



Product and Customer Support Content Style Guide for the U.S.

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Introduction

Your Guide to eBay Content

The *eBay Product and Customer Support Content Style Guide for the U.S.* offers guidelines for producing and developing content for eBay. Great content is:

- Clear – Unambiguous and straightforward
- Concise – Succinct, expressing a lot with few words
- Consistent – Reliable both in information and voice
- Compelling – Resonating with users

This content style guide has these parts:

1. Developing content for eBay

An introduction to writing usable, effective content for the eBay audience, this part is relevant to all channels and content types.

2. Developing customer support content

An introduction to customer support content, this part is relevant to Customer Support and site assistance channels.

3. Developing Trust and Safety content

Guidelines for approaching Trust and Safety content, which can appear in any channel.

4. Terms, symbols, and punctuation

An A-to-Z list that also includes the correct names of eBay products, services, programs, and features, and is relevant to all channels and content types.

This guide will be supplemented by tone and formatting guidelines for specific eBay content types:

- **Tone and Formatting for Product Content/UI**
- **Tone and Formatting for Help/InfoHubs**
- **Tone and Formatting for Contact Us**
- **Tone and Formatting for KANA Emails**
- **Tone and Formatting for Chat**
- **Tone and Formatting for Phones**

The *eBay Product and Customer support Content Style Guide for the U.S.* is a living document and will be updated as standards are set and changed. You can always find the current document at <http://share/sites/ContentMgmt/default.aspx>.

Part 1. Developing content for eBay

This section is relevant to all channels and content types.

About eBay Inc.

eBay is The World's Online Marketplace®, enabling trade on a local, national, and international basis. With a diverse and passionate community of individuals and small businesses, eBay offers an online platform where millions of items are traded each day.

The eBay audience

When you're developing content for eBay, knowing your target audience will help you communicate with people effectively. For up-to-date information about the eBay audience, refer to the [eBay Product Voice Guide](#) and the *personas* (profiles of [buyers](#) and [sellers](#)) developed by the product and UI teams.

The eBay voice

Voice is a company's unique way of speaking. If you think of content as *what* is said, voice is *how* it's said. Voice is an aspect of *brand*—a company's immediately recognizable identity, which is expressed in every facet of how the company is presented.

The eBay voice is always human and conversational, with the personality of a helpful, smart friend you can trust. We use the eBay voice:

- On the website
- In email, print collateral, and advertising
- On the phone

For various audiences and contexts, we use shifts in tone, but eBay customers should always recognize the eBay voice, which is described in the [eBay Product Voice Guide](#). The eBay brand is described in [eBay Brand Guidelines](#). For information about tone, see the guides to tone and formatting for the specific content type you're developing.

Creating and developing eBay content

As you create or develop content for eBay, use conversational, everyday language that supports the eBay value proposition of value, selection, and fun. Remember that the eBay personality is also approachable and straightforward.

Follow these basic guidelines:

- [Motivate users](#)
- [Write for an easy, fast-paced read](#)
- [Write for a general U.S. audience](#)

Motivate users

Users are generally trying to do something such as find a product, make payment, or create a listing—they want to accomplish some *task*. As you create content, focus on the user's task or goal, and what's in it for the user rather than eBay. Mention the payoff or benefit before asking people to do something, and frame information in terms of what the user is trying to do or has done instead of focusing on products, features, or policy names.

Correct: To start buying or selling on eBay, you'll need to register. It's free.

Correct: To complete and submit your listing, review your fees and click the **Submit** button.

Incorrect: eBay wants buying and selling to be easy. To get started, register now.

Write for an easy, fast-paced read

To make using online text easier for our members, remember that they're looking for what they need at that moment. Our job is to make that easy for them. When a user doesn't have to *think* about what they're trying to do, we are succeeding.

To write easy-to-use text:

- Be clear, uncluttered, and persuasive.
- Don't lead off with a wordy introduction or bury essential information.
- Anticipate people's questions.
- Avoid sounding like you're selling something.
- Present information in manageable chunks.
- Avoid acronyms such as *BIN*, *FVF*, and so on, except commonly used acronyms such as *ATM*, *SUV*, or *GPS*.
- Avoid technical jargon such as *URL*, *cookie*, and *functionality*.
- Avoid empty adjectives like *exciting*, *fabulous*, and *incredible*.
- Use contractions to keep the tone conversational (*you're*, *don't*).

