrong with that? Swifty was quick to explain this dubious feature. For an extra 50 cents, eBay will give you the opportunity to add a subtitle to your listing title. You would think that this would increase your chances of being found through normal search methods, but unfortunately this is not the case. Subtitles are searchable by item description only. To remind you, this means that the searcher would have to enable the Search Title and Description option to hit your subtitle keywords.

On the other hand, if your item title is good enough, people will see your item with all the other results. If you have a subtitle, it may be the extra push a potential buyer needs to click on your item before anyone else's. It's hard to pass judgment on this feature because it really depends on what you're selling. If you can't possibly include everything you need in the item title, use the Subtitle feature to give it that extra punch. Otherwise, you should be fine bypassing this feature.

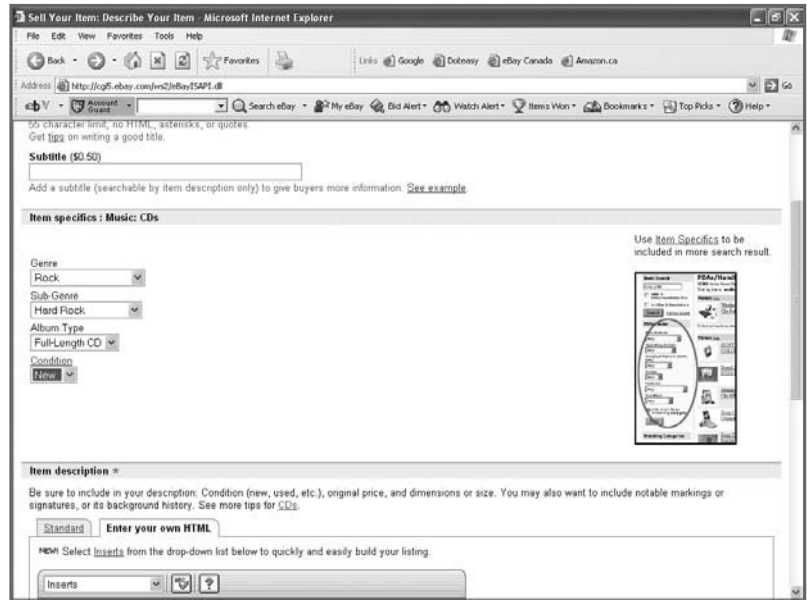
## Item Specifics

In the Item Specifics section of the Describe Your Item page, you are given the option to select from three different drop-down menus. These drop-down menus allow you to further describe your item with standardized details that make your item a lot easier to find. Not all items you sell on eBay will have an Item Specifics section, but for Music CDs, you will see drop-down menus for Genre, Subgenre, Album type, and Condition.

If you choose to use the Item Specifics feature, CD browsers will be able to search by one of those attribute types and come across your item.

Figure 15.3 displays the Item Specifics section with my entries for the Solace CD.

I am well on my way to posting this item for sale on eBay. I can already taste the bids coming my way!



**Figure 15.3**

Item Specifics for the Solace CD—makes finding your item easier!

## Item Descriptions

A lot of the rules stated for creating item titles also apply here. Creating an item description is virtually a blank sheet of paper, where you can advertise and promote your item to your heart's content. Here are some additional rules that you should adhere to when designing your item descriptions.

### Be Organized

The structure of your item description needs to be neat and clean. I'm sure you've come across many a page where you have no idea if you're coming or going. The page is full of terms and conditions and little relevant content, and everything is all over the place. Organize your content in a logical way and you'll see a lot more bidding activity on that item. Look at it this way: The more organized your item description appears, the more organized you appear as a seller. Buyers like dealing with organized sellers. Organized sellers are usually reliable sellers. Remember that.

In creating our item description for the Solace CD, I decided on a structure ahead of time. Swifty typically creates his description in a word processor or web application outside of eBay. Once he has the content and structure he likes, he copies it over to his listing on eBay. There is so much more editing and formatting power in a word processor that it just makes sense to do it that way—not to mention higher-end spell- and grammar-checking capability.

The structure we decided on for the Solace CD is as follows:

- album photo
- band name
- CD title
- features, i.e. autographs
- CD synopsis
- track listings
- band history
- reviews
- shipping and payment details
- accepted payment methods

Once I had all that information in place, the rest was as easy as plugging it in.

## Anticipate the Question

As I've mentioned, always do your best to anticipate the question a buyer could ask about the item you are selling and include the answers in your description. Makes sense, doesn't it? A great way to keep your facts straight and anticipate possible questions is to review the original manufacturer's listings on its own website. I am not encouraging you to copy their content into your listing, but you can always get a good idea as to what's important based on how the manufacturer promotes its item.

For example, I buy a lot of music CDs on eBay. Questions that always come to mind when I'm browsing through the thousands for sale are

- What condition is the CD in?
- What are the track listings?

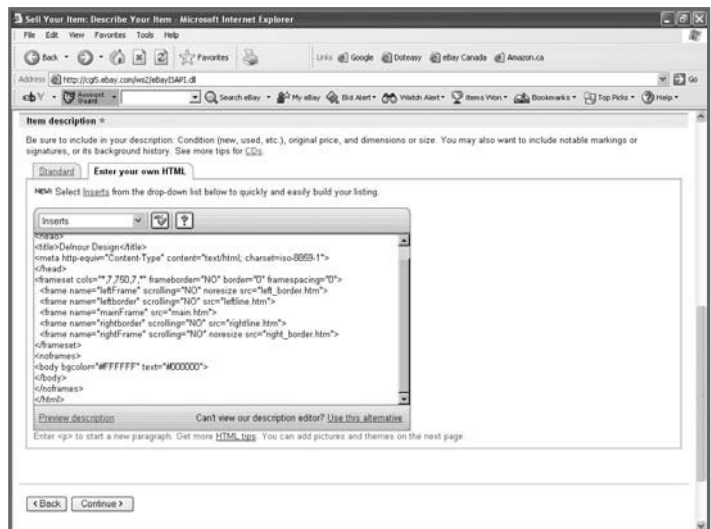
**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

- Is it sealed?
- Is this the real CD or a burned copy?
- What condition is the case in?

With that said, I better include the answers to those questions in my description. Some of those obviously slipped by me based on my structure outline I created in the previous example. I've still got some work to do, but I'm close.

## To HTML or Not

Believe it or not, and contrary to what you're probably being told, you don't need a really crazy, high-end, flashy listing page to get business. In fact, I've sometimes heard the opposite. To get those flashy pages, you need to know how to use HTML or a web design application. If you know what you're doing, more power to you. If you aren't exactly web savvy, use the formatting tools available and create your listing your way. If the information is there and people want what you're selling, then your item will sell. Colors, sounds, and movies will not convince someone to buy one item or another. It's all about the information—laid out in a structured, professional, and honest way. Figure 15.4 shows the HTML view of creating your item description. If you have HTML code created in another application, you can copy it and paste it into this built-in editor window.



**Figure 15.4**

HTML view for creating your item descriptions.



## Expose Your Flaws

There's nothing more honest than admitting there's a flaw in your item. If your item is perfect, then by all means don't lie and say there's a problem. But if your item does have an issue of some sort, expose it—in your item description area. Even if the flaw is small, by admitting it, the potential buyer is drawn to your honesty. It gives the buyer a sense of trust.

## Keyword Yourself to Death

Swifty strongly recommends creating a keyword list for the item you are selling. What are some of the words that instantly come to mind for the item on the selling block? For example, let's look at the keyword list Swifty created for the framed *Grease* movie poster he sold a couple of days ago.

- Grease
- Grease is the word
- Greased Lightening
- T-birds
- Pink Ladies
- movie poster
- frame
- framed poster
- photo
- film poster

Once he had his list put together, he ran it by his wife for a second opinion. Sure enough, she had some to add:

- John Travolta
- Olivia Newton-John

Now with a complete list on hand, Swifty included as many as he could in his item description. Let's look at what he put together.

*Grease is the Word! Greased Lightening! Sound familiar?*

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

*Do those words take you back to the days of the T-Birds and Pink Ladies? If you're a big fan of the movie Grease and its stars, John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John, then this framed film poster is for you!*

*This photo-quality print is encased behind a very sturdy wooden frame with glass front. There are absolutely no scuffs on the glass or frame. You are bidding on a mint condition, framed piece of movie memorabilia.*

The description also listed the poster's measurements, payment methods, and more. Swifty was easily able to include his keywords in his description and in the process ensure that if someone were searching with the Search Title and Description option enabled, they would find his item.

For the Solace CD, I came up with the following keywords:

- Solace
- rock 'n' roll
- rock band
- The Mirror
- Nosferatu
- Money Man
- Soldier
- music CD
- autographed
- signed
- Certificate of Authenticity (COA)
- Ottawa
- Canadian
- Canada

I was primed about creating my description. Swifty had more to say, though.

## **Fluff Alert**

Avoid the fluff and stay real. What does that mean? It means avoid the used car salesman approach and deliver the goods straight, minus the flowery

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

expressions and jargon. It's easy to get caught up in the marketing and promote your item until the cows come home, but a lot of buyers will be turned off by this approach. As long as you remember to always be professional and include only what is relevant, then you shouldn't have any problem getting people to bid on your item.

## **Guaranteed or Your Money Back**

How many times have you heard that before? The reason you hear and see it so often is because it's really important. If you stand behind the items you sell, you shouldn't have any problem including a guarantee in your listings. It just further reinforces your credibility as an honest seller.

## **Spelling errors**

Do I have to go through this again? Please ensure that your descriptions are free from errors. Use the spell checker available, or better yet, use another application like WordPerfect or Microsoft Word to type your descriptions. There you can spell check and grammar check to ensure there are no errors. Remember that buyers tend to move away from listings that contain errors, fearing that this sloppy attention to detail may be transferred to their buying transaction experience.

## **Shipping It on Out**

Your item description should also include your shipping details. Typically, you should include the shipping rate for North America and international. Buyers want to know up front what it's going to cost them to have the item shipped to their door. If the buyer lives in the same country, you should be able to offer a rate in your description that is fair. For international buyers, you are better off asking them to contact you for further information regarding rates. Last but not least, eBay offers shipping calculators that you can include in your listing that allow buyers to calculate their own shipping rates. More to come on this topic in Chapter 18, "Payment, Shipping, Review, and Submit."

## Terms and Conditions

It is imperative that you include terms and conditions in your listings—if you have some. There is such a thing as overkill when it comes to these, but within reason, they can be very important. For example, if you prefer to deal only with buyers with positive feedback, include it here. If you prefer that winning bidders contact you no more than three days after auction close, include it here. This is also where you include your guarantees and money back terms.

## Payment Methods Accepted

Although you will be asked to include this information again in a later step in the process, it is still important to speak your piece here, too. What payment methods do you accept? If you've been reading this book straight through, then you already know that the more methods you offer, the better. If you offer PayPal or credit card payments, mention them here. If you don't deal with personal checks or money orders, include this in the item description. Swifty always includes the following text, which I will now use, too:

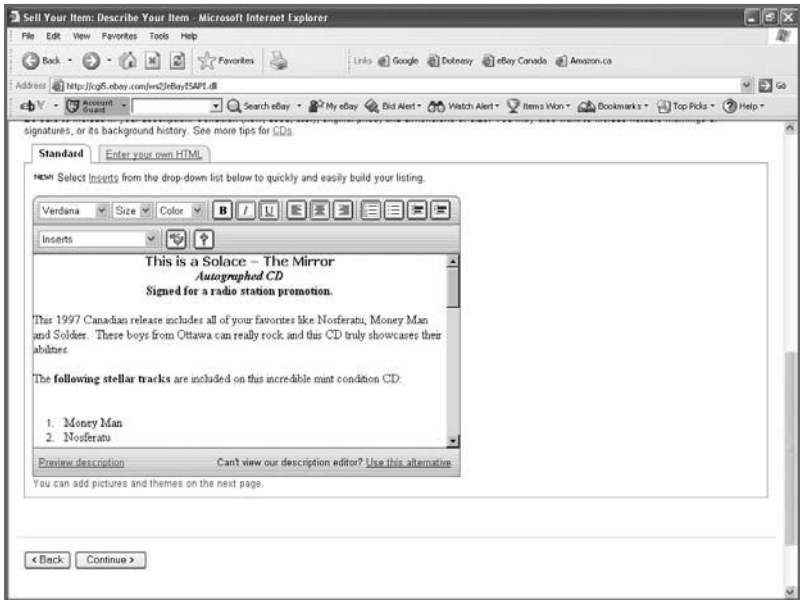
### **Prompt payment receives same day shipping.**

It seems to work for him. Thanks for the tip, Swifty.

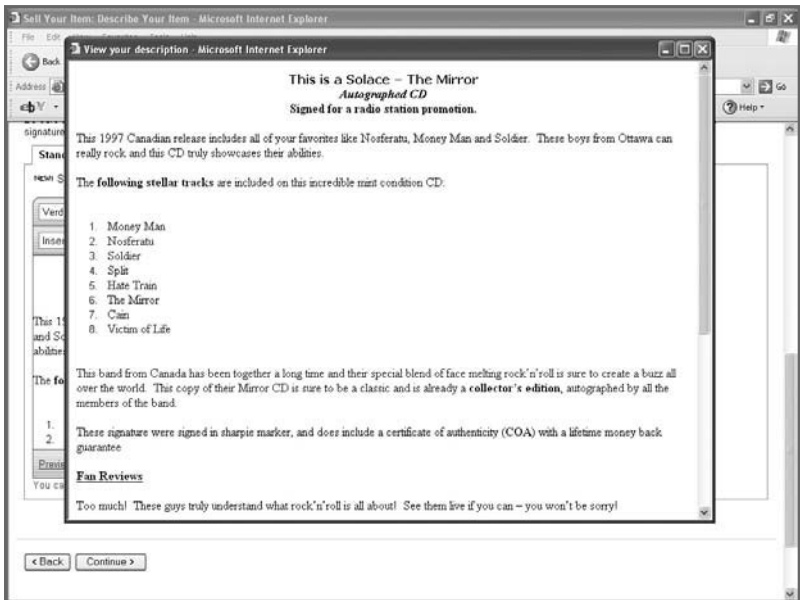
With this information in hand and mind, I proceed to create the item description for the Solace CD. Figure 15.5 displays the Item Description page with my content included.

Using the formatting tools available, I do what I can to liven things up a little. Once I have my information exactly the way I want it, I click on the Preview Description link, as shown in Figure 15.6.

Happy with what I saw, I am ready to move to the next chapter on pricing and auction durations.



**Figure 15.5**  
Item Description page with the Solace content included.



**Figure 15.6**  
Item description in Preview mode!

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 16



## Auction Details Defined

---

Did you wonder when we were going to cover this stuff? How do you price your item so you don't scare anyone away? What is a reserve price? Should you set one? Does Buy It Now seem to be the way to go but you're just not sure? How long do you want your auction to last? How do you go about selling 50 items at once? How do you pick the item location? Is it automatically set to where you live? So many questions, so little time. Wait a minute! We have lots of time. In this chapter, we will look at pricing, auction durations, item quantities, and setting your item location.

### Price It

---

Isn't setting pricing as easy as your costs plus margin? Doesn't the same thing apply on eBay? Well, it does, sort of. Look at the typical item selling on eBay. Fooled you. There is no typical item selling on eBay. Let's try that again. If you look at a particular item selling on eBay, you can most likely get an idea of what it is selling for by searching the web for something comparable if not the same. If you use the values you find as the cost number, and then add your margin, you've got your item price. Unfortunately though, it's not that easy. This is eBay. eBay is an auction site. You need a pricing strategy that works in an auction scenario.

## Hot Ticket Items

How do you know if you have a hot ticket item? Why would you care? Knowing if you have a hot ticket item is the best way to determine which pricing strategy you should use on eBay. Here's the best way to figure it out. Using eBay's search capabilities, covered in detail in Chapter 4, "Seek and You Shall Find," search for your item in completed auctions. Here are some things you should look for:

- **100 or More.** Are there more than 100 valid results returned? If yes, you've got yourself a hot ticket item.
- **Win or Lose.** From those results, what percentage actually had bids? If 75 percent or more were bid on, move ahead two spaces. Oops, wrong book. If 75 percent or more were bid on, you've still got yourself a hot ticket item.
- **Cost of doing business.** Look at how much you paid for the item you are selling. Now, look at the winning bids across all those results. Create a chart if you have to. What is the average winning bid amount? Is it lower or higher than the price you paid for the item? If the amount is only slightly higher than what you paid, then it still may be a hot ticket item, but not when you're selling it. If the amount is lower than what you paid, don't bother listing this item—it's a loser and you know it. If the amount is substantially higher than what you paid—what are you waiting for? Get out there and sell, sell, sell!

## Pricing Strategies

Here are some pricing strategies that aren't that complicated. In fact, they're so easy to understand, they may be downright insulting.

### Pricing Strategy #1: eBay—How Low Can You Go?

Like the title says, aim low. If you are selling a hot ticket item, then start the bidding off low. People will jump in because the price is attractive and stick around until the bids exceed their max. But, in a lot of cases, these curious



bidders will return to the scene of the crime just to see the action. Drawn into the fray, they sometimes bid again, against their better judgment. Starting low gets people interested in what you are selling. That's all that matters with this strategy. The more people who bid on the way up, the better.

