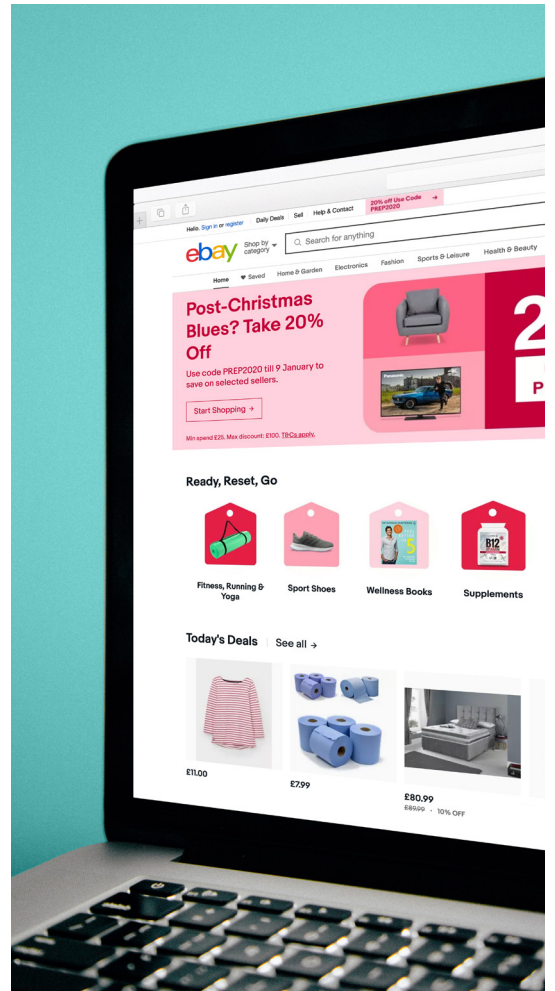




The Global Language of Business

# eBay guide 2020

## Checklist for optimising listings



## Getting the basics right

So, you have a great product, and you're ready to list it on eBay. But are you using best practices to optimise your listings to give your products the best chance of being seen by shoppers? At GS1 UK, our marketplaces team have compiled a checklist to help you get the basics right when listing your products for the first time.



### Create your product title with the most important keywords at the beginning



- State exactly what the item is, even if it repeats the category name
- The optimal product title order is brand, features, product type, details i.e. Silentnight Superspring Hollowfibre Pillow Extra Softness & Comfort 2 Pack
- Use as many of the 80-character limit as you can, but keep in mind that in eBay's gallery view, the title will be truncated, so the first 55 characters are the most important
- Don't use acronyms or jargon like RRP (Recommended Retail Price) or BNIB (Brand New In Box)
- Be aware that subtitles are charged at £2 per listing



### List items in the correct category and subcategory



- This is the first way shoppers will filter their product search, so listing your product in the correct category and subcategory is extremely important
- Be aware that although you can select a second category, if it is relevant to your product listing, extra fees may apply
- Add a reminder to check the eBay taxonomy regularly to make sure you are still listing in the right category in case of any changes on the platform



### Add product identifiers – brand, GTIN and MPN (if provided)



- Not all products require Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs) or Manufacturer Part Numbers (MPNs), but where possible, you should add these as they give additional marketing benefits
- If you are the manufacturer or brand owner, you should be allocating your own GS1 GTINs to your products to ensure brand protection, guarantee uniqueness and avoid number clashes
- Unique identifiers allows listings from sellers on eBay to appear on external product comparison sites and pull in customer product reviews from other retailers
- Google states a product with a GTIN can see **20 per cent** higher conversion rates than those without, along with a **40 per cent increase** in visibility



### Complete item specifics using eBay-suggested attributes



- Provide as many product attributes as possible or your product may be excluded from search results when a shopper refines their search by a specific product trait that is not listed
- eBay now require at least the top three item specifics for each category - check which ones are mandatory for your product by visiting <https://sellercentre.ebay.co.uk/business/item-specifics>
- Item specifics can vary by category, so make sure to browse the site for the category your product is going to be in to ensure that, at the very minimum, the attributes that appear above the fold are completed