Note: In some Trust and Safety content, a more formal tone can be preferred over a conversational, casual tone. For example, a first warning would use a contraction, but a suspension might not. Serious situations such as an account takeover may need a more formal tone as well—in cases such as these, people want to be reassured by a respected professional, not just by a friend.

Write for a general U.S. audience

As you write, take into account how much experience the user of this particular content has with eBay, and use language that a general U.S. audience will find readable. To make content "readable to a general U.S. audience," follow these guidelines:

- Keep sentence and paragraph structure clean and straightforward.
- Use natural grammar, and maintain consistency by using the same word to mean the same thing every time you use it.
- Don't use puns, jargon, irony, or sarcasm, any of which can easily be misunderstood.
- Use terms consistently. Don't use terms with similar meanings interchangeably, for example, *cost*, *price*, *fee*, and *charge*.
- Use the same name for parts of the site every time you refer to them.

Remember that for some users, English is a second language. You can use common Americanisms, but avoid overuse of culturally specific references, slang, idioms, metaphors, and figures of speech.

Acceptable: Give it a try.

Incorrect: Keep it real.

Avoid references to these topics, which are potentially offensive to many people:

- Politics, ideology, and religion.
- Situations referring to social class.
- Sex and gender relations.
- Race or ethnicity.
- War—past or present.
- Defense-related industries or actions (unless the subject relates directly to a defense-related industry).
- Cultural comparisons.

Refer to current events only when necessary. For example, after Hurricane Katrina we wrote email responses explaining that delivery of items from Gulf Coast sellers might be delayed.

Writing for web usability

Here are some more guidelines to follow when writing for the web:

- [Understand how people read online](#)
- [Write text to be scanned](#)
- [Write titles and headings to help users get information quickly](#)
- [Use the "inverted pyramid model"](#)
- [Place important information "above the fold"](#)

- [Write in the active voice](#)
- [Keep content concise](#)
- [Use humor with caution](#)
- [Avoid ambiguity](#)
- [Avoid abstract words and redundancy](#)
- [Use graphics and text that complement each other](#)
- [Use links wisely](#)
- [Avoid using interactive elements within a sentence](#)
- [Write effective error messages](#)

Understand how people read online

Usability studies and research by eBay show repeatedly that most people (79%) scan web pages instead of closely reading them. That's because people focus on what's most relevant to their task—whatever they're doing online right now. Knowing this, we can shape content to make it easier for people to use.

Write text to be scanned

To create scannable content, use:

- Headings that make it easy to find relevant information.
- Bulleted lists to present key information succinctly and to avoid long lists of items in paragraph format.
- White space to make information easier to see.
- Bold to highlight important words.
- Links that are easy to recognize.
- Captions to describe screenshots or other images.

Write titles and headings to help users get information quickly

When you're writing a title or heading, go for clarity rather than cleverness: the title or heading has to be scannable and stand on its own, letting users know quickly whether the information under it is relevant to what they're doing. Say what the paragraph or page under the title or heading is about, from the user's viewpoint.

Correct: Try contacting the seller.

Incorrect: Just pick up the phone.

Correct: Check your email.

Incorrect: You've got mail!

Use the "inverted pyramid model"

Start each page with your main point so users can get it quickly. Then add detail. Users should be able to stop reading at any time and come away with the information that's most important to them.

Example: You can find items on eBay by searching or browsing. Searching is best when you know what you're looking for, and browsing is great when you want to explore a category. To search, use the search box on every page or click the "advanced search" link. To browse....

Place important information "above the fold"

Users will scroll down only if they have reason to look past the top part of the page or email. Place key information "above the fold" (in the first screen of information that appears when the page or email appears). Shorten copy or rewrite it to bring important points farther up. Users will scroll down the page or email if they think they need to see more.

Write in the active voice

Writing that is active is easier to read, engage with, and understand. In most cases, we use the active voice.

Correct: You can choose another option.
Incorrect: Another option can be chosen.

When a message is particularly sensitive, however, we can use a more passive voice. For example, when we describe eBay policies, we sometimes use passive sentences.

Acceptable: Your listing may be removed...
Incorrect: eBay removed your listing...

Acceptable: Your account was suspended...
Incorrect: We suspended you...

Keep content concise

Get to the point quickly, and be succinct. Avoid or remove unnecessary words and sentences. Stay with one idea per paragraph, and make one point per sentence. Use your judgment about sentence and paragraph length, but for optimal readability, stick to about three sentences per paragraph and no more than 20 words per sentence.