## **Pricing Strategy #2: Reserve the Right to Reserve**

Something to keep in mind: If your item is not a hot ticket item, you may need a different strategy. Doing the appropriate amount of research, as discussed in the "Hot Ticket Items" section of this chapter, will ensure that you get a good idea of what people are willing to pay for your item. If it's not a very popular item, but still an item that receives favorable amounts of bidding, the following strategy may work for you.

Let's say, after doing some research, you determine that people are willing to spend up to \$50 on the item you are selling. It cost you \$35 dollars to buy the item in the first place. That would make a difference of \$15 between the two prices—right? Wrong. You cannot overlook the costs of doing business on eBay. When you factor in the eBay fees and the PayPal fees, you're now looking at around a \$10 difference between the two prices. For more detail on eBay's fee structure, please read Chapter 18, "Payment, Shipping, Review, and Submit." I also recommend you consult PayPal's help section to get a better idea of how their fees can affect your bottom line.

The lowest price should be \$40. That's a pretty scary starting bid. Most bidders won't touch it unless it is an exceptionally rare or sought-after item. The other option you have is to set a reserve price on this item.

A reserve price is the lowest price at which you're willing to sell your item. If the bidding doesn't hit your previously assigned reserve price, no one wins, and you get to keep your item. However, many people do not like to bid on reserve auctions. Many feel there are no deals to be had on reserve auctions and they are pretty much wasting their time—especially since the reserve price is hidden from the bidders. They have to keep bidding on your item until the Reserve Has Not Been Met message disappears from the listing. That can be aggravating for a potential buyer. And you are charged an extra fee for running a reserve auction. Fees will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 17 and 18.

If you set a reserve price, it is common to not see much activity during the actual auction run. Oftentimes, the vulture types wait to see if the reserve price is met and, if so, determine if it is worth bidding on.

Personally, I stay away from reserve auctions. I don't use them as a seller, and I don't bid on them as a buyer. Bidding gives me a rush. Bidding on an item where there's a minimum price kills that buzz instantly. Keep this in mind when using reserve pricing. I'm not alone with these feelings.

### **Pricing Strategy #3: Will You Please Buy It Now?**

Another bidding strategy involves setting your auction as a Buy It Now listing. In effect, you've eliminated the whole bidding process and are allowing people to buy your item at a set price that you've determined. How can you go wrong with this strategy? Think about it. In our last example, you realized that you would lose money if your item sold at a price lower than \$40. Using the Buy It Now feature, you can set your price at \$45, still \$5 cheaper than what people are willing to pay, and make a profit of \$5. There's no negotiating. There's no bidding. It's an open and shut auction. You set the price for the eBay world to see. The buyer hits the Buy It Now button, and your listing ends.

This strategy will work only if the price you've set is reasonably lower than what people are willing to spend. If someone selling the same item has a starting bid of \$9.99 and your item is set at \$45, who do you think that buyer will go to? Well, it all depends. If that buyer is in a hurry and needs the item right away, a Buy It Now auction is the way to go. You play the odds using this feature.

By the way, the Buy It Now feature is available only to sellers with a minimum feedback rating of 10 or who are ID Verified. Many sellers choose to become ID Verified to boost buyer confidence. A 3<sup>rd</sup> party organization working with eBay retrieves that seller's contact information and runs it through consumer and business databases to ensure the seller is legitimate. Once the seller is cleared by this company, he is given the ID Verified stamp of approval. Last but not least, I would also be remiss if I didn't tell you that there is a small fee to use the Buy It Now feature in your listings (which will be discussed in Chapter 18).

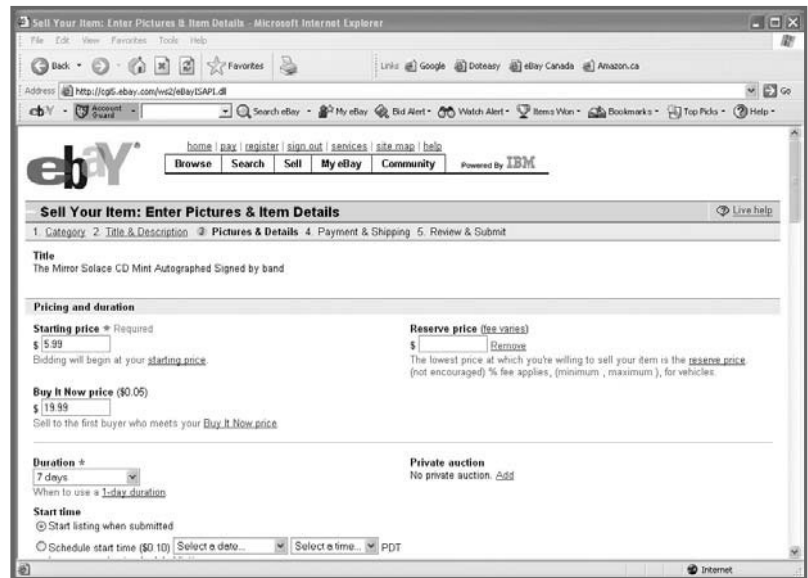
## Pricing Strategy #4: Bid and Buy It Now

That's right, kids, the two can exist together. With this pricing strategy, you are given the option of presenting a starting bid as well as the option of setting a Buy It Now price. In the example we discussed earlier, you could set a Buy It Now price at \$45 and also start the bidding at \$9.99. For those people who love the bidding experience, the starting price is low enough that you will get some bites. For those people who are in a rush and know a deal when they see one, they can jump all over your Buy It Now price and make the purchase. Obviously, this strategy does not eliminate the fact that your auction could sell a lot lower than you want it to. Starting your bidding price at \$9.99 is risky on a non-hot ticket item. Depending on the item, you will have to make the decision as to what starting price makes you comfortable. Sometimes you have to take a risk, but always make sure you do research beforehand. It is also important to note that once a bid is entered on an item that also offers Buy It Now pricing, the Buy It Now pricing is disabled and regular auction play resumes. So once a bid is entered, the Buy It Now option is no longer available.

## Solace CD Pricing Strategy

For the Solace CD I'm selling, I had to make a decision about the price. I knew this was not a hot ticket item but nevertheless interesting to certain buyers. After doing a Completed Items search on eBay, results did turn up, but none that were autographed by the band. That told me that my item was unique and could potentially fetch me somewhat more than what buyers were currently paying. I also looked at my costs. This CD was given to me for free, so my only real costs were for the listing on eBay and PayPal fees. I could start pretty low on this item, but going too low would take away from its perceived value. Swifty made some suggestions.

We put in a starting bid of \$5.99. At this price, people will feel comfortable bidding and potentially up my traffic. I also set a Buy It Now price of \$19.99, as shown in Figure 16.1. Based on my research, people were willing to pay \$12 for the Solace CD—minus the band signatures. With those autographs, I'm going on the assumption that people will pay more. It is a risk, but I took it nonetheless. The suspense is killing me. I can't wait to see what happens when I actually list this item for sale on eBay.



**Figure 16.1**

Entering a start bid amount and a Buy It Now price for the Solace CD.

## Duration Choices

If you look at the available options for duration, you can choose from five time frames. They are 1-, 3-, 5-, 7-, and 10-day auctions. What makes one more attractive than the other? Let's look at each in detail.

### 1-Day Auction

If you are new to eBay, this option is probably not for you. The more seasoned vets like this one because it allows them to get in and out quickly and on to their next listing. You would also use this duration for any items that have a short shelf-life, such as event tickets, food, and tee times. For music sellers, the 1-day auction can come in handy during the holidays. For example, it's two days before Valentine's Day and you're selling Barry White CDs. By setting up a 1-day auction, you are sure to get more bids from those guys who forgot to do something special for their partners. If you time the auction properly, just before special occasions, you're bound to get those last-minute shoppers placing bids and hoping for a deal. Again, though, you must have at least 10 feedback points or be ID Verified to hold a 1-day auction. Sorry, guys.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

### 3-, 5-, and 7-Day Auctions

I've grouped these three durations together because they all cost the same amount—zilch. There are no additional costs to list a 3-, 5-, or 7-day auction. Depending on the day of the month, you may choose to strategically pick one duration over another. In my opinion, always use the longest duration you can. In this case it would be the 7-day auction. The more time it's listed, the more exposure your item is getting. It makes sense to me. How about you? We'll talk more about timing your auctions a little later in this chapter.

### 10-Day Auctions

You'll really get some great exposure with a 10-day listing. There are definitely things to consider, though, when using this duration choice. Is 10 days too long? There are different schools of thought on this, so here's my take: Yes. Swifty tells me that when bidding on an item, many people get frustrated by long wait times. It can be really intimidating and stressful to bid on an item on day 1, and then have to wait nine more days as people continue to bid on that item and raise the price higher and higher. Great for the seller. Not so great for the buyer. Being that this is a chapter for the seller, you would think that how a buyer feels would be irrelevant. Well, in this case, it could reduce the number of people who bid on your auction. It's really hard to say.

On the other hand, as I mentioned, the longer the auction plays out, the more exposure your item gets. Also, you have to ask yourself why eBay would charge the seller extra for a 10-day auction duration. Maybe they see the value. You'll have to make the call on this one. You know where I stand.

## Start Me Up

---

You have two choices when you are deciding the start date for your auction.

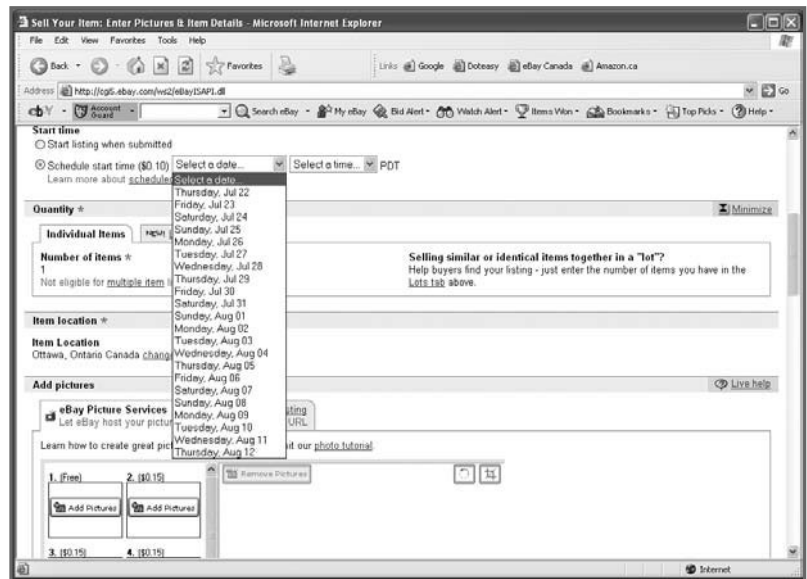
### Immediately

You can select the option to have your item go live the moment you submit your listing to eBay. How's that for service? Going with this option is free and is the most popular option.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Schedule a Start Time

If you have a valid credit card on file with eBay, you can also choose to select a start time, as shown in Figure 16.2, instead of having the listing go live immediately. Why would you want to delay or select a different date to post your listing? There's no better time than the present—right? Again, I am sorry to say—wrong!



**Figure 16.2**

Schedule a start time for your listing, as opposed to it going live immediately after it's submitted.

## Weekends

If you are running a 10-day auction, many people will purposely list on a Thursday or Friday so that the auction goes over two different weekends. As you can probably guess, weekends are big on eBay. Timing your auction so that the end date falls on the weekend is a very good idea. With all those extra people online, you've just increased your chances that you'll get an even better price for your item.

## Morning or Afternoon

The debate rages on when it comes to ending your auctions in the morning or evening hours. Let's think about this logically. If you start your 5-day auction at 9AM EST, five days later, the auction will end at 9AM EST. That means that the entire Pacific coast is potentially asleep when your auction ends. There are also people (like me) who believe that most eBayers browse in the mornings but make their bidding and purchasing decisions at night when they are home from work. This just reinforces the need to time your auctions so that they end at night rather than in the morning.

## The eBay Months

Are certain months hotter than others on eBay? Well, we can say that any month that holds a major holiday is pretty hot. Let's look at Christmas. Selling music CDs before and after Christmas will probably get you a lot of bids. Before Christmas, everyone is snatching them up as gifts for loved ones. After Christmas, everyone is buying them for the new CD players received as gifts. Slow months are notoriously summer time—mainly due to vacation schedules. eBay activity never truly dies at any point of the year, but things have been known to slow down during this time.

## Your Schedule

It's really easy to overlook the most obvious of issues when planning a start time and date for your auction. What about you? What about your schedule? If the perfect time to list your item falls on a day when you can't be home to do it, then scheduling the date ahead of time would make more sense for you. Although there is an additional fee to schedule a start time sometime in the future, it definitely has its place, depending on your situation and business strategy.

For my Solace CD I decided that with no major holidays anywhere in site and a weekend three days away, I would list my item as a 5-day auction, starting immediately (so I don't incur any additional fees). This means that my auction will start and end at night and will close over a weekend. That's the plan, and I'm sticking to it.

## Private Rooms

---

Sounds intriguing doesn't it? eBay gives you the option of conducting a private auction for your item. It's probably not what you think, though. Sellers who use this feature allow bidders to shield their user IDs from other bidders for that item. Therefore, user IDs will not be visible during the auction duration in either the listing or in the bid history. Only the seller can see who the winning bidder is at auction end.

eBay does not encourage the use of this option unless there is a very good reason for using it. Personally, I think it's ideal for those auctions where the item for sale may be somewhat embarrassing. Keeping my identity anonymous sure is sweet when I'm bidding on a New Kids on the Block Donnie Wahlberg figure for my collection.

## A Lot of Quantity

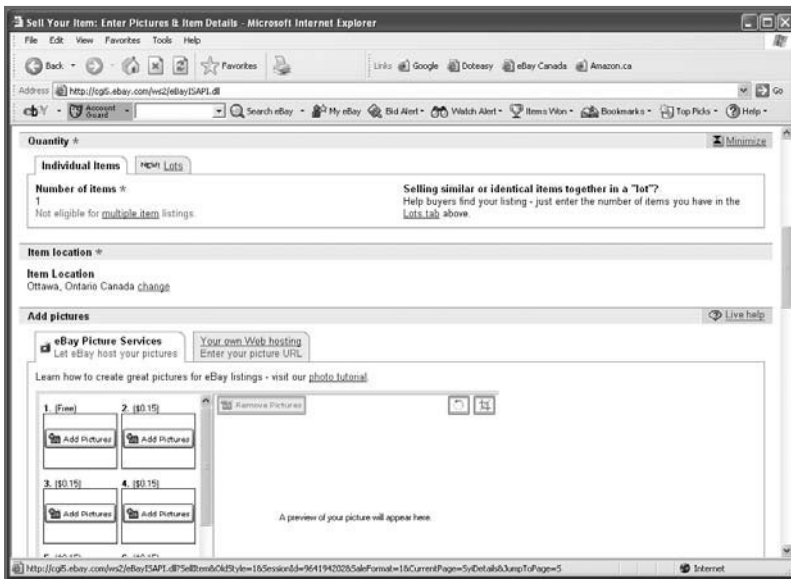
---

As shown in Figure 16.3, there are also features available that assist you in selling multiples of your item. You have three choices here—all of which can be ignored, depending on your preferences. The best way to bring these features home is to use examples to describe each option.

### Online Auction

Let's say you have ten promotional copies of a signed Kurt Cobain photograph. Your hope is to list this item on eBay and let everyone know that you have ten copies. Using the Online Auction option, buyers can bid on a per unit price and then decide how many units of that item they want to buy. Therefore, if a potential buyer wanted to buy three copies, he may bid at \$10 with a quantity of 3. The Total Bid Value of this bid would be \$30. In order to beat this bidder, another buyer would have to submit a higher Total Bid Value to pull ahead. For example, someone bidding for 2 units at \$20 would become the high bidder on this item with a Total Bid Value of \$40. If this bidder were to win the auction, he would owe the seller \$40 for the two copies of the photograph. The remaining eight units would not be sold and could be relisted by the seller.



**Figure 16.3**

Selling multiples of an item is easy using these listing options.

## Fixed Price

Using the same example, this seller could set a fixed price per unit for this Kurt Cobain photograph. Therefore, depending on the quantity requested, a buyer would multiply the fixed price specified by that quantity number. The listing would remain active until either the auction duration expired or the photograph quantities were depleted.

## Lots

Using this same example, this seller could sell all ten of the Kurt Cobain signed photographs as one lot. Bidders would bid on all ten signed photographs and the winner would take home the entire set of photographs.

## Item Location

At no extra cost, eBay will provide your listing with additional visibility by allowing you to list where your item is located. In most cases, this location will be where you live and ship your item from. When eBay buyers sort or

filter their search results by distance from their location, your item will be displayed, depending on the parameters requested.

This is especially useful when a buyer prefers dealing locally. In those cases, depending on where you live, your location will be recognized and bid on for that reason.

We are moving along quite nicely through the selling process. On our next stop, we are going to look at improving the visibility of our listings and including great photos.