### Be honest about the condition of your items



- If the product you are selling is not new, make sure you are describing it correctly, so that the shopper knows exactly what to expect to minimise returns
- Make sure any issues with the condition of the item are reflected in an image, so the shopper is fully aware of what they are purchasing

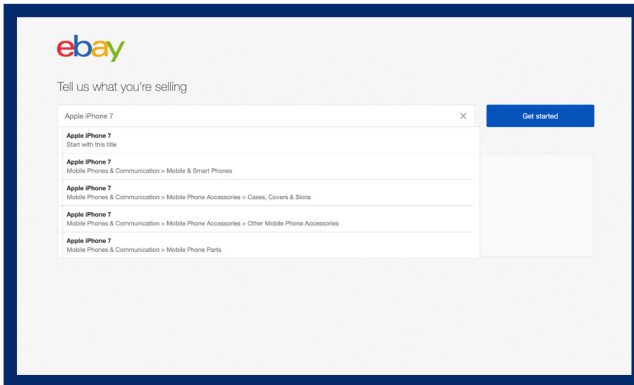


### Ensure your description is genuinely descriptive!



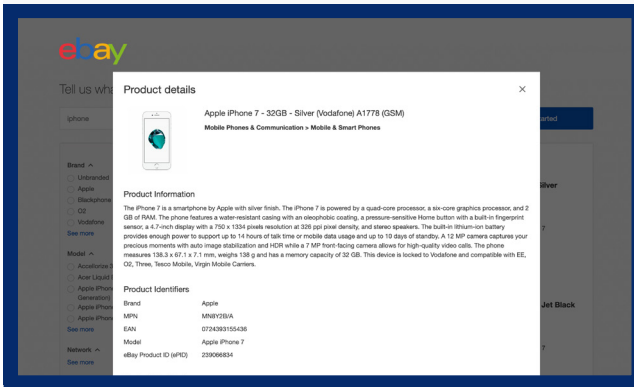
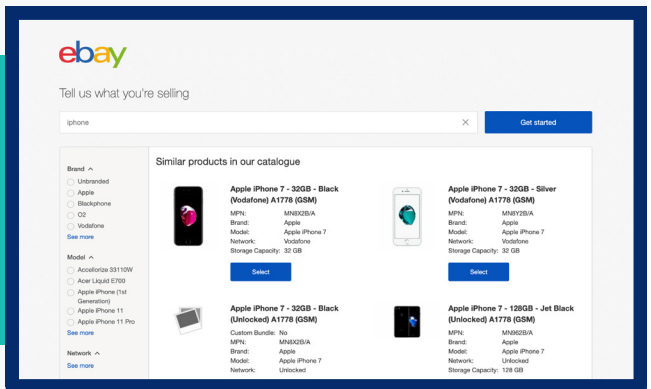
- Put your terms and conditions in the designated fields, not in your description - this is even more important with the mobile views
- eBay automatically shows sections like returns and terms and conditions for mobile, so these fields need to be populated to ensure all customers get the information

**Remember: if the item is brand new, it needs a GTIN listed against it to appear on Google Shopping**



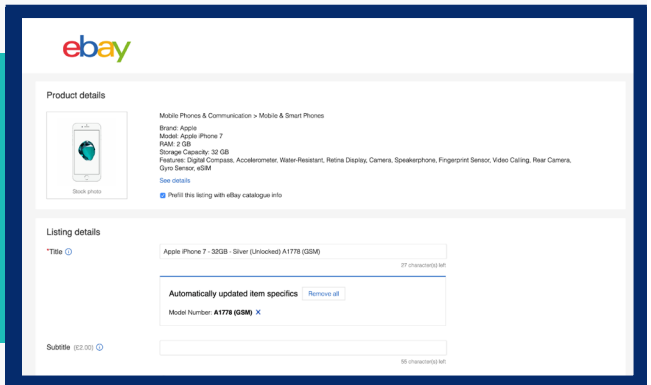
When you start to list your item, you can enter several types of product identifiers – including the GTIN (EAN/UPC). eBay uses this to match the item you are selling to their catalogue.

eBay will then show you options for items matching that search result, for example the term 'iPhone' will give multiple options. If you use a GTIN, you will only surface one option.