Incorrect	Correct
To protect our members' privacy and personal information, we must be able to verify your identity before we can respond to your request. Therefore, in order to verify your identity, please write back Please note that the information you provide must match what we have on file. Only when the information matches can we request a temporary password for your account	Before we can help you reset your password, please verify your identity. We ask this to protect your privacy. Please write back with the following information (it needs to match what's on your account) and we'll be happy to help you.

Note: Always balance the need for concise, readable language with the user's task and our business goals. Remember that text that's highly usable can fail at both the user's goal and the business goal—a scannable bulleted list of facts written in very objective language about a product might be easy to read, but it might not persuade someone to buy that item.

Use humor with caution

Although some users enjoy humor on a website, and the eBay brand is fun, use judgment about humor. Remember that the brand is fun, but not funny. There are times and places for humor—humor can be engaging in marketing content, for example, but it's not appropriate for customer support or Trust and Safety content.

Avoid ambiguity

When text is ambiguous, indirect, or repetitive, it can be difficult to understand. For example, multiple nouns joined together to form a single thought are confusing:

eBay Communication Partner Warning

In this example, what's an "eBay Communication Partner Warning"? Is this a warning to an eBay Communication Partner? If so, what's an eBay Communication Partner? Is this a warning from eBay about a partner? If so, what's a partner?

Avoid abstract words and redundancy

Use adjectives and modifiers sparingly, especially in calls to action, error messages, and Trust and Safety content. Abstract adjectives in particular have little meaning to users, especially when they're combined with nouns.

Avoid all of these:

- Abstract adjectives: major, positive, quality, serious, alternative, feasible.
- Abstract phrases: positive impact, viable alternative.
- Abstract modifiers: simply, easy, merely, just.

Also avoid redundant terms such as these:

Incorrect	Correct
add additional	add or additional, not both
add on	add
already exists	exists

Incorrect	Correct
at this point in time	at this time, or currently
basic fundamentals	basic
check to be sure	check
click on	click
close proximity	close
connect together	connect
create a new	create
first create	create
group together	group
print out	print
specific requirements	requirements
start up	start
still pending	pending

Use graphics and text that complement each other

Words and pictures can be a powerful combination, but to be effective they need to work together. Use graphics only if they complement the content and add to the page's purpose by being related to the content. For specific information, see the tone and formatting guidelines for the type of content you're working on.

Use links wisely

Try to keep link text to no more than 3 – 5 words. If your link text is too short, it's less noticeable and a bit more difficult to click. If your link text is significantly longer, it can be hard to read, especially if the link is one of several near each other, or if there are many links on the page.

Note: Research shows that the most successful in-text links (as compared to buttons, for example) are in sentences of no more than 7 – 12 words (including the linked phrase and the text surrounding it).

Avoid too many links on a page

Include only links that users need to achieve their goals and that lead smoothly down a path that achieves the business goal. Some users find lots of links on a page distracting.

To compel action, include a verb in the link text

Where the goal is for users to take action, including the verb in the link text can be compelling.

More compelling: [View all identical listings.](#)

Also acceptable: View all [identical listings.](#)

Do not use "click here"

People want to know *why* they should click—they don't need to be told to click. Reword any text that seems to need "click here," "press this button," "read this," or similar constructions. Write link text that tells users what to expect when they click—where it will lead, or what will happen.

Correct: Find out more about [Feedback](#).

Incorrect: Feedback is important. [Find out more](#).

Correct: View all [identical listings](#).

Incorrect: Please enter a cost. [Learn more](#).

Correct: Identical listings appear only once in search results, see [all listings](#).

Incorrect: To view all identical listings, [click here](#).

Correct: If you want to be refunded for your credit, see [Requesting a refund from eBay \(for sellers\)](#).

Incorrect: If you want to be refunded for your credit, [read this](#).

Incorrect	Correct
<p>As a seller, you can work out the following situations at the Resolution Center:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">You sold an item but haven't received payment. For specifics about what to do when a buyer doesn't pay, go here.You want to cancel the transaction. For specifics about how to cancel transactions, go here.	<p>As a seller, you can work out the following situations at the Resolution Center:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">You sold an item but haven't received payment. Find out what to do when a buyer doesn't pay.You want to cancel the transaction. Find out how to cancel transactions.

Avoid ambiguous links

Your link text should be absolutely clear, and easily distinguished from other links.