# chapter 17



## Pix & Trix—Getting Your Listing to Stand Out

---

How important do you think photographs are to your item listing? In this chapter, we will look at this very important question and cover in detail the best photos to take, how to take them, and finally, how to place them in your listings. We'll also look at the different ways you can make your listings stand out from the rest. Keep your hands on your wallet for this chapter. This is where the fees can really begin stacking up if you're not careful. Don't worry, though. We're here to help.

### Is a Picture Necessary?

---

There isn't much debate around this question, but it's always a fun one to ask. The answer is a resounding "absolutely." A picture is extremely important to your item listing. You might as well throw in the towel now if you're not planning on including at least one photo with your ad. People buy what they can see. Would you purchase something without seeing it first? Most people won't, so do your auction a favor, and make sure you include a photograph.

### Cams and Scans

---

For the new member, getting photos on to eBay may seem like a challenge. It really shouldn't be. Believe it or not, uploading is the easy part. Making sure you take good photographs is the real nut to crack. You pretty much have two options for getting your pictures on eBay.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Digital Camera

If you don't have a digital camera by now, I strongly recommend you make the purchase.

They are relatively inexpensive, and you really don't need anything too fancy. Many people mistakenly believe that a high-end digital camera is necessary to take good pictures. Entry-level cameras take exceptional photographs that are perfectly suited for eBay.

Point, shoot, upload, and you're done. In terms of efficiency, digital cameras take the prize.

## Scanner

You can also use a scanner to get your images on eBay. With your non-digital camera, you take a picture of your item, develop the film, scan the photograph, and then upload the image file. Although the process takes longer than with a digital camera, using a scanner is just as effective.

On the other hand, non-digital camera users also have the option of taking their film to a photo shop where their pictures can be placed on a CD. This is a viable option for those people not willing to purchase a digital camera or scanner.

## The Right Kinds of Photographs

Regardless of how you get your images to the web, taking pictures with a camera is always the starting point in the process. There are the right kind of photographs and the wrong kind of photographs to include with your listings. I pulled together my panel of experts and collected all their tips on taking the best kinds of photographs for eBay listings.

## Focus on the Item

Seem obvious? I would think so. As you can see in Figure 17.1, this item is clearly out of focus. Learn to use your camera properly and focus directly on the object. Fuzzy or blurry images are not better than no image at all.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

People are suspicious of blurry images because they feel the seller is trying to hide something. If you aren't strong with a camera, get someone who is to help you with your pictures.



**Figure 17.1**

Too fuzzy—what are you hiding?

## Take Many

eBay offers one free picture with each listing. Although generous, it's not enough. At least two photos should be included for your item. Think angles. If you're selling a music DVD, for example, take pictures of it from the front and back. If the case has been opened, take a photograph of the actual DVD itself. The more pictures you take, the better.

## Avoid Clutter

Have you seen those pictures where the item is surrounded by all sorts of debris, plates, crazy wallpaper, and the pet dog? Keep the area around the item clean and clear when taking your shots. You don't want anything to distract the buyer from the item for sale. In addition, if other items are present in the photograph, you may confuse the buyer into thinking more than the one item is for sale in the listing. (See Figure 17.2 as an example.) This can open up a whole other can of worms. Achieve a higher level of professionalism with buyers by ensuring your images are free of clutter and confusion.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 17.2**

Keep your item front and center in a photo and remove all clutter.

## Size Does Matter

Not everyone has access to high-speed Internet. For those people who don't, large image files can create slow page views. What does this mean to someone like you? Well, if you're a seller and you want people to bid on your item, you've just alienated a large population of people because your images are too big and slow. Bottom line—keep your image file sizes small.

When people take pictures with digital cameras, they sometimes set the resolution at its highest level. This is not necessary. All digital cameras offer several resolution settings. My panel agrees that 640×480 is ideal for eBay. Images taken at this resolution usually fall between 30 and 60KB, which is a very manageable file size. Do yourself and potential buyers a favor by reducing the resolution settings on your camera; your Item page will come up quicker and ultimately get more bids.

## Light It Up

When staging your item for a photograph, always ensure that you have proper lighting. Many will suggest taking your item outside and taking

shots on a cloudy day. Or, if you're shooting indoors, set up some artificial lighting sources to ensure your item isn't too dark. To avoid glares in your photographs, as shown in Figure 17.3, make sure your light source is not above your item. Good lighting will produce images with nice, crisp detail. That's what you want to see on eBay.



**Figure 17.3**

Avoid glares in your photographs.

## JPG

You'll want to pay special attention to the file format you are saving your images in. When you scan an image into scanning software, you are always given the choice as to what format you want to use. Same rules apply for digital cameras and their associated software. The format of choice is one called JPG (jpeg). This format is universally accepted on the web, compressed, and small in file size. Using this format for your eBay images will help speed up your page display time and keep bidders happy in the process. Although other formats are allowed, as a general rule, the JPG format is awesome for photographs.

## Show All Flaws

Does your item have any flaws? Small scratch in the corner? Small tear in the sleeve? Let the bidder know by including a photograph like the one in Figure 17.4. This is a close-up photo of a scuff mark on a black Yamaha acoustic guitar. Obviously, this shouldn't be the only photo you include or no one will buy your item. Mention the flaw in more detail in the item description text as well. This type of honest, up front behavior goes a long way on eBay. By including photographs and admitting to flaws, you establish credibility and build item confidence.



**Figure 17.4**

Scuff on a guitar. Show close-ups of any flaws and build buyer confidence in your item.

## Using Photo-Editing Software

There are several applications on the market that allow you to photo edit your images, including:

- Corel PHOTO-PAINT
- Adobe Photoshop
- JASC Paint Shop Pro
- ACDSec



Most of the applications listed offer a free trial version available for download from their websites. I recommend downloading a copy and giving it a test run before making a purchase.

Generally speaking, photo editing is not looked upon favorably on eBay. This is especially true if your goal is to change what the item really looks like. For example, a seller can take pictures of his item, import the files into a photo editor, and then erase any defects or flaws that item may have. Figure 17.5 shows a photograph of a guitar case. This case in particular has a lot of visible scuffs on the bottom.



**Figure 17.5**

Scuffed up guitar case.

To prove just how easy it is to doctor an image, I took this photograph into Corel PHOTO-PAINT for some retouching. Figure 17.6 displays the modified photograph of the guitar case looking absolutely brand new.

This is a very deceitful practice and is highly frowned upon in the eBay community.

On the other hand, if used properly, photo editors do have their place. The following list outlines just some of the ways you can use this type of software to improve your photos:

- lighten an image that is too dark
- crop out extraneous background and objects

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 17.6**

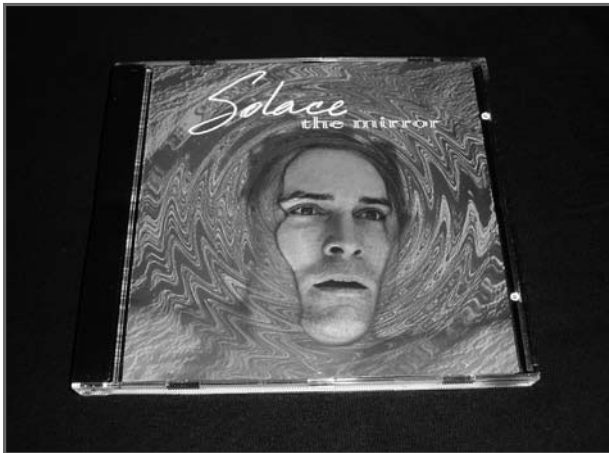
Retouched image doctored  
in Corel PHOTO-PAINT.

- sharpen an otherwise blurry image
- add a professional border to your image
- remove red eye
- resize an image
- change an image's file format
- rotate an image

## Inserting Pictures into Your Listing

Let's continue from where we left off in the previous chapter with respect to the Solace CD I am selling. The last thing we did was set a price and determine an auction duration and item location. The next step in the listing process is to add pictures. What a coincidence that we just finished learning all the ins and outs of taking great photographs!

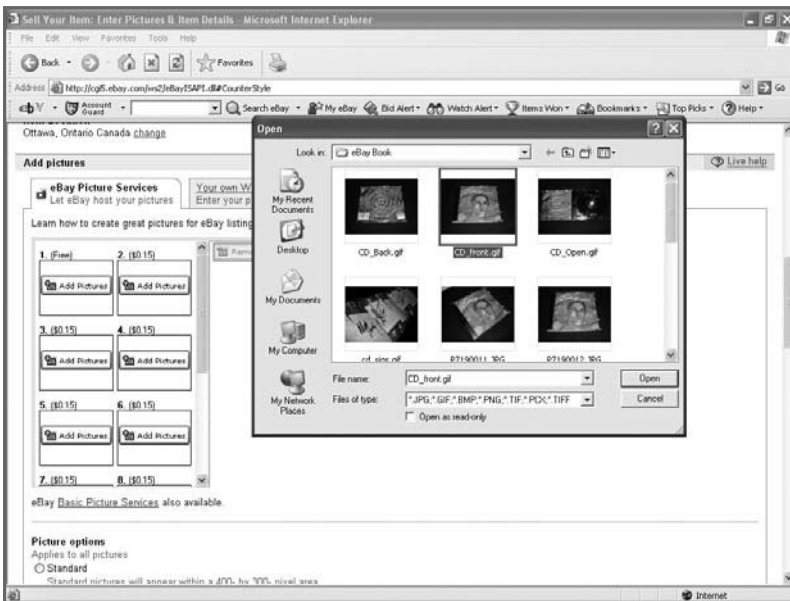
Using many of the tips listed in this chapter, I took four pictures of the Solace CD and the autographed insert. Figure 17.7 displays one of the pictures I took.



**Figure 17.7**

One of the photos I took of the Solace CD.

Now I am ready to upload the four images into my listing on eBay. In the Add Pictures section of the page, I click on the Add Pictures button in box 1. This is the free picture spot—paid by eBay. Figure 17.8 shows the Open dialog box, allowing me to search my hard drive for an image to upload.



**Figure 17.8**

Browsing for the images on my hard drive.

After some navigation, I find my first image, select it, and click on Open. Immediately, the image populates the small preview window, as shown in Figure 17.9. That was easy enough and, best of all, free of charge. I repeat the same steps to upload the remaining three images. Each additional image will cost me 15 cents, for a total of 45 cents.

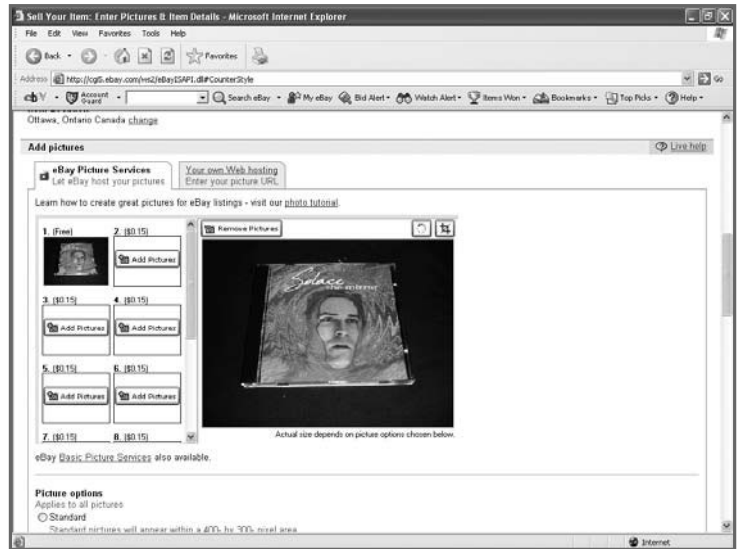


Figure 17.9

Previewing the images as I add them to my listing.

## Picture Options

Just when you thought you were done, eBay comes around the corner with some more features and options. With your pictures now uploaded, eBay provides several options as to how you can have your pictures displayed.

- **Standard.** By far the most popular, standard pictures are approximately 400 × 300 pixels. This one is free of charge. Figure 17.10 displays how this image layout will appear.
- **Supersize It.** If the pictures you're using are large in size, viewers can see them supersized up to 800 × 600 pixels. That's a big image! If you plan on allowing potential buyers to see your item supersized, it's going to cost you a whopping 75 cents. Trust me—it adds up. Supersizing your images is necessary only when you feel detail is important.

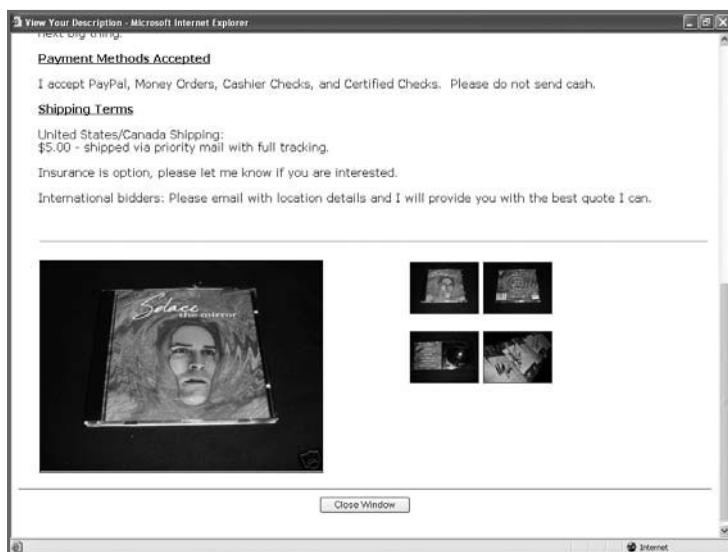


Figure 17.10

Standard photo layout.

- **Slide Show.** Using the slide show feature, you can display multiple views of your item in a  $400 \times 300$  pixel space. Again, eBay hits you up for 75 cents for this feature. Laying them out the standard way is enough to impress a buyer. The slide show feature can be a little bit of an overkill. Figure 17.11 displays how this image feature would appear.
- **Picture Pack.** Here you'll find eBay's version of a photo feature bundle. You get everything and the kitchen sink for \$1 to \$1.50, depending on the package you choose. Again, if your item warrants having lots of pictures, this option may make the most sense due to the cost savings.

For me, selling an autographed CD, I'm going with the Standard option for my photos. So far, I've been keeping my eye on costs, and I'm not doing too badly.

## Hire a Listing Designer

The next step in the listing process gives you the opportunity to select from several themes. Without any knowledge of HTML, you can change the look and feel of your item listing by selecting one of the options in the list provided. Most of the themes apply only to a border but still can change the

TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !

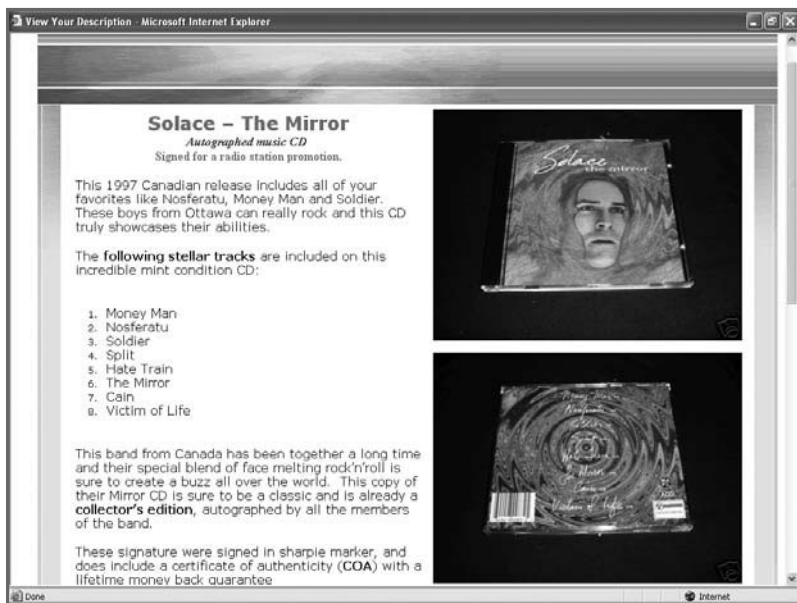
**Figure 17.11**

Setting up your photos using the slide show option.

overall look of your page. I found only two that were music related, and I wasn't a big fan of either. "Save your money" was the general response from my panel of experts. The frames don't provide much value, and you're sometimes better off with a barebones look anyway. Unless you fall in love with one of the options, leave good enough alone. I ignored their advice and went with one called Metallic-Silver. At a meager 10 cents to use this feature, I thought it looked pretty sweet.

Within the Listing Designer section, you also have the choice of selecting a layout format. There are four options to choose from. Although the differences are subtle, there's a reason why eBay offers them. If you go with the Standard format, buyers have to scroll down to the bottom of your listing to see your item photos. Of the four other options presented, three place your photos closer to the top. The thinking here is that lazy buyers won't scroll, and you may lose them before they see your captivating pix. The panel agreed that if you have the cash, select a format other than the Standard one. I'm going with the Photo on the Right option. That way, all the images come closer to the top, saving on the scroll factor. Figure 17.12 displays what my page currently looks like, with the new themed border and photo layout.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 17.12**

Here's what my Item page looks like so far, with a themed border and photos on the right.