When you select the item, eBay will show you the completed attributes that are held in their catalogue for you to verify.

Once selected, you are able to enter the detail of your 'offer', which includes the price, shipping options, condition etc.



## Elevating your listing

Once the you have got your basic product listings right, you should start to think about increasing their visibility further – particularly for mobile devices. Our marketplaces team have provided a checklist of tips that you can apply to your product listings to help improve their visibility and chances of conversion.



### Add a mobile-friendly description

Over half of the transactions on eBay take place through a mobile device. This means it is crucial that you make sure your descriptions are small-screen friendly.



- **Keep your descriptions short and sweet** - Remember mobile buyers are reading your descriptions on a small screen, so keep them as short as possible without omitting any important details, such as key information on the product's condition
- **Active content is no longer allowed on eBay** - Complicated HTML, such as cross-selling carousels, should no longer be used in your item descriptions. This is because it is likely that it won't render properly on different mobile devices and require a lot of updating, which can lead to frustration for your buyers when they are trying to view more detail. See eBay's help page on their Javascript policy for more details: <http://www.ebay.co.uk/help/policies/listing-policies/javascript-policy?id=4247>
- **Make sure you check how your listing displays on different devices** - As mentioned above, HTML readers differ depending on the device they are being viewed on. There are free online tools you can use to check your listings, where you simply input the URL and select the device you wish to view - eBay recommends using <http://www.i-ways.net/mobile-friendly/en-uk/>
- **Keep the formatting simple** - Use bullet points in item descriptions to make information easy for customers to quickly scan read
- **Improve readability with clear text** - Use a black font from size 12-14 on a white background for ease of readability
- **Listing fields should include your postage, payment and returns information** - Use designated fields to share information on you postage, payments and returns - it will be far more effective than trying to clump this information into your description where you could detract from the item itself



### Propose a range of postage options



- This might seem obvious, but eBay gives preferential treatment in their search function for listings with “fast and free” shipping options - if you can offer this function, please do. eBay will add the badge and promote this for you
- Include other postage options where available - not all customers are in a hurry



### Use square images in a minimum of 1600 pixels wide



- eBay recommend that image sizes are a minimum of 1600 pixels on the shortest side and the maximum file size is 7MB
- Use the entire image frame to showcase your item, with minimal empty space in the background, to make it easier for your buyer to view the item you're selling
- eBay are starting to suppress images that don't comply with their guidelines, so make sure you adhere to the rules



### Use the multi-variation function where appropriate



- If your product comes in a range of different colours or sizes, make sure you build this as one multi-variant listing, rather than a different listing for each variant - this will enable sales from all product variants to be combined, helping with your product's search rankings as each time a variant is sold it counts towards the listing as a whole
- Remember that you need a GTIN (EAN) for each variant - sometimes known as the child SKU - they should be assigned as the bottom level of the product, not the parent SKU and not at a unit level



### Offer straightforward returns



- eBay are strongly encouraging business sellers to update their returns policy from 14 days to 30 days - sellers that do this experience a conversion uplift of up to 13 per cent
- Buyers expect to see returns periods set to 30 days, however, even if you set your returns period to a year, this doesn't necessarily increase the amount of return requests but does mark you as an accommodating seller
- eBay continue to give more exposure to sellers that provide great customer service, so consider how to broaden your returns policy and boost your customers' satisfaction



### Check your price is reasonable, but you don't have to be cheapest



- It is unlikely that you are the only person selling a particular item on eBay, so benchmark your price against others - pricing is important, but it's not the only factor
- Generous return options have a positive impact on purchase decisions

## Promotions to increase visibility and sales

Once you are 100 per cent happy with your product listings, the next thing to think about is promoting your products to a wider audience. You can tap into eBay's native marketing tools to run event-specific promotions, offer your customers multi-buy options or provide discounts when customers order more than one product from you.