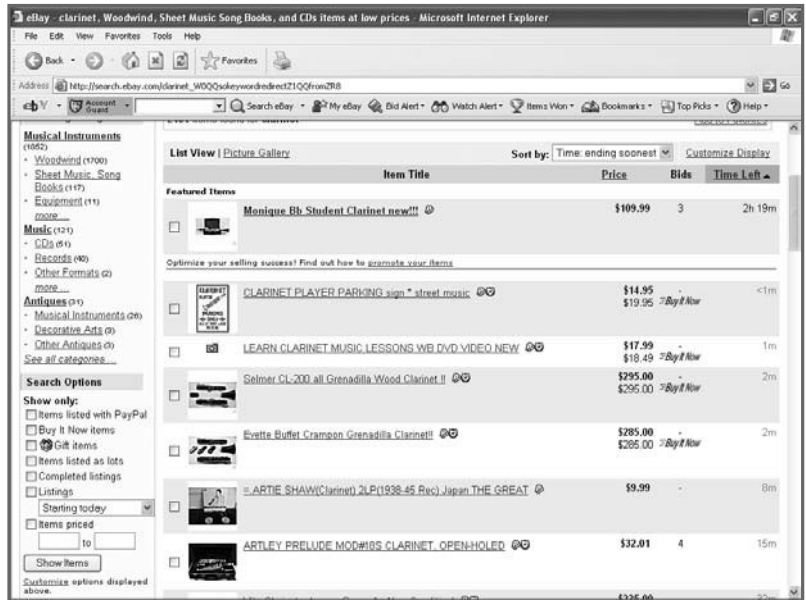
## Increase Your Item's Visibility

This is where eBay will get you every time. Figure 17.13 displays all the different ways you can make your item stand out to potential buyers. I consulted my panel of experts on these because I was really feeling dazed and confused. Ideally, I would pay for them all and really make my listing come screaming off the page. That was definitely not one of my better ideas.

### Gallery Options

You may be tempted on this one because the benefits are really obvious. If you fork over 25 cents to eBay, they'll post your first picture next to your item title in the Search Results list, as shown in Figure 17.13. In other words, when a potential buyer is searching using keywords and he comes across your item title in the Search Results list, he'll also see a small thumbnail photo of your item for sale—not just boring text. For those few people who actually use the Gallery View Only feature, your item's picture will appear, giving you more exposure in that viewing space.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 17.13**

For 25 cents, you can have one of your images appear next to your item title in the search results.

The opinions from the panel were mixed on this feature, only because they thought the image was too small to provide any value. The problem that exists, though, is that everyone else seems to be using this feature, making my listing title seem small in comparison. In fact, it's sometimes easy to scroll right by a listing that doesn't include a photo. Consider that feature selected. I hate getting lost in the crowd.

## Gallery Featured

With the Gallery Featured option, your first image will get preferential treatment in the Featured area of the Gallery view. For the \$20 you're going to pay, you'll also get the benefits of having the photo appear next to your item title in the search results. The general consensus in the group is that unless you use the Gallery view a lot, this feature isn't worth it. Their feeling is that this view isn't popular enough to warrant paying that kind of cash. Considering my item could possibly sell at \$5.99, I'm not in a big hurry to spend more placing the ad.



## Bold

For \$1, you can have your item line bolded so that it really stands out in the crowd of results. Again, look at the value of your item, and if it makes sense from a cost perspective, then go for it.

## Border

Somewhat more expensive at \$3, new to eBay is the ability to apply an eye-catching frame to your listing in the search results. This feature really works. Three dollars is a little steep, but I have to admit, my listing will stand out like the Fourth of July among the others. Can I afford it? Not for this item, but maybe something a little more expensive where I stand to make a bigger sale.

## Highlight

You can also make your listing more noticeable by applying the Highlight feature. For \$5, you can have your listing appear in lights, so to speak, and really grab buyers by the collar. Again, this option really does bring your eyes to the listing, but is it worth it? Look at what you stand to make from a sale and do the math. It's really the only way to determine if a feature makes sense or not.

## Featured Plus!

Every Search Results page can have a featured section at the very top. The big spenders (\$19.99) can pay to have their items appear there when their keywords are called. Same thing applies for category listings. Each category page also includes a featured section at the very top. With this option selected and paid for, eBay will place your listing in this prominent piece of real estate. On another note, eBay offers this feature only to those sellers who have 10 or more feedback points.

This feature is typically reserved for those higher-priced ticket items. Twenty dollars is a lot to pay for this placement if you're only selling a drum stick or a DVD.

## Home Page Featured

For close to forty dollars you can have your ad appear in the featured area of eBay's homepage. For double that amount, you can submit two or more items to eBay's front page featured area and get maximum exposure.

By the way, you must have at least 10 feedback points to qualify for this feature.

## Gift Services

For 25 cents, eBay will add a gift icon to your listing, letting the world know that you offer gift-related services for your item. These services can include gift wrapping, gift cards, and express shipping. Potential buyers have the option of filtering through Results lists for sellers with gift services, therefore increasing your exposure.

The panel is not a big fan of this feature. Searching for gift services isn't popular enough to warrant the extra shell out for this icon. Your money would be better spent on a different feature.

## Counters

---

These, I love. Using eBay's free counters allows you to see how often your item has been viewed. There are three kinds to choose from, including one hidden counter. If you're the highly competitive type and would rather not have others know how often your item is getting hit, you can select this hidden version of the counter and only you will see the results. Personally, I'm going with the Green LED format for my listing.

In the end, I pretty much cheaped out: I went for the gallery option at 25 cents, additional pictures at 45 cents, and my metallic theme look at 10 cents. Based on my selling price, this was really all I should be spending. From here, I am ready to move on to the next chapter in my selling experience, where I will be dealing with payment and shipping. My hands are trembling as I key my way closer to the eBay finish line.

# chapter 18



## Payment, Shipping, Review, and Submit

---

The tough part is over. Now, we take care of the finishing touches. In this chapter, we will look at the available payment methods, shipping information, and the different fees you'll be charged by eBay to list an item. By the end of this chapter, my listing will be complete and live on eBay. Now that's exciting.

### **Seller-Accepted Payment Methods**

---

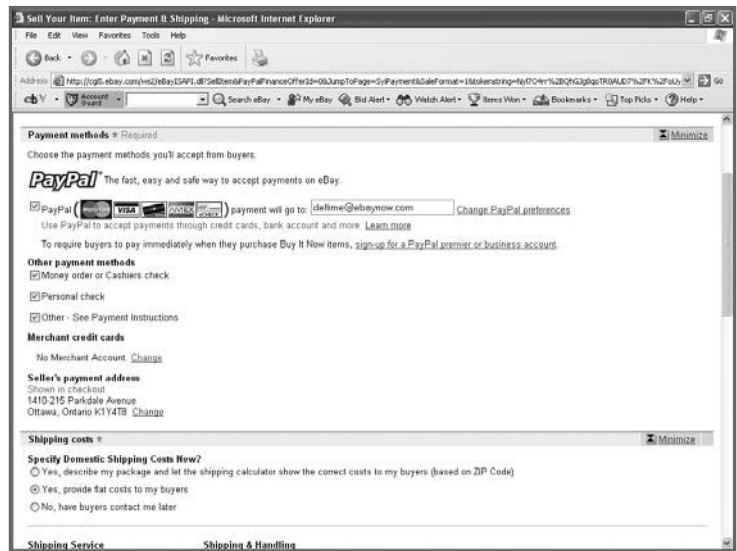
Now, where were we? Oh yes! We had just finished adding pictures and ensuring that my listing stood out from the rest. The next step involves providing potential buyers with my accepted payment methods. Without this step, I wouldn't get paid, and I obviously want something in return for the item I'm selling, right?

Figure 18.1 displays the different payment method options available during the listing process.

#### **PayPal**

This option is listed first for a reason. Besides the fact that eBay now owns this company, PayPal greatly speeds up the payment process. By simply providing your e-mail address to the buyer, he can quickly, easily, and securely pay you for your item.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 18.1**

Payment methods available to a seller.

If you're just starting out as a seller on eBay, my panel recommends you sign up on PayPal to receive payments. It takes no time at all and will help increase your sales. For more details on how to sign up with PayPal, refer to Chapter 3, "Getting Started."

It's also important to keep in mind that eBay favors those sellers who sell using PayPal. How do they do that? They provide special search features that cater to listings that support this payment method.

Figure 18.2 shows the search results for the keywords "The Who sheet music." I enabled the Items Listed with PayPal search option on the left side of the screen. You'll notice that all the results in the Search list have a small PayPal icon next to their item title. PayPal is here to stay. Join the crowd and get on board. Your sales may thank you for it.

## Money Orders or Cashier Checks

Do you like waiting? If so, this option is for you. It's always smart to offer this method of payment as a backup or alternative to PayPal or other credit card system. To offer it on its own can sometimes be a surefire auction killer. In today's "instant" generation, people tend to wait a lot less for things and prefer

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

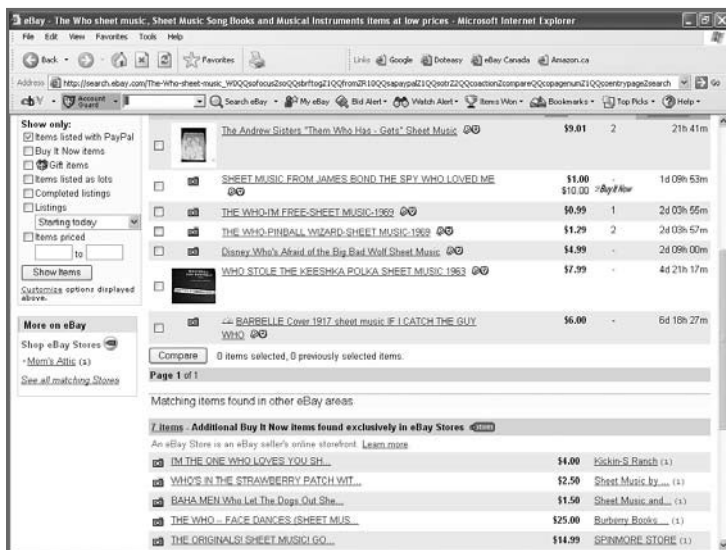


Figure 18.2

Search results have been filtered to show only those items listed with PayPal.

the speedier, more expedited ways of doing things. Going to the bank and mailing things through the post office are being done a lot less now. As a seller, you must adapt and keep up with these trends or your auctions will suffer.

In addition, many buyers are not aware of the fact that there are different types of money orders out there. For instance, I'm Canadian, and if a buyer from the United States sends me a U.S. money order, I've got some work ahead of me, trying to cash the payment at my bank. Either the bank holds the money order for an extended period of time or I have to cash it at a U.S. post office. International money orders are the way to go when dealing with sellers located across borders.

Although many still lean toward the more traditional ways of sending funds, always offer as many methods as possible, and encourage those you prefer in your payment instructions.

## Personal Checks

You probably already know what I'm going to say regarding this method. Should you include it as an option? The answer is yes, and you'd better believe it. As I've stated already, it is important to offer everything and the

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

kitchen sink when listing your accepted payment methods. With personal checks, though, there is a risk to the seller. Will the check bounce? Is it a valid check? Will the buyer cancel the check before it's cashed?

Most people who accept checks as a payment method will stress in their payment instructions there will be a two-week delay before the item is shipped, to ensure the check clears. Can you imagine waiting an additional two weeks before your item even sees the back of a shipping truck? I couldn't. Offer this method and be crystal clear regarding the wait time. As in the situation with money orders and cashier checks, stress in your payment instructions that your preference is PayPal, but you will support all others listed.

## Other Payment Methods

Other? Are there other means of paying a seller for her item? Actually, there are several others. For example, if a seller offers credit card payments as an acceptable means of payment, she can provide an 800 number where transactions can be carried out over the phone.

Other methods include cash payments through the mail. That's right—cash payments. Cold, hard cash, thrown together in an envelope. Would you believe some sellers support this method? Arguably one of the least secure methods of payment, if you're feeling brave, include your support for this questionable method in this section as well.

There are several other payment options that could be included in this section. For example, BidPay, Western Union wire transfers, and MoneyGram to name a few.

## ALERT



Avoid wire transfers when dealing through eBay. Sending money by wire transfer to someone you don't know is extremely risky and very difficult to track. The following quote comes from the auction site Ubid.com: "A significant portion of Internet fraud is committed through wire transfer payments. Money wired to any location (within the United States or overseas) is virtually impossible to reclaim." With all the recent news around wire transfers and fraud on eBay, stay as far away as possible from this payment method unless you know and trust the person on the other end of the deal.

## Merchant Credit Card

eBay also allows sellers to set up their own merchant credit cards as acceptable payment methods. If you're a merchant with your own credit card system in place, you can add the following payment types to your item listing: American Express, Visa, Discover, MasterCard, or eCHECK. If you have an 800 line that buyers can call in on and pay by credit card, you can include this information in the payment instruction area. Personally, when this option is available, my preference is to call in. Speaking to someone live always makes me feel more secure in my transactions.

With all this payment information under my belt, it is time for me to make some educated decisions on how I plan to allow buyers to pay me.

Being a PayPal account member already, I enable the PayPal option and enter my e-mail address. The e-mail address I enter will tell PayPal as well as the buyer where any payments should go.

To avoid confusion, especially when it comes to getting paid, ensure the e-mail address you have on PayPal is the same one you are using on eBay. With one e-mail address, you can make sure that payments are going to the right account.

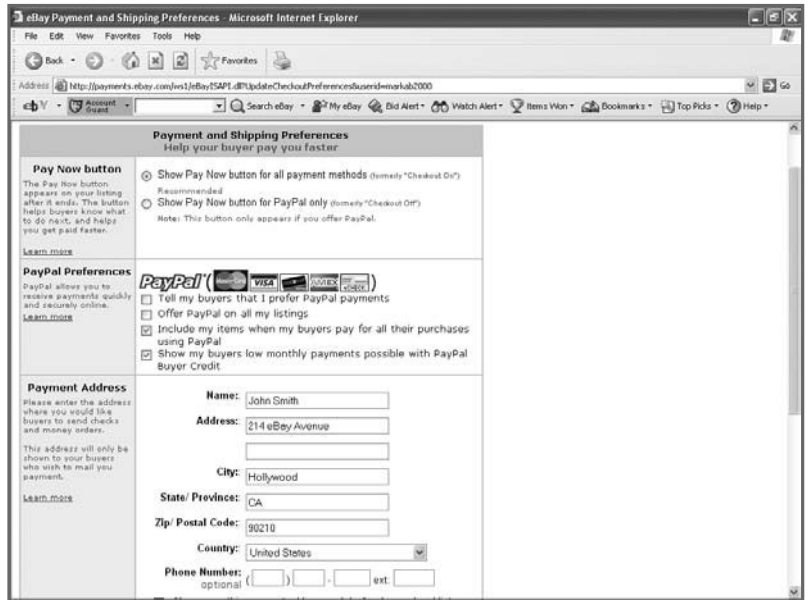
On the advice of my panel, I enable the following options as well: money order or cashiers check, personal check, and other.

## Payment Preferences

Down, near the bottom of the Payment Methods section is one more thing I need to look at—seller's payment address. Figure 18.3 displays the page that appears when you click on the Change link located next to the address. On this page, you'll see several options.

### Pay Now Button

This is one of my personal favorites. When a buyer wins one of your auctions, eBay will typically send both of you an e-mail. With the Pay Now button option enabled, a Pay Now button will appear on your listing after it ends.



**Figure 18.3**

Setting your payment preferences.

So not only will a buyer receive the e-mail from eBay, he will also have the option of clicking the Pay Now button on the actual listing and following the steps from there. Figure 18.4 shows an example of an e-mail where the Pay Now button option is displayed.

The button guides new buyers on how to pay a seller and ensures things are done properly and quickly.

## PayPal Preferences

When you set PayPal as an accepted payment method, there are several options you can enable.

### Tell My Buyers That I Prefer PayPal Payments

With this option selected, eBay will place a friendly encouragement note within your Accepted Payments section that tells buyers that you prefer to receive payments via PayPal. Don't worry—no one gets threatened, and no hard-line measures are taken. eBay plays the heavy in a very nice, courteous way. Figure 18.5 displays the message that eBay lists regarding this preference.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



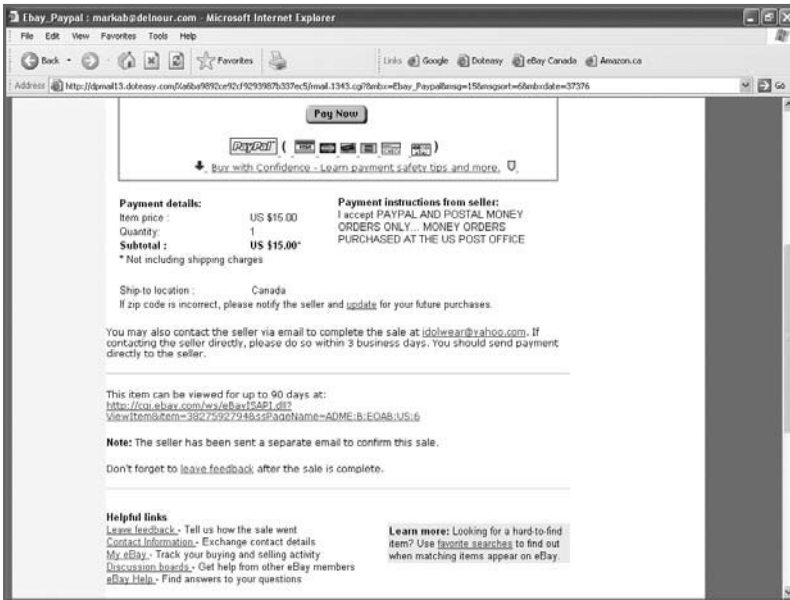


Figure 18.4

The Pay Now button as displayed in an e-mail sent to the winning bidder.

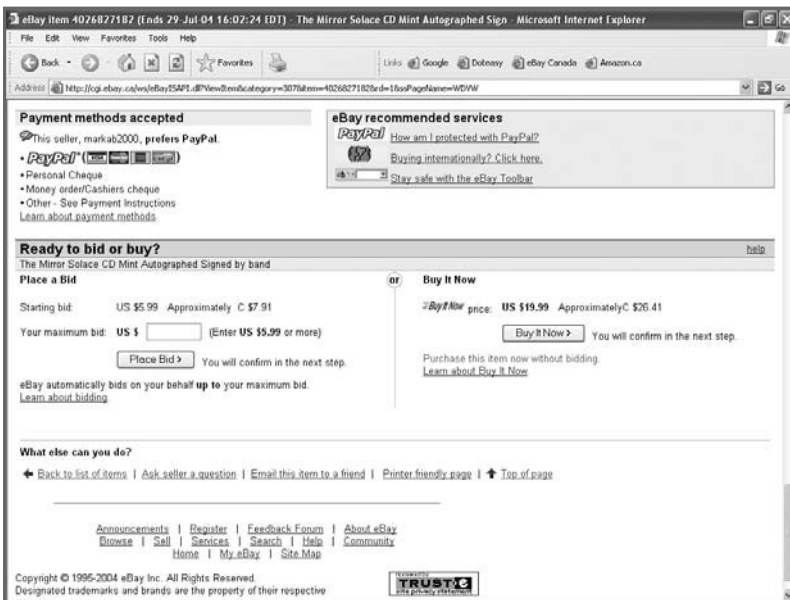


Figure 18.5

This seller prefers PayPal.

## Offer PayPal on All My Listings

With this checkbox selected, PayPal will be offered automatically on all your listings. Simply put, you'll save a couple of mouse clicks by not having to enable the PayPal option each time you list an item to sell.

## Include My Items when My Buyers Pay for All Their Purchases Using PayPal

If you weren't aware, eBay allows buyers to use multiple seller payment features when purchasing items from various members. Once a buyer is done with his little shopping spree and is ready to check out and pay by PayPal, if this option was checked, your item will appear in his payment list along with all the other sellers this person has bought items from. Think of this feature as a master invoice list. As a seller using this feature, you will still receive individual payment from a buyer, and your information is not shared with others. This option simply saves a buyer time when paying for multiple items from multiple sellers using PayPal.

## Payment Address

The Preferences page also gives you the ability to change or add your payment address. If you are a seller who supports payment methods other than PayPal and credit cards, your payment address will be very important to list. This information will be visible only to buyers and winning bidders, who will use this data to mail you your payment.

Now that we have a good idea of payment methods, let's take a look at the wonderful world of shipping and ensuring items get to their destinations in one piece.

## Shipping Costs

---

Before we get into the proper ways of shipping music-related items, let's continue with the process of listing my Solace CD on eBay. When we arrive at the Shipping costs section of the Enter Payment & Shipping page, we are

give you three different options to choose from with respect to specifying domestic shipping costs. They are discussed in the following sections.

## Shipping Calculator

This option is a definite must for sellers on eBay. This allows you to include a shipping calculator in your listing. What this means to a buyer is that she can enter her ZIP code and determine accurate shipping costs to her location. This option is a must because many buyers feel that sellers artificially increase their shipping costs to offset a lower than expected selling price. With this added bonus of a shipping calculator, buyers will know the exact cost without any risk of being cheated.

As a seller, your only responsibility is to describe your package in terms of size and weight and the shipping services you want use, and the rest is handled by the buyer. The buyer punches in his location and is given a shipping cost, as shown in Figure 18.6.

You're probably wondering how much a service like this costs. For convenience like this, there must be a fee. Surprise! This is a free service provided by eBay. If you are within the United States, this feature is definitely for you.

etbay.com: Seller Shipping Calculator - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Package size:  Dimensions (optional):  in. x  in. x  in.  
 This package is irregular or unusual. Only required for UPS Air services.

Packaging & handling fee:  [Change](#) Seller ZIP Code:  [Change](#)

**Shipping Calculator Rates**

If you use the shipping calculator on your listing, eBay will ask your buyers for a Zip code so they are shown and changed the correct amount. To see what rates we will show your buyers, you can select a sample city or type a ZIP Code below.

Show rates to:  ZIP Code:

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE		UPS	
Service	Rate	Service	Rate
<input type="checkbox"/> Parcel Post® Estimated delivery in 2-9 days	\$11.49	<input type="checkbox"/> UPS Ground Guaranteed delivery in 1-6 days	\$10.40
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority Mail® Estimated delivery in 2-3 days	\$12.30	<input type="checkbox"/> UPS 3 Day Select® Guaranteed delivery in 1-3 days	\$20.86*
<input type="checkbox"/> Express Mail® Overnight to many areas	\$30.40	<input type="checkbox"/> UPS 2nd Day Air® Guaranteed delivery in 1-2 days	\$25.59*
<input type="checkbox"/> Media Mail™ (restrictions apply) Estimated delivery in 2-9 days	\$3.52	<input type="checkbox"/> UPS Next Day Air Saver® Guaranteed delivery by next day	\$47.46*
Shipping Insurance With Express Mail: Free	\$1.30	Shipping Insurance Offered by UPS based on value of \$5.99	Free

**Why choose US Postal Service?**

- Confirm Delivery
- Affordable and Reliable
- No surcharge for Saturday and residential delivery

**Why choose UPS?**

- Print labels directly from PayPal
- Detailed tracking information
- Guaranteed day of delivery
- Included insurance up to \$100

UPS prices based on standard UPS On-Demand rates. Edit your shipping preferences.

**Figure 18.6**

Buyers can determine their own shipping costs using the shipping calculator feature.

## Flat Costs

If shipping costs are not an issue and are rather straightforward regardless of where the item is going, you can offer buyers a flat fee for shipping. For CDs, DVDs, and similar items, you are pretty safe going with a flat rate for North America and a higher rate for international customers.

## No Shipping Rates Included

The third option is to have the buyer contact you for a shipping rate after the item has been won or purchased. This is not a recommended way of doing business. Many potential buyers will most likely not even bid on your item due to this omission. Buyers want to know their costs up front, and that goes for all their costs—including shipping.

My panel completely bypasses any sellers who do not post their shipping rates in their listing. As a buyer, it's too late to pull out once you've won the auction. If there's an item you really want and the seller didn't post a shipping rate, e-mail him immediately asking for one. Keep the e-mail on file as proof of this communication.

## Payment Instructions and Return Policy

In this section, you are asked to enter all your payment and return policy instructions. It is here where you would include all the information we discussed in the “Other Payment Methods” section in this chapter. Your return policy should also be included in this section. Again, it is highly recommended that you stand behind the items you are selling and include a return policy for potential buyers. In most cases, no one will ever take you up on it, but it does provide buyers with an added sense of security that may encourage them to bid on your item over another.

Here's the text that I will be including in my listing for the Solace CD I am selling. You may notice that I repeat my shipping rates in this section as well. When I wrote up my item description, I included my shipping rate information there as well. There is no harm in listing this data twice—as long as the information is the same in both locations.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

*Please e-mail me with questions BEFORE bidding. Payment by PayPal, cashier's check, or money order are all accepted. I will ship within 2 days of receipt for these payment methods.*

*Personal checks are also accepted but will be held for 2 weeks prior to item delivery.*

*Bid with confidence. 10-day money-back guarantee! If you wish to make a return, please inform me by e-mail within 7 days of purchase. I will either replace the goods or refund your payment.*

*United States/Canada Shipping:*

*\$5.00 - shipped via priority mail with full tracking.*

*Insurance is optional, please let me know if you are interested.*

*International bidders: Please e-mail with location details and I will provide you with the best quote I can.*

*Good luck everyone!*

## Ship-To Locations

As we come to the tail-end of the listing process, we are asked to enter ship-to locations for the item. This is the section where you will let your buyers know exactly which locations your item will ship to.

There are several options to choose from in this list as well.

### United States Only

Many people just don't want the hassle of dealing with cross-border shipping. If you are one of those people, you can check this option and deal only within the confines of your own country and avoid any of the slowdowns and extra fees typically associated with international dealings.

### Worldwide

From an auction perspective, this is the best option to go with. To get the maximum number of bids on your item, you'll want to open it up to the world.

Obviously, though, there are risks to selecting this option. There are many international locations that are notorious for committing fraud on auction sites. Shipping rates can also get complicated, depending on where the buyer is located. Last but not least, shipping in general can be a lot riskier in terms of item condition once it arrives at its destination. Shipping items across the world can sometimes be a bumpy ride, so packing properly becomes even more important.

## Here and There but Not Over There

To circumvent the issues described in the Worldwide option, you can choose to ship to the United States and other countries that you specify. For auctions originating in North America, I typically see sellers offering shipping to the United States and Canada.

## No Shipping

For larger items or those that are extremely fragile, many sellers refuse to take on the extra hassle of shipping—at all. With this option selected, buyers will see that this item will not be shipped and that pickup is their only means of retrieval. This is not the most popular of options to select, but if you must, you must. Be warned though—bidders may be passing you by for that reason.

## Review and Submit

---

This is it. I am ready to review and finally submit my listing to eBay. Figure 18.7 displays the Review page where I can see all the work I've done over the past several chapters. I am given the opportunity now to review, line by line, my submission content to ensure there aren't any mistakes in my text or options.

## Fees

---

Closer to the bottom of this page is my Listing Fee Total. Would you believe that this listing has cost me only \$1.20—so far. I say “so far” because this



**Figure 18.7**

Almost ready to submit my listing. Must review all the work first.

fee does not factor in the final value fee I will still owe eBay if the item sells. This fee is based on a percentage of the final sale price. This is where eBay takes its cut. Table 18.1 displays the final value fees. I should also mention that the fees listed in this book are subject to change but were accurate at the time of printing.

**Table 18.1** eBay Final Value Fees

Final Value	Final Value Fee
\$0–\$25.00	eBay will take 5.25% of the final value
\$25–\$1,000.00	eBay will take 5.25% of the initial \$25 (\$1.31), plus 2.75% of the remaining balance (\$25.01 to \$1,000)
Over \$1,000.00	5.25% of the first \$25 (\$1.31), plus 2.75% of the initial \$25–\$1000 (\$26.81), plus 1.50% of the remaining closing value balance (\$1000.01–closing value)

Here's the bottom line when it comes to final value fees—the more you make, the more eBay takes.

Other fees include insertion fees. Insertion fees are exactly that—the price to insert your listing into eBay. These calculations are shown in Table 18.2.

**Table 18.2** eBay Insertion Fees

Starting Price, Opening Value, or Reserve Price	Insertion Fee
\$0.01–\$0.99	\$0.30
\$1.00–\$9.99	\$0.35
\$10.00–\$24.99	\$0.60
\$25.00–\$49.99	\$1.20
\$50.00–\$199.99	\$2.40
\$200.00–\$499.99	\$3.60
\$500.00 and up	\$4.80

In the case of the Solace CD, my opening value was \$5.99. Based on the information in this table, eBay will charge me 35 cents as an insertion fee.

For more details regarding eBay's fee structure, I recommend you visit their Help site. Click on the Help link just above the main toolbar. In the Search Help text box, type **fees**. Several help topics will appear based on this search. Select "Fees for Selling" from the list.

There are four different ways to pay eBay's selling fees.

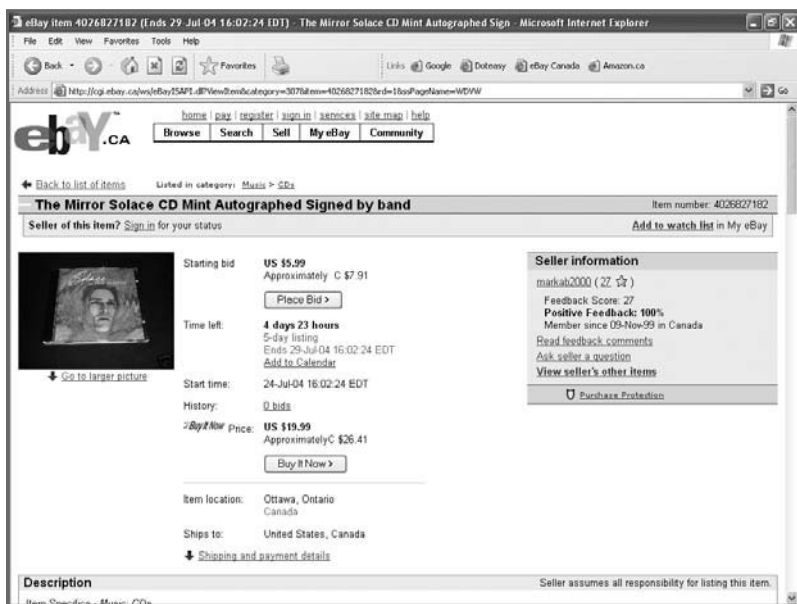
- PayPal
- direct pay from your checking account
- credit card
- check or money order



Depending on the method you select, you can choose one-time payments or monthly payments. If you have a credit card set up already, eBay will invoice you on a monthly basis. If you prefer to pay immediately after your item goes live, you can access your account information and payment options through My eBay. eBay makes paying fees a very flexible and pleasurable experience.

## It's Live!

After reviewing all my page content and feeling quite confident that everything's where it should be, I click the Submit Listing button. Figure 18.8 displays my page as it appears on eBay, live for the world to see.



**Figure 18.8**

My listing live on eBay.  
Here come all the bids!

With all the finishing touches in place, let's jump to the next chapter, where we'll look at post go-live activity. Just because your listing is active doesn't mean it's time to sit on your laurels. There are things you can be doing to ensure all goes smoothly.

*This page intentionally left blank*

# chapter 19



## Post Go-Live Activity

---

Alright now. My Solace CD is live on eBay. What should I do? Should I constantly check back every minute to see if someone has bid? How much time is left in the auction? What happens if it doesn't sell? How much do I owe? How do I package and ship a CD? In this chapter, I will attempt to address all of these concerns and questions with the help of my panel of eBay experts.

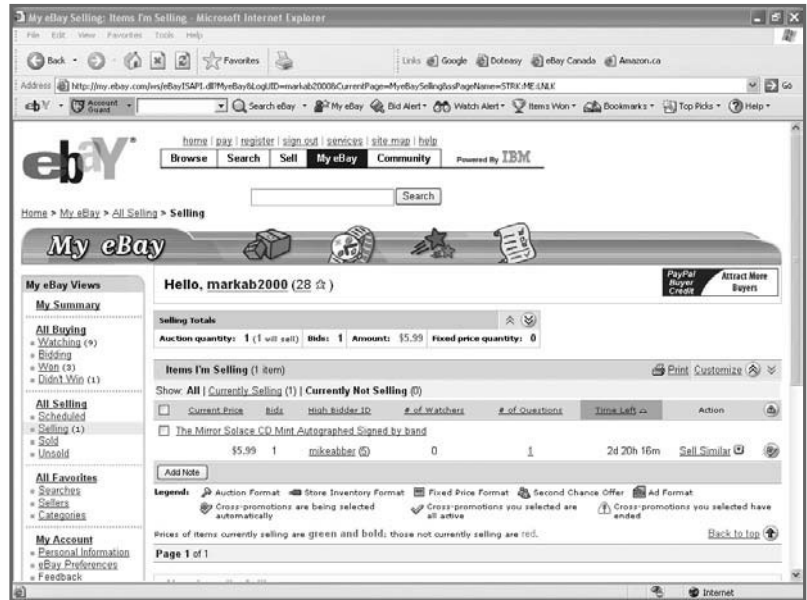
### Checking Bid Activity

---

In previous chapters we looked at the different ways you can stay on top of your eBay transactions. As a seller waiting on an auction to end, there are similar methods you can use.

#### My eBay

From the My eBay page, you can really get a good idea of what is happening with your item's bidding activity. By clicking on the Selling link in the All Selling section of the My eBay page, you will be taken to a detailed view of all your items on the selling block and the bid activity for each. Figure 19.1 displays the activity for the Solace CD I am selling. As you can see from this screen, there is currently one bidder (mikeabber), with 5 feedback points. This line item also tells me that I have one question waiting from this bidder and that there are 2 days, 20 hours, and 16 minutes left in this auction.