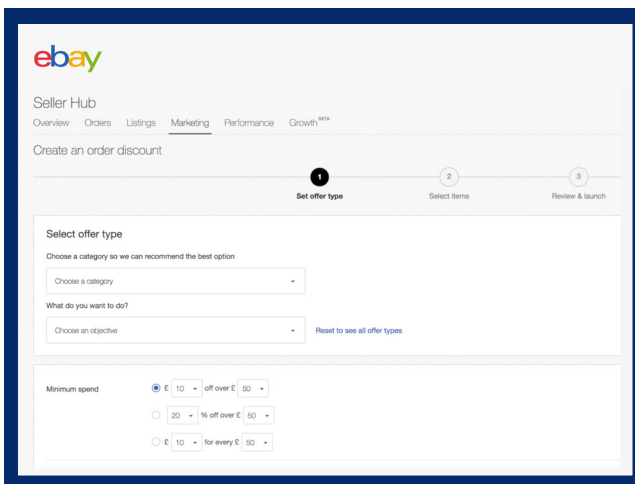


### Use eBay's native marketing tools



The eBay Seller Hub boasts several promotional tools to help manage your e-commerce venture all in one place. Make sure you group similar products together and offer discounts on those as a group, rather than promoting a random mixture of items. For example, a promotion of 20 per cent off all footwear will be far stronger than a blanket discount, because customers will know what to expect from the promotion and will be more likely to click through. Some of eBay's marketing tools include:

- **Multi-buy** - This function allows you to offer tiered discounts to buyers when they purchase multiple quantities of your items
- **Order discount** - Offer a discount when buyers order more items from you - upsell at the point of sale to customers who are about to convert
- **Sale event and markdown** - Use this function to sell your items at a discount for a limited period of time, promising bargains on the listed price of your key products
- **Seller coupons** - Create your exclusive offer codes to apply to your products at checkout



Here you can see the eBay tool that allows you to set up an order discount. It is an easy way for you to create different types of promotions that you can tailor to suit your business needs.

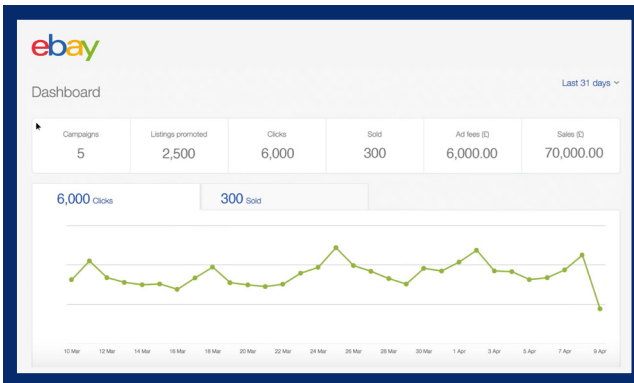
Find out how to set up these promotions by watching this training video: <https://sellercentre.ebay.co.uk/business/order-discount>



## Use the promoted listings tool



- This is the eBay equivalent of sponsored ads - they only charge you when a customer makes a purchase, so you can set the budget to the maximum amount
- Promoted listings are risk-free if you can afford some extra margin