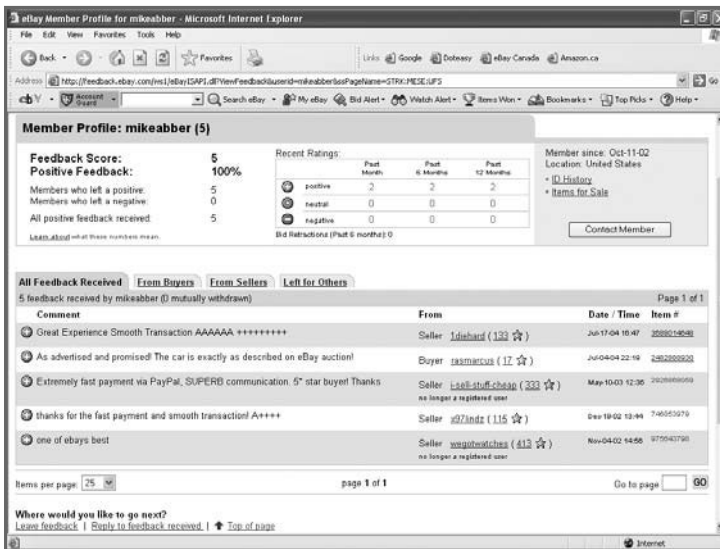
**Figure 19.1**

My eBay is an excellent resource for reviewing your selling activity.

## Check Bidder's Feedback

Call me a skeptic, but I'm in the habit of checking a winning bidder's feedback profile even before he's won the auction. I guess it gives me something to do, plus prepares me for what kind of transaction I may have with this buyer. From the My eBay page, you can click on the number in parentheses located next to the bidder's user name. Figure 19.2 shows this particular member's feedback profile. You'll notice that he or she has five feedback points with all positive comments.

Based on some of the tricks we learned in previous chapters, I scrutinized each comment to see if I could detect any problematic trends. For example, some things I looked for were comments left by the same person over and over. I also checked for comments left by members with low to no feedback points. Last but not least, I checked his previous auctions to see if any possible shilling occurred. After all this review, this member seemed clean with no red flags to report.

**Figure 19.2**

Review a bidder's feedback profile ahead of time—just to be prepared.

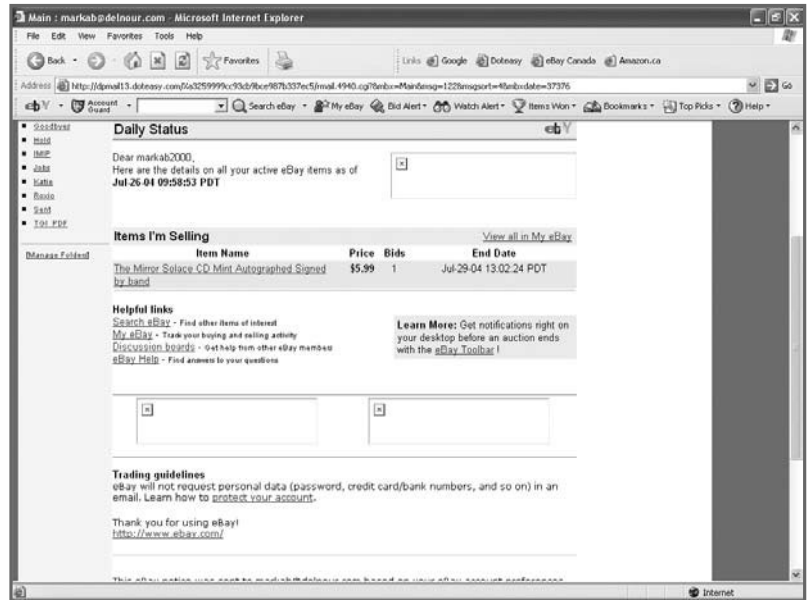
## Checking E-mail

When you're waiting on an auction, stay close to your e-mail or you will potentially miss out on some questions and bid summaries. My alerts are set up in such a way that as a seller, I receive daily status messages via e-mail. These messages summarize my activity for that day and help keep me organized. Figure 19.3 displays an example of an eBay daily status e-mail I received earlier today. You'll notice that this e-mail also provides me with a quick link to the actual listing for a more updated view of the action.

## Answer Questions

You may receive e-mails from members hoping to get answers to their questions before they actually bid. If you aren't checking e-mail, you're not answering questions. If you're not answering questions, members aren't bidding on your item. I check my e-mail periodically throughout the day to ensure no questions slip by me. I've had people ask me questions one hour before an auction closes. If I wasn't there to see it, that person wouldn't have bid and ultimately won the auction. As a seller, it is your responsibility to be available during the life of your auction. You will only stand to gain—in the end.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**



**Figure 19.3**

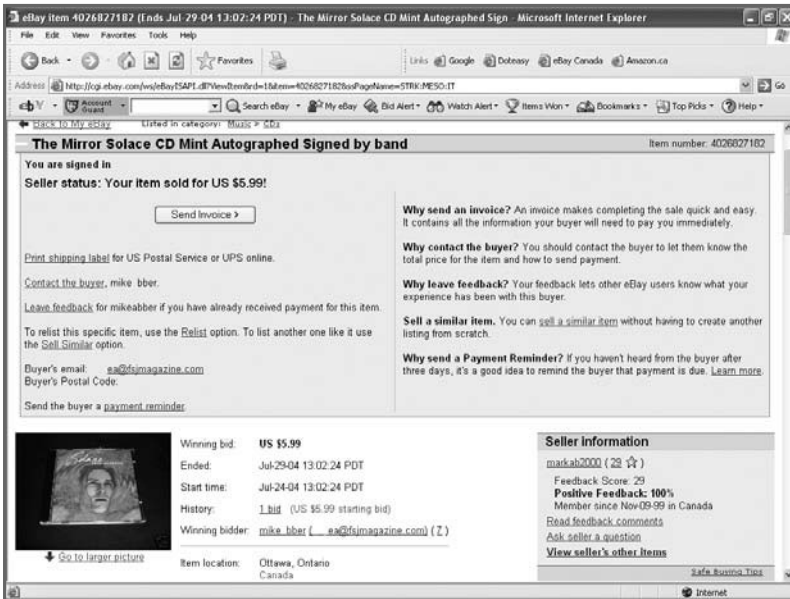
Here's an example of an eBay daily status e-mail detailing my selling activity.

## Item Sells!

Yippee! There is nothing more exciting than successfully selling an item on eBay. The excitement is even more pronounced when you sell at an incredible price. In this case, my Solace CD sold at my opening bid amount—\$5.99. Not exactly the win I was expecting, but nonetheless a sale. Figure 19.4 shows what the winning item page looks like once the auction is completed.

## E-mail the Seller

Typically, the moment an auction ends, the winning bidder and the seller are notified via e-mail. I always e-mail the winning bidder right away and establish contact. Ask the winning bidder to confirm his or her shipping address so that you can ensure you are using the appropriate shipping rate. Also, take this opportunity to give the buyer shipping information, such as ETA and the vendor you'll be using. Last but not least, thank the buyer for her business and ask how she plans on paying.



**Figure 19.4**

The winning Item page for my completed auction.

## Receipt of Payment

Once you've received payment from a buyer—please let him know. This is one of my biggest pet peeves on eBay. When I send a member money, it's always with a little bit of apprehension and fear that this may be the seller who rips me off. Please, help put me and the countless other buyers out there out of our misery by confirming you've received payment, and include a date as to when the item will be shipping. That isn't too much to ask.

## Ship It Responsibly

Shipping and packaging plays a huge part in the selling process and should never be overlooked. Can you imagine going through all this work, only to have the item arrive damaged at its destination?

In this section, along with my panel of experts, I've managed to collect shipping and packaging tips and tricks for music-related items. Unfortunately, I won't be able to include every type of musical item, but I will attempt to cover some of the more popular items.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

## Shipping Musical Instruments

Musical instruments are a tricky lot due to their weight, fragility, and awkward shapes. When shipping musical instruments, here are some general guidelines to follow.

### Choose the Right Box

The most common mistake when choosing a box for an instrument is selecting one that is too small. Just because your guitar fits perfectly within it doesn't mean it's the perfect size box. Look for a box that leaves roughly five inches of space between the instrument and the box's walls. Choose a box that is sturdy and strong—preferably one with double cardboard thickness.

Music stores are constantly disposing of cardboard boxes that have held instruments. They should be your first bet on getting these boxes for free. Next stop is moving companies, where they will probably have a supply on hand.

Last but not least, cover the box with “Fragile” labels that are typically available at any shipping location.

It is ideal to ship instruments in their original cases. The good cases have sufficient padding and leave little room (if any at all) for the instrument to move around. The instrument, in its case, is then packed in a box, and the same guidelines apply.

As a sidebar, you must also ensure that there are no moveable, loose pieces (picks, whammy bars, straps, tuners, reeds, change, and so on) flying around in the case along with the instrument. Those pieces can do the instrument some considerable damage during transit if they scratch and scrape against it.

### Packing Materials

Bubble wrap is the way to go when attempting to secure an instrument within its box. Obviously with five inches of space between the instrument and its box, you're going to need a fair bit of packing material to keep it from moving around during transit. Don't skimp on the packing materials. Wrap it nice and tight to reduce any movement during transit.



## Tape

You can never use enough tape. Remember that. Once you've packed the instrument in the proper box, the next step is to tape it like it's never been taped before. Gift wrapping cellophane tape is not the type of tape I'm talking about here, either. Nor am I talking about the masking tape you can buy at your local convenience store. What you are looking for is industrial-strength tape. High-performance filament and box-sealing tapes are very good choices.

## Shipping CDs

The best way to ship a CD is either in a cardboard mailer or in a bubble pack. There are several types of mailers available for CDs and DVDs. They range in price from 25 cents to \$4.00 depending on the quality and quantities you buy. If your business is selling CDs and DVDs, then you may want to purchase CD shipping packages in bulk. The discounts are incredible, starting at 50 to 100 units.

My panel of experts recommends the following types of CD mailers for your CD and DVD shipments: bubble mailers, polyethylene bubble mailers, and paperboard CD sleeves.

## Shipping Albums

If you're looking for ready-made packaging for your albums, then you can try Bags Unlimited, as shown in Figure 19.5. No one said buying these things was cheap, so please don't say you weren't warned. For \$16.80, you can purchase 10 album mailer folders, made from 200# test brown corrugated cardboard. These are 13×13 and can be expanded to hold up to six albums. There are cheaper alternatives, but I thought that would give you a good idea of what you're looking at in terms of costs. Again, if you plan on selling records as a business, you are better off buying these materials in bulk to achieve a higher level of discount.

To add to your costs, you may also want to invest in some LP record mailer filler pads. Depending on how much room remains once you've packed your albums, you may require some of these to restrict their movement during transit. Bubble wrap is also a great space stuffer if required.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

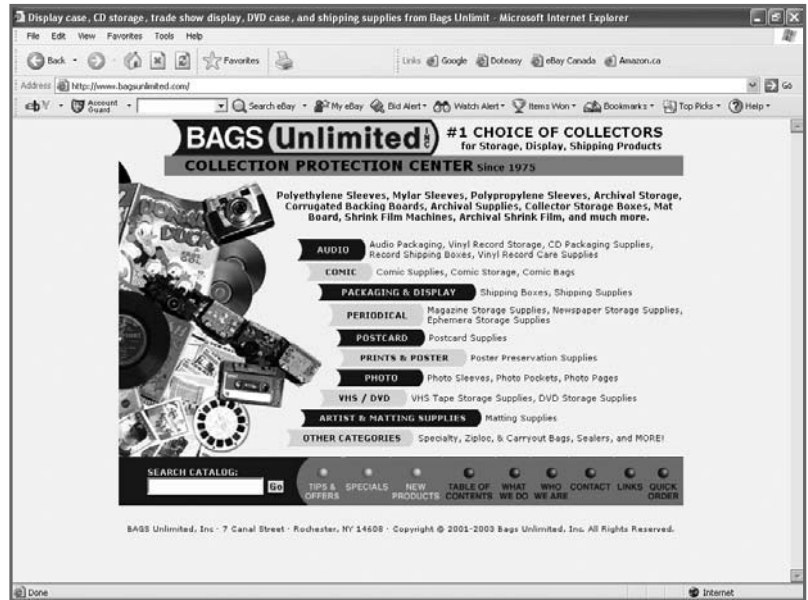


Figure 19.5

[www.bagsunlimited.com](http://www.bagsunlimited.com)—  
a great choice for your  
packaging needs.

To be extra cautious, Swifty recommends going the distance and pulling the record from its jacket and packing it separately. Separate the jacket and record with two pieces of cardboard, and if possible, put a plastic sleeve around the jacket as well. Everything will still go in the same box but separated from one another.

Another option when shipping albums is to go down to your local record store and see if they have any LP boxes and filler pads laying around that you could buy or take off their hands.

Last but not least, remember to mark all boxes going out with a “Fragile” label to ensure they don’t get bumped around too much.

## Shipping Rock Posters

The biggest mistake a seller can make when shipping a poster is to fold it, pack it, and send it out in an envelope. Believe me—it’s happened to me. Unmounted posters should be rolled and put in heavy cardboard mailing tubes. This will protect against damage and dust from handling.

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Poster tubes can also be quite expensive, so buy in bulk when possible. There are several sites that offer deep discounts, depending on your quantities.

An alternative to buying those tubes new is to check out your local cinemas and theatres. They receive posters all the time and toss the tubing in the garbage once they've hung the poster. This tip comes courtesy of Jordy Nicholas—the bargain-hunting garbage picker.

## Shipping Electronics, DJ Equipment, Stereos, and So On

The best packing material is the original packing material. If you still have it on hand, along with the foam pieces that keep it in place, you are ready to ship without any additional work.

If you no longer have the original packaging, then you may have to make a couple of purchases to ensure it makes it to its destination in one piece. TV, computer, and stereo boxes are sold at most packing stores. Depending on the size and weight of the item you are shipping, different box types will apply. For example, for any electronic item weighing in at ten pounds, we recommend a ten pound weight inner carton enclosed by a minimum of 2 to 3 inches of foam on all sides. The outer carton should be double-walled and long-fiber cardboard.

Swiftly goes the extra distance yet again and wraps all electronics in plastic bags. He then wraps them in bubble wrap before securely placing them in a durable double-walled TV box. He then fills any open spaces with newspaper.

## Shipping Music Collectibles

First of all, let me say you shouldn't even think of shipping any fragile or expensive collectibles without protecting yourself and the seller with insurance.

Bottom line with collectibles is that each piece needs to be wrapped and secured individually before being packaged into one box. Wrap each piece in bubble wrap. If there's a chance that the bubble wrap could possibly damage painted surfaces, wrap the item in plain paper first. Leave enough space between the pieces once they are packed within a box. Pack the box with any

packing materials you have on hand to limit movement during transit. We recommend any of the following materials: newspaper, bubble wrap, styro-foam peanuts, or plain paper. Fragile labels should be plastered all over the box with the appropriate side pointing up, if applicable.

## Shipping Rock Clothing

When shipping clothing, there are several options to choose from. The choice you make will depend mainly on the quantity and type of clothing being shipped.

For this example, let's look at shipping rock t-shirts. You're a seller who's just sold a Marilyn Manson t-shirt to a buyer on eBay. You need to get it to him or her in the fastest, safest, and semi-cheapest way. Using Tyvek envelopes is a very popular practice with clothing shippers on eBay. Tyvek envelopes are incredibly light and will go a long way to reduce postal costs for your buyer. With your average shirt weighing in at about 8 to 12 ounces, a regular box will simply add to the weight, increasing your buyer's shipping costs. Increased shipping costs to a potential buyer may be the incentive they need to move on to the next seller to see if they have cheaper shipping rates.

In addition to their light weight, they are highly puncture and tear resistant, resist moisture, and are ten times stronger than your average envelope. Tyvek envelopes are also friends to the environment. They are manufactured with 25-percent post-consumer recycled content, and they are also recyclable.

For more expensive clothing (for example, a Rod Stewart used tuxedo), Tyvek envelopes are not the answer. The proper size box and plastic bags should be used to ensure the item isn't damaged in transit. For further information regarding the packaging and shipping of expensive clothing, contact a store or retailer near you that sells that specific type of merchandise.

## Shipping Music Books

Regardless of the type of book you are selling, proper care should always be taken to ensure it gets to its destination in the same condition as when it left you.

There is a common misconception that books are easy to ship and that an envelope is all you need. This is not true. Books in transit can be damaged by punctures, moisture, and folding.

For collectible books costing more than five to ten dollars, we recommend the following packaging and shipping steps:

1. Place book in archival Mylar bag. Seal tightly.
2. Wrap each covered book in shipping paper.
3. Tape everything very tightly and assume the worst with regard to the elements. At some point that book may see rain, so protect it now.
4. Wrap the book in bubble wrap and tape firmly again.
5. Place the book in a cardboard box that is just slightly larger than the book and fill with loose packing material to restrict movement. Padded envelopes are an alternative to boxes and could be used with less-expensive books you sell.