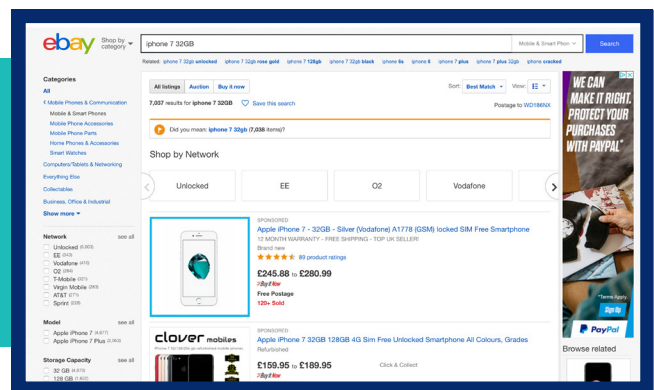
This is the dashboard for 'promote your listings'. To begin using this tool follow three steps:

**Start your programme:** choose the listings you want to promote

**Choose your rate:** select the percentage of the sale price you want to use for your promoted listings

**Pay when you sell:** no sale, no fee - when shoppers click your ads and buy, you pay your selected rate

This is an example of where a sponsored listing can appear on the eBay site. There are more than 50 different options across the site, which can give your products up to 32 per cent more visibility.



Watch the video for more information: <https://sellercentre.ebay.co.uk/business/promote-your-listings>





## Set up a promotions calendar



- Track peak shopping periods throughout the year, from traditional retail high points to the online sales events like Black Friday and Cyber Monday
- Include some of the lower profile buying events too, such as Mother's Day, Back to School, Eid, Chinese New Year etc.
- Using the tools in the eBay Seller Hub, you can offer specific promotions as visibly as possible



There are many templates out there you can use as a base to create a promotional calendar. A simple google search will bring up some great ideas.

You should start with key events and dates for the year, but go further than the obvious ones like Christmas or Easter. Think internationally and more than national events or bank holidays.

Include things like The Great British Bake Off final, if you sell complimentary products – eBay saw a huge spike in the sale of baking goods while the programme was on air. Remember, we also have some big sporting events like the Euros and the Olympics this year. For the last football World Cup eBay saw a surge in the sale of TVs.

Once you have all your key dates, start planning in the promotions you can run in conjunction with them. Ensure you get them set up and saved, so they are ready to go live ahead of time in case other things crop up – you don't want to rush. Finally, make sure you preview your promotions and amend keywords on any sponsored ad campaigns you also have running.

# Tips and tricks

## Don't be too exact when detailing the item specifics



eBay have sets of attributes which they display to shoppers. For example, in clothing colours they display 'Red', but they don't display, 'Crimson', 'Cherry' or 'Candy'.

You should set your **item specific** to the more generic 'Red' and then use an 'Exact Colour' item specific to display the shade of red or the manufacturer's colour/code name.

## Only include relevant item information in your product description



**Do include:** Anything that is a 'product description' - brand name, model, fabric, material, colour and any additional information that's helpful to your prospective purchaser.

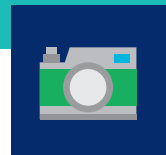
**Do not include:** Information about your business, terms and conditions, shipping, returns or eBay feedback. Your description supports rank and visibility on search engines both on and off eBay, and information not relevant to your product may lower its position in search.

## Regularly check your products are in the right category



eBay update their category structure regularly. Check your products are in the best category and subcategory for their type of product.

## Invest in professional product images



You will get a lot of mileage from your most important product images by using them on multiple occasions and over a period of time. It is worth investing in professional help to ensure your images reflect your product in the best possible light, from simple cropping or touch ups to studio photoshoots.

## Optimise product titles by putting the most important words first



Place important words, such as the brand and product type, towards the beginning of your title.

If you want to find out more about scaling your business on eBay or have any questions on how to add GTINs to your listings, get in touch with our marketplaces team by emailing [marketplacessupport@gs1uk.org](mailto:marketplacessupport@gs1uk.org) or call our member support team on **020 7092 3501**.