## Leaving Feedback

Once you've shipped the item, do not hesitate to contact the buyer via e-mail to ensure it arrived safe and sound. This type of selling behavior just screams of customer service and will almost guarantee repeat business. Word travels quickly on eBay, so make sure it's the positive kind rather than the negative. If the transaction has gone well, leave the buyer feedback saying so. Praise the buyer and anything he or she did exceptionally well. It can be as simple as being very responsive or courteous. Your comments are valuable, so always leave feedback. In most cases, your feedback to a buyer sparks a reminder for him to leave you some as well. Remember, as a rule of thumb, never beg for feedback. If they want to leave it, they will. Coercing a buyer to do so is never a good idea.

## What Do You Owe?

Well, in the case of the Solace CD, eBay charged me an initial up front fee of:  
Listing fees/Insertion fee: \$0.35

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Buy It Now: \$0.05

Photo: \$0.45

Listing Designer: \$0.10

Gallery: \$0.25

Subtotal fees: \$1.20

Based on Table 18.1 in Chapter 18, “Payment, Shipping, Review, and Submit,” the final value fee for items with a closing price of \$0–\$25.00 gives eBay an additional 5.25% of that figure. My Solace CD sold at \$5.99—5.25% of \$5.99 is approximately 31 cents. Therefore, my grand total paid to eBay was \$1.51. It was nice doing business with you eBay. You know that I’ll be back.

## Item Does Not Sell!

What should you do when your auction closes and there were no bids at all? The following content will discuss some of your options and things you can do to bounce back into the game.

### Why?

Always ask yourself why an item did not sell. There are a number of things you can look at to help you get a better idea for the next time—if you plan to relist your item. Do a search on eBay to see how others selling the same item are doing it. You can search both incomplete and completed auctions for this information. You may notice some of these things once you’ve done your comparative research:

- Your starting bid is too high
- Your item description is missing critical information
- You have too many negative feedback comments
- You have too few feedback points
- No other items like yours are selling, therefore not an in-demand item

- Your shipping price is too high
- The eBay market is saturated with your item
- Your item title contains incorrect keywords
- Your listing contains keyword spelling errors
- You did not include photographs
- Your terms and conditions are too strict
- Timing was wrong

## To Relist or Not, That Is the Question

If after reviewing all the possible reasons why your item did not sell, you may choose to relist your item on eBay. If the item sells on this second try, eBay will refund the insertion fee for the relisting.

In order to qualify for the credit though, eBay states the following rules:

- You must relist within 90 days
- You can only relist the same item once
- The opening bid/price cannot be higher on the relisted item
- Price format must be consistent (for example, reserve price)

If you choose to walk away without relisting, eBay comes out on top with your insertion and listing fees deposited into its bank account.

To actually go through with relisting an item, simply visit your item's listing page and click on the Relist Your Item link. Make the appropriate changes to the listing based on the criteria discussed earlier and cross your fingers that you're more successful the second time around.

"If at first you don't succeed, try try again." This famous saying couldn't be truer than with eBay.

Well, here we are coming to the finish line for this book. I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it.

In the words of Jim Morrison and the Doors,

This is the end

**TEAM LING - LIVE, INFORMATIVE, NON-COST AND GENUINE !**

Beautiful friend

This is the end

Good luck buying and selling your music and keep on rockin' in the free world.



## Numerics

- 1-day auctions, duration choices, 296
- 3,5 and 7-day auctions, duration choices, 297
- 8-tracks
  - collectibles, 10–11
  - storage options, 11
- 10-day auctions, duration choices, 297

## A

- ABBA 8-tracks, 10
- About Me page
  - launching, 240
  - layout considerations, 241
  - overview, 239
  - page content, 241–242
  - review and submit page, 242
- accessories, instruments, 20
- accounts
  - Half.com, setting up, 223
  - My Account area (My eBay), 203–204
  - PayPal, 67–69, 206–207
  - seller's accounts, setting up, 63–66
- acronyms, in titles, 277
- Add to Calendar link (Item page, Details section), 123
- Add to Favorites link option, 93–94
- Add to Watch List section (Item page), 122
- afternoons, auction start times, 299
- albums
  - collectibles, 12–14
  - shipping, 341–342
- alerts. *See also* notifications
  - Bid Alerts, 182–183
  - end of auction, 175
  - MS Alerts, 174–176
  - Watch Alerts, 183–184
- All Buying section (My eBay)
  - Bidding link, 196
  - Didn't Win list, 197
  - Watch list
    - adding items to, 192–193
    - adding notes to, 193–194
    - Bid Now button, 195
    - comparisons, 195
    - Won list, 197
  - All Categories search option, 81
  - All Items option, search results, 103
  - All Selling section (My eBay), 198–199
  - American Idol*, collectibles, 15
  - amps, collectibles, 20
  - Anka, Paul, 8-tracks, 10
  - Answer Center (Community page)
    - overview, 52
    - Packaging & Shipping link, 53
  - Apple Soundtrack software, 24
  - Are You Looking For link, search results, 105–106
  - Ask the Seller a Question link, Seller Information section, 120, 138–139
  - asking questions to sellers
    - overview, 120
    - researching before bidding, 138–139
    - scams, avoiding, 233–234
  - At Least option, Multiple Item Listings section, 83–84
  - At Most option, Multiple Item Listings section, 84
  - Attend Classes link (eBay University), 47
  - Auctions option, search results, 103
  - audio electronics, collectibles, 20, 22
  - Audio Tour link (Learning Center), 46
  - authenticity, 24
  - autographs
    - Certificates of Authenticity, 24
    - collectibles, 22–23

## B

- background clutter, in photos, 305
- Backstage Lounge, 149–150
- BBB (Better Business Bureau), 236
- Beatles, *Yellow Submarine* sheet music, 29
- Better Business Bureau (BBB), 236
- Bid Alerts (My eBay), 182–183
- bid histories, Item page
  - overview, 124
  - sniping and, 165
- Bid Notice option, status e-mail, 177

**Bid Now button, Watch list, 195**

**bidding**

- bid rigs, 168
- Bidding and Selling Daily Status option, status e-mail, 176
- Bidding link (My eBay, All Buying section), 196
- bids column, search results, 108
- collusion, 168
- current or starting bid, item details, 122
- increments table, 158–159
- last-minute shopper techniques, 166–167
- location preferences, 125–126
- losing, reasons for, 186–188, 250
- maximum bids, 156–158
- monitoring, 171, 182–186
- notifications
  - bidding alerts, 174
  - direct mail, 181–182
  - eBay Wireless E-mail, 172–174
  - end of auction alerts, 175
  - MS Alerts, 174–176
  - overview, 171
  - Privacy Policy changes, 180
  - telemarketing options, 181
  - transaction e-mail, 176–179
  - User Agreement changes, 180
- nudge, 160
- odd man technique, 166
- outbidding, 159–160
- preparation for, 155–156
- retractions, 142–145
- shilling, warnings against, 168–169
- sniping
  - alternate snipe option, 165
  - defined, 160
  - nudge bidding and, 160
  - refresh rates and, 161–163
  - ten minute mark, 164
  - ten second mark, 165
- vanilla, 156–160
- vulture techniques, 166–167
- winning, 188–189

**birthdate information, registration process, 60**

**blue star rewards, feedback ratings, 141**

**bonus items, 257**

**books**

- collectibles, 26–27
- shipping, 344–345

**bootlegs, 126**

**Bowie, David, collectibles, 10**

**Brand New Items option (Half.com), 227**

**Browse link, main toolbar, 37–38**

**business accounts, PayPal, 67**

**Buy It Now Items option**

- search results, 103
- searching by, 85, 98

**buyers. *See also* buying**

- end of auction notice, 178
- feedback for, 71
- non-paying, 70

**buying. *See also* buyers**

- help options, Get Help Buying or Selling link, 262
- How to Buy link (Learning Center), 46

## C

**calendars**

- adding items to, 123
- concert memorabilia, 6

**camera icon, 109**

**case-sensitivity**

- passwords, 67
- searches, 89

**cashier checks, seller-accepted payment methods, 320–321**

**cassettes, collectibles, 12**

**categories**

- charities, 152
- favorite, 202–203
- Item page, 118
- Matching Categories section, search results, 96–98
- overview, 44
- searching by, 81, 91–92
- searching by, Half Zone search option, 215
- selling by
  - additional category options, 269–271
  - category by keywords, 266–268
  - Main Categories section, 268–269
  - Previously Used categories, 265

**CDs**

- discussed, 8
- instructional, 30–31
- searching, 74–76
- shipping, 341

**Certificates of Authenticity, 24**

**character limitations, titles, 276**

**characters in titles, avoiding, 274**

**charities**

- categories, 152
- Giving Works page, 151–153
- MissionFish, 152–153
- nonprofit, 152
- search options, 151

**chat rooms, 52**

**Checkout link (Half.com), 227–228**

**checks, seller-accepted payment methods, 321–322**

**classes, Attend Classes link (eBay University), 47**

**clothing, shipping, 344**

**collectibles**

- 8-tracks, 10–11
- albums, 12–14
- amps, 20
- audio electronics, 20, 22
- autographs, 22–23
- books, 26–27
- cassettes, 12
- Certificates of Authenticity, 24
- discussed, 9
- DJ equipment, 20, 22
- DVDs, 15
- examples of, 8
- instructional videos/CD/DVDs, 30–31
- instruments, 19–20
- magazines, 26–27
- MIB (Mint in Box), 17
- MP3 players, 20
- music figures, toys, 16–18
- photos, 27–28
- posters, 27–28
- sheet music, 28–30
- shipping, 344–345
- software, 24–26
- speakers, 20
- stereos, 20
- VHS videos, 15
- vinyl, 12–14

**collusion, bidding, 168**

**comment lines, feedback, 146–147**

**Community page**

- Answer Center, 52–53
- chat rooms, 52
- Community Values link, 55–56
- discussed, 40
- discussion boards, 50–51
- Events page, 54–55

Groups link, 55

Member's Spotlight link, 55–56

news, 54

People section, 55–56

**Community Values link (Community page), 55–56**

**comparisons, Watch list, 195**

**competition, checking before bidding, 136**

**Complete eBay Registration button,  
registration process, 62**

**Completed Items searches, avoiding scams, 237**

**Completed Listings only search option, 81, 99**

**concert memorabilia, 6–7**

**concert tickets, 4, 6–7**

**Condition column, Half Zone, 216–217**

**condition of items**

- in descriptions, 129
- repair cost considerations, 233
- scams, avoiding, 233
- searching by, 86

**conferences**

- eBay Live!, 41
- learning how to sell from, 256

**confirmation, listing e-mails, 178**

**contact information, registration process, 58**

**context-sensitivity, help features, 46, 48**

**costs, shipping, 326–328**

**counters, 131, 318**

**courses, Online Courses link, 47**

**credit card information**

- payments, 133
- seller-accepted payment methods, 323
- seller's account, 63

**currency options, searching by, 83**

**current or starting bid, item details, 122**

**custom charges, location preferences, 126**

**customer reviews, checking before bidding, 138**

**customization options, sorting search results, 111–113**

**D**

**descriptions. *See also* titles**

- changes in, bid retractions, 144
- condition of items, 129
- counters, 131
- on Half Zone, 222
- lack of information in, 128–129
- organized, 282–283
- outrageous claims, 127

descriptions. *(continued)*

- photos in, advantages of, 129–130
- searching by, 77–78
- spelling errors in, 128, 256–257

## Details section (Item page)

- Add to Calendar link, 123
- current or starting bid, 122
- Time Left section, 122–123

## Didn't Win list (My eBay, All Buying section), 197

## digital camera options, photos, 304

## direct mail notifications, 181–182

## discussion boards

- overview, 50–51
- scams, avoiding, 231

## DJ equipment, 20

## duration choices

- 1-day auction, 296
- 3,5 and 7-day auctions, 297
- 10-day auctions, 297

## DVDs

- collectibles, 15
- instructional, 30–31

**E**

## e-mail addresses

- confirmation, PayPal, 67
- registration process, 58

e-mail notifications. *See* notifications

## Eagles, 8-tracks, 10–11

## eBay

- defined, 34–35
- launching, 35
- Web site, 35, 74

## eBay Live!, 41

## eBay Motors, 42

## eBay Search Toolbar, 92–93

## eBay Stores, 42–43

## eBay Toolbar, 182

## eBay University link, 46–47

## editing software, photos, 308–310

## electronics, collectibles, 20, 22

## end and start dates, 124

## end of auction notice, 175, 178

## Ending Soonest option, sorting search results, 108

## Events page, 54–55

## exact phrases, searching by, 89

## Exactly option, Multiple Item Listings section, 84

## Exclude these words text box, searches, 82

## exclusionary searches, 89–90

## experts

- asking before bidding, 138–139
- learning from, 255

**F**

## Favorites area (My eBay)

- favorite categories, 202–203
- favorite searches, 199–201
- favorite sellers, 201

## Featured Plus option, 317

## feedback

- avoiding scams, 244
- for buyers, 71
- comment lines, 146–147
- Feedback link (My eBay, My Account area), 206
- Feedback Notification option, status e-mail, 177
- feedback points, stars, 119–120
- in Half.com, 226
- negative, 148
- neutral, 147
- non-paying buyers, 70
- non-sending sellers, 70
- positive, 147, 189
- private, 149
- Read Feedback Comments link, 120
- recent ratings, 142
- score breakdown, 142
- for sellers, 70–71
- star rewards, 119–120, 140–141

## Find Items search option, 78–80

## finding items to sell, 260–261

## flaws in photos, 308

## focus techniques, photos, 304–305

## frame icon, 110

## From Buyers tab, feedback comments, 146

## From Sellers tab, feedback comments, 147

## From Specific Sellers section, searches, 82

**G**

## Gallery View Only feature, 315–316

## Get Help Buying or Selling link, 262

## gift icon, 110

## Gift Items option, searching by, 85, 99

## gift services, 318

Giving Works page, charity links, 151–153

Global Sites area, 45

Goldmine Guides, 12

Google Web site

avoiding scams using, 243

researching items on, 137–138

Grease, collectibles, 15

green star rewards, feedback ratings, 141

Groups link (Community page), 55

guitars, collectibles, 19

## H

### Half Zone

category searches, 215

Condition column, 216–217

launching, 209

Results page, 216

search keyword option, 210–214

selling on

item description, 222

item type, 219

online auction *versus* fixed price option, 218

overview, 217

Search By option, 219–221

Start Selling Now button, 218

### Half.com

accounts, setting up, 223

Brand New Items option, 227

Checkout link, 227–228

discussed, 43

favorite sellers, 225

feedback ratings, 226

launching, 222

Like New Items option, 227

overview, 42

personal information, 224–226

Purchases link, 224

Very Good Items option, 227

harmonicas, collectibles, 19

Hately, Matt, 34

headphones, 20

### help features

Community page, discussion boards, 50–51

context-sensitivity, 46, 48

eBay University link, 47

Get Help Buying or Selling link, 262

Help Hub, 46

Learning Center, 46

Security Center, 48–49

histories of bids, Item page, 124

home page

illustration, 36

launching, 35

## I

I agree to These Terms button, registration process, 61

identification information, registration process, 59

identity theft, bid retractions, 145

illegal items, warnings against, 278

increments table, bids, 158–159

installing eBay Search Toolbar, 92–93

instructional music videos/CD/DVDs, 30–31

instruments

accessories, 20

collectibles, 19–20

shipping, 340–341

insurance options, 132

Item page

Add to Watch List section, 122

bid histories

discussed, 124

sniping and, 165

categories path, 118

Description section

condition of items, 129

counters, 131

lack of information, 128–129

outrageous claims, 127

photographs in, 129–130

spelling errors in, 128

Details section

Add to Calendar link, 123

current or starting bid, 122

Time Left section, 122–123

location preferences, 125–126

overview, 117

Payment Methods section, 132–133

Read Feedback Comments link, 120

Seller Information section, 119–121

shipping and payment details, 132

start dates/end dates, 124

Item Watch Reminder option, status e-mail, 176

Items Available To section, searching by, 82

Items by Bidder option, searching by, 87

Items by Seller option, searching by, 86  
 Items in New Condition option, searching by, 86  
 Items in Stores option, searching by, 87  
 Items Listed with PayPal option, searching by, 85, 98  
 Items Located In section, searching by, 82  
 Items Near Me section, searching by, 85  
 Items Priced section, searches, 82, 99  
 Items Specifics section, titles, 281  
 Items Won option, My eBay, 185

## J

Jagger, Mick, collectibles, 8  
 John, Elton, collectibles, 13  
 Jones, Tom, 8-tracks, 10  
 JPG format, picture quality, 307

## K

keywords  
     Search Title and Description feature, 77–78  
     selling by, 266–268  
 KISS, collectibles, 17

## L

lack of information, descriptions, 128–129  
 last-minute shopper techniques, bidding, 166–167  
 launching  
     About Me page, 240  
     eBay, 35  
     Half Zone, 209  
     Half.com, 222  
     home page, 35  
     Learning Center, 46  
     My eBay, 191  
     registration process, 57–58  
     Start Selling Now page, 261  
 Learning Center, 46  
 Left for Others tab, feedback comments, 147  
 licensing considerations, 26  
 lighting considerations, photos, 306–307  
 Like New Items option (Half.com), 227  
 List view, search results, 103  
 listing e-mails, 177–179  
 Listing Option page, titles, 279  
 location preferences  
     bootlegs, 126

    custom charges considerations, 126  
     pirated copy considerations, 126  
     regional differences, 126  
     searching by, 85  
     shipping cost considerations, 125  
     US only shipments, 329  
     worldwide shipments, 329  
 Location section, searching by, 82–83  
 losing bids, 186–188, 250

## M

Madonna concert tickets, 5  
 magazines  
     collectibles, 26–27  
     *Rolling Stone*, 26  
 Main Categories section, selling by, 268–269  
 main toolbar  
     Browse link, 37–38  
     Community link, 40  
     My eBay link, 40  
     Search link, 37, 39  
     Sell link, 37, 39, 63  
 Matching Categories section, search results, 96–98  
 maximum bids, 156–158  
 Mcfarlane toys, 17  
 member profiles, reviewing, 145  
 Members Click Here link, 37  
 Member's Spotlight link (Community page), 55–56  
 memorabilia, concert, 6–7  
 merchant credit cards, seller-accepted  
     payment methods, 323  
 Metallica, collectibles, 23  
 Mint in Box (MIB), collectibles, 17  
 MissionFish, 152–153  
 modifiers, searches, 88–90  
 money orders  
     scams, 244  
     seller-accepted payment methods, 320–321  
 monitoring bidding process, 171, 182–186  
 More on eBay section, search results, 101–102  
 More Search Options link (Find Items search option), 79  
 mornings, auction start times, 299  
 Morrison, Jim, collectibles, 18  
 motors, eBay, 42  
*Moulin Rouge*, collectibles, 15  
 MP3 players, 20

MS Alerts, 174–176  
**Multiple Item Listings section, searching by**, 83–84  
**music figures, toys, collectibles**, 16–18  
**musicals**  
     collectibles, 15  
     tickets for, 4  
**My Account area (My eBay)**  
     Feedback link, 206  
     Personal Information link, 203–204  
**My eBay**  
     accessing, 191  
     All Buying section  
         Bidding link, 196  
         Didn't Win list, 197  
         Watching list, 192–195  
         Won list, 197  
     All Selling section, 198–199  
     Bid Alerts, 182–183  
     Favorites area  
         favorite categories, 202–203  
         favorite searches, 199–201  
         favorite sellers, 201  
     Items Won option, 185  
     My Account area  
         Feedback link, 206  
         Personal Information link, 203–204  
     overview, 40  
     Seller Account link, 206  
     Watch Alerts, 183–184

## N

negative feedback, 148  
 neutral feedback, 147  
**New to Selling section (Sell link)**, 63  
**Newly Listed option, sorting search results**, 108  
**news (Community page)**, 54  
**Nicholas, Jordy**, 33, 73  
**non-paying buyers, feedback**, 70  
**non-sending sellers, feedback**, 70  
**nonprofits, charities**, 152  
**notes, adding to Watch list**, 193–194  
**notifications. See also alerts**  
     bidding alerts, 174  
     direct mail, 181–182  
     eBay Wireless E-mail, 172–174  
     end of auction alerts, 175

MS Alerts, 174–176  
 overview, 171  
 Privacy Policy changes, 180  
 product surveys, 180  
 registration process, 61  
 telemarketing options, 181  
 transaction e-mails  
     listing e-mails, 177–179  
     status e-mails, 176–177  
 User Agreement changes, 180  
**nudge bidding**, 160

## O

obscene language, warnings against, 278  
**odd man technique, bidding**, 166  
*Official Price Guide to Records*, 12  
**online action versus fixed price option, selling on Half Zone**, 218  
**Online Courses link (eBay University)**, 47  
**opening**  
     eBay, 35  
     Half Zone, 209  
     Half.com, 222  
     home page, 35  
     Learning Center, 46  
     My eBay, 191  
     registration process, 57–58  
**opera tickets**, 4  
**organization considerations**  
     in descriptions, 282–283  
     selling techniques, 248  
**Osbourne, Ozzy, collectibles**, 17  
**Outbid Notice option, status e-mail**, 177  
**outbidding**, 159–160  
**outrageous claims, caution against**, 127  
**overseas shipping considerations**, 126–127

## P

**Packaging & Shipping link (Answer Center)**, 53  
**packing materials, shipping instruments**, 341  
**passwords**  
     case-sensitivity, 67  
     good/bad, 59  
     PayPal, 67  
     registration process, 59–60  
     stolen, 59

**payment**

- credit card, 133
- instructions and return policies, 328–329
- Pay Now button, 323–324
- payment and shipping details, Item page, 132
- Payment Methods section (Item page), 132–133
- prompt, 288
- scams, 243
- seller-accepted payment methods, 319–323

**PayPal**

- accounts, setting up, 67–69, 206–207
- business accounts, 67
- e-mail confirmation, 67
- Items Listed with PayPal option, searching by, 85, 98
- overview, 44, 66
- password considerations, 67
- personal accounts, 67
- preferences, 324–326
- privacy policies, 67
- as quick payment method, 188
- registration confirmation, 68
- seller-accepted payment methods, 319–320
- signing up, 67
- user agreements, 67
- Web site, 67

**People section (Community page), 55–56****personal accounts, PayPal, 67****personal checks, seller-accepted payment methods, 321–322****personal information**

- Half.com, 224–226
- Personal Information link (My Ebay, My Account area), 203–204

**photos**

- background clutter in, 305
- borders around, 317
- close-ups, asking for, 236–237
- collectibles, 27–28
- in descriptions, advantages of, 129–130
- digital camera options, 304
- editing software, 308–310
- Featured Plus option, 317
- flaws in, 308
- focus techniques, 304–305
- Gallery View Only feature, 315–316
- Highlight feature, 317
- inserting in listing, 310–312

## JPG format, 307

- lighting considerations, 306–307
- scanner options, 304
- size considerations, 306
- slideshow feature, 313
- standard, 312
- super sizing, 312

**pianos, collectibles, 19****Picture Gallery option, search results, 103, 105****pictures. *See* photos****pins, concert memorabilia, 6****pirated copy considerations, location preferences, 126****Plant, Robert, collectibles, 8****Popular Searches area (More on eBay section), 101****positive feedback, 147, 189****posters**

- collectibles, 27–28
- shipping, 342–343

**Presley, Elvis, collectibles, 8–9****Previously Used categories, 265****price headers, search results, 108****pricing techniques**

- Goldmine Guides*, 12
- hot ticket times, 292
- Official Price Guide to Records*, 12
- strategies, 292–295

**privacy policies**

- changes to, 180
- PayPal, 67
- registration process, 60–61

**private auctions, 300****private feedback, 149****product surveys, 180****profanity, warnings against, 278****Purchases link (Half.com), 224****purple shooting star rewards, feedback ratings, 141****purple star rewards, feedback ratings, 141****Q****questions**

- anticipating, 283–284
- asking to sellers
  - overview, 120
  - researching before bidding, 138–139
  - scams, avoiding, 233–234



**R**

**Read Feedback Comments link (Item page)**, 120  
**recent ratings, feedback activity**, 142  
**red shooting star rewards, feedback ratings**, 141  
**red star rewards, feedback ratings**, 141  
**red tag icon**, 111  
**refresh rates, sniping and**, 161–163  
**refunds/warranties**, 235  
**regional differences, location preferences**, 126  
**registration process**  
     birthdate information, 60  
     Complete eBay Registration button, 62  
     contact information, 58  
     e-mail address, 58  
     I agree to These Terms button, 61  
     notifications, 61  
     password considerations, 59–60  
     PayPal information, 66–69  
     privacy policy, 60–61  
     security, 58  
     seller's account, setting up, 63–66  
     starting, 57–58  
     user agreements, 61  
     user IDs, 59  
     verification, 61  
**Related Links section (Learning Center)**, 46  
**relisting items**, 347–348  
**repair cost considerations**, 233  
**researching items**  
     Ask the Seller a Question link, 138–139  
     bid retractions, 142–145  
     competition, checking, 136  
     customer reviews, 138  
     experts, gathering information from, 138–139  
     feedback considerations  
         recent ratings, 142  
         score breakdown, 142  
         star rewards, 140–141  
     Google Web site, 137–138  
     member profiles, reviewing, 145  
     online stores, checking, 137  
     overview, 135  
     star rewards, 140–141  
**reserve prices**, 168  
**results, from searches**  
     All Items option, 103  
     Are You Looking For link, 105–106

    Auctions option, 103  
     bids column, 108  
     Buy It Now option, 103  
     customization options, 111–113  
     displaying only in current Results list, 98–100  
     on Half Zone, 216  
     List view, 103  
     Matching Categories section, 96–98  
     More on eBay section, 101–102  
     Picture Gallery option, 103, 105  
     price headers, 108  
     sorting, 108–113  
     time left column, 108  
**retractions, bidding**, 142–145  
**return policies**, 328–329  
**review and submit page, About Me page**, 242  
*Rolling Stones*  
     magazine, 26  
     *Sticky Fingers* album, 12, 14

**S**

**same day shipping**, 288  
**scams**  
     avoiding  
         About Me page, 239–242  
         BBB (Better Business Bureau), 236  
         close-up photos, asking for, 236–237  
         completed items searches, 237  
         discussion groups, checking with, 231  
         experts, guidance from, 232  
         feedback comments, checking, 244  
         Google searches, 243  
         item condition considerations, 233  
         overview, 229  
         refunds/warranties, 235  
         repair cost considerations, 233  
         sellers, quizzing, 233–234  
         serial numbers, checking, 230  
         trial usage considerations, 237–238  
     outrageous claims, 127  
     payment methods, 243  
     Security Center, 48  
     shilling, 168–169  
     ticket sales, 6  
**scanner options, photos**, 304  
**Scheduled list (My eBay, All Selling section)**, 198

score breakdown, feedback ratings, 142

Search By option, Half Zone, 219–221

Search link, main toolbar, 37, 39

#### searches

Add to Favorites link option, 93–94

All Categories search option, 81

Buy It Now Items option, 85, 98

case-sensitivity, 89

by categories, 91–92

charities, 151

Completed Listings only option, 81, 99

by currency options, 83

eBay Search Toolbar, 92–93

by exact phrases, 89

Exclude these words text box, 82

exclusionary, 89–90

Favorite, 199–201

Find Items search option, 78–80

Gift Items option, 85, 99

on Half Zone

category searches, 215

search keyword option, 210–214

Items by Bidder option, 87

Items by Seller option, 86

Items in New Condition option, 86

Items in Stores option, 87

Items Listed with PayPal option, 85, 98

Items Near Me section, 85

Items Priced section, 82, 99

Location section, 82–83

modifiers, 88–90

Multiple Item Listings section, 83–84

overview, 73

researching before, 74–76

results of

All Items option, 103

Are You Looking For link, 105–106

Auctions option, 103

bids column, 108

Buy It Now option, 103

customization options, 111–113

displaying only in current Results list, 98–100

List view, 103

Matching Categories section, 96–97

More on eBay section, 101–102

Picture Gallery option, 103, 105

price headers, 108

sorting, 108–113

time left column, 108

Search Title and Description feature, 77–78

Show Only section, 84–86

From Specific Sellers section, 82

store items, 87

What are you looking for search box, 45

wildcard modifiers, 91

#### security

registration process, 58

Security Center, 48–49

Sell link, main toolbar, 37, 39, 63

seller-accepted payment methods, 319–323

Seller Account link (My eBay), 206

Seller Information section, Item page, 119–121

Seller MIA, bid retractions, 144

sellers. *See also* selling

asking questions to, 120, 233–234

contacting, 188

end of auction notice, 178

favorite, 201

feedback for, 70–71

non-sending, 70

paying, 188

searching by items by, 82

View Seller's Other Items link, 120

selling. *See also* sellers

Advertise Your Real Estate option, 263

bonus item considerations, 257

by categories

additional category options, 269–271

category by keywords, 266–268

Main Categories section, 268–269

Previously Used categories, 265

duration choices, 296–297

finding items to sell, 260–261

on Half Zone

item description, 222

item type, 219

online auction *versus* fixed price option, 218

overview, 217

Search By option, 219–221

Start Selling Now button, 218

help options, Get Help Buying or Selling link, 262

illegal items, warnings against, 278

pre-selling preparation, 261

Sell at Fixed Price option, 263

- Sell Item at Online Auction option, 262
  - seller's account, setting up, 63–66
  - selling fees, 65
  - Start Selling Now page, 261
  - terms and conditions, 288
  - tips for, 274–278
  - Trading Assistant option, 264
  - Selling list (My eBay, All Selling section), 198**
  - seminars, 41
  - serial numbers, checking, 230
  - sheet music, collectibles, 28–30
  - shilling, 168–169
  - shipping**
    - albums, 341–342
    - books, 344–345
    - CDs, 341
    - clothing, 344
    - collectibles, 344–345
    - cost considerations, location preferences, 125
    - costs, 326–328
    - instruments, 340–341
    - overseas shipping, 126–127
    - posters, 342–343
    - same day, 288
    - shipping and payment details, Item page, 132
  - Show Only section, searching by, 84–86**
  - shrink-wrapped software, 26
  - Sign Up button (PayPal), 67
  - sites. *See* Web sites
  - size considerations, photos, 306
  - sniping**
    - alternate snipe option, 165
    - defined, 160
    - nudge bidding and, 160
    - refresh rates and, 161–163
    - ten minute mark, 164
    - ten second mark, 165
  - software**
    - Apple Soundtrack, 24
    - licensing considerations, 26
    - shrink-wrapped, 26
  - Sold list (My eBay, All Selling section), 199**
  - sorting search results, 108–113
  - speakers, collectibles, 20
  - specialty sites, 41
  - spelling errors in descriptions, 128, 256–257
  - stands, instruments, 20
  - star rewards, feedback points, 119–120, 140–141
  - start and end dates, 124
  - Start Selling Now button (HalfZone), 218
  - Start Selling Now page, 261
  - start times, for auctions, 297–299
  - starting and current bid, item details, 122
  - status e-mail, 176–177
  - stereos, collectibles, 20
  - Sticky Fingers* album, Rolling Stones, 12, 14
  - stolen passwords, 59
  - storage options, 8-tracks, 11
  - stores
    - overview, 42–43
    - searching items by, 87
  - straps, instruments, 20
  - subtitles, 281
  - sun icon, 110
  - surveys, product, 180
  - sweats, concert memorabilia, 6
  - Swift, Mark, 33–34
- T**
- telemarketing options, notifications, 181
  - ten minute mark, sniping, 164
  - ten second mark, sniping, 165
  - terms and conditions, 288
  - The Chatter newsletter, 54
  - The Sound of Music*, collectibles, 15
  - tickets
    - concert, 4
    - musicals, 4
    - opera, 4
    - scams, 6
    - vintage, 6–7
  - time left column, search results, 108
  - Time Left section (Item page, Details section), 122–123
  - titles. *See also* descriptions
    - acronyms in, 277
    - character limitations in, 276
    - characters in, avoiding, 274
    - Items Specifics section, 281
    - Listing Option page, 279
    - searching by, 77–78
    - subtitles, 281
    - Title Model system, 275
  - toolbar, main**
    - Browse link, 37–38
    - Community link, 40

My eBay link, 40  
 Search link, 37, 39  
 Sell link, 37, 39  
 toys, collectibles, 16–18  
 tradeshows, learning how to sell from, 256  
 Trading Assistant option, selling options, 264  
 transaction e-mails  
   listing e-mails, 177–179  
   status e-mails, 176–177  
 trial usage considerations, avoiding scams, 237–238  
 trumpets, collectibles, 19  
 turquoise shooting star rewards, feedback ratings, 141  
 turquoise star rewards, feedback ratings, 141  
 typographical errors, bid retractions, 143

## U

university, eBay University link, 47  
 Unsold list (My eBay, All Selling section), 199  
 US only shipments, 329  
 user agreements  
   changes to, 180  
   PayPal, 67  
   registration process, 61  
 user IDs, registration process, 59

## V

vanilla bidding, 156–160  
 verification, registration process, 61  
 Very Good Items option (Half.com), 227  
 VHS videos, collectibles, 15  
 videos, instructional, 30–31  
 View Seller's Other Items link, Seller Information section, 120  
 vintage concert tickets, 6–7  
 vintage instruments, 19  
 vinyl, collectibles, 12–14  
 violins, collectibles, 19  
 vulture techniques, bidding, 166–167

## W

warranties/refunds, 235  
 Watch Alerts (My eBay), 183–184  
 Watch list  
   adding items to, 192–193  
   adding notes to, 193–194  
   Bid Now button, 195  
   comparisons, 195  
 Web sites  
   eBay, 35, 74  
   Google, researching items on, 137–138  
   PayPal, 67  
 weekends, auction start times, 298  
 What are you looking for search box, 45  
 Who vintage signed concert ticket, 7  
 wildcard modifiers, searches, 91  
 winning bids, 188–189, 251–253  
 wire transfers, scams and, 243  
 wireless e-mail notifications, 172–174  
 Won list (My eBay, All Buying section), 197  
 worldwide shipments, location preferences, 329

## X

xylophones, collectibles, 19

## Y

yellow shooting star rewards, feedback ratings, 141  
 yellow star rewards, feedback ratings, 141  
*Yellow Submarine* sheet music, Beatles, 29

## Z

Zip Codes, searching by, 85