Correct: You can [relist your item](#) if it didn't sell the first time.

Incorrect: You still [have options](#) if your item didn't sell.

Repeat the link text on the destination page

Remember that a link sets an expectation in the user's mind. Research has shown that when users click a link, they're reassured that they've reached the right place if they see the same or similar words shown prominently on the page that appears. For example, if a user clicks on a link that says "Vehicles for sale," that user will feel confident if a page title or heading that reads "Autos for sale" is prominently shown. If the title or heading is different, for example "Number 1 Dealer," it can seem like a mistake and they might even leave the site.

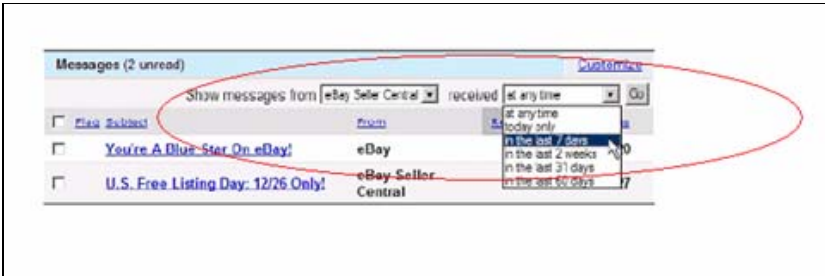
Be sure that the heading or most prominent text on the page matches the link users clicked to get there.

Example: If a link reads "selling formats," the destination page title should include words such as *Compare Selling Formats*.

Avoid using interactive elements within a sentence

Do not insert interactive elements in the middle of a sentence or phrase, because this can make the information more difficult to understand.

For example, the pull-down menus in the screen shown here make the sentence hard to read:



Example of a pull-down menu that interrupts the sentence

In the example, putting the interactive elements at the end of sentences is a possible solution:

- Show messages received from the following senders: [pull-down menu]
- Show messages received in the following timeframe: [pull-down menu]

Write effective error messages

Error messages and small pieces of content also benefit from best practices in usability and readability. Try to limit error message text to two complete sentences that are simple and direct. The first sentence communicates the error and the second sentence provides direction for a solution. When there is room for only one sentence, communicate the error and what to do about it very concisely in that sentence.

Example (two sentences): Your user ID is not valid. Please try again.

Example (one sentence): Please enter a valid user ID.

Part 2. Developing customer support content

This part of the style guide introduces general principles of writing and editing customer support content.

- To understand the eBay brand, see [eBay Brand Guidelines](#).
- To learn how the brand translates into voice and tone, see [the eBay Product Voice Guide](#).
- To learn about tone and formatting for a specific content type, see the guidelines for that channel.

The goals and guidelines described here are for customer support in all its forms.

About customer support content

The goal of customer support content is to *help the user accomplish a task or solve a problem*. Customer support focuses on helping the member, rather than selling a feature. We empower and motivate our customers, helping them help themselves by explaining how eBay works and providing detailed instructions about how to resolve their specific concerns. We guide and inform them so they can be successful buyers and sellers on eBay.

Customer support content is helpful and trustworthy, credible, easy to read, and free of typos and errors. It has to be accurate, both for the sake of the user and because these communications represent eBay as a company.

Clear, accurate customer support content also reduces the number of times users contact Customer Support (CS). Additionally, CS agents responding to members use this content (including online help) as reference. Customer support content might also be used as evidence in legal cases.

Customer Support Channels

The Customer Support Content team writes and edits content for these channels:

Help and InfoHub	Onsite user assistance pages, including Policies pages. Some help pages have been migrated into the InfoHub format; many pages are still in the older help format. New pages should go into the InfoHub format.
Kana	Customer support emails sent in response to emails (mostly through Contact Us) from users. Kana emails are in templates, also called “hotkeys.” Customer-service reps (CSRs) customize the templated content for each

	customer and situation (except for Auto-Acknowledgers and Auto-Responders). (Kana is the name of the software we use for these emails.)
Auto-Acknowledgers/Responders (AA/AR)	A kind of Kana email. Sent automatically, without customization or input from CSRs.
Chat	CSR scripts that form the basis of live customer support by chat. (The scripts are stored in the Talisma KnowledgeBase.)
Phone	CSR scripts that form the basis of live customer support by phone. (The scripts are stored in the Talisma KnowledgeBase.)
Homer and CW2	Customer support emails informing a user about a policy violation and resulting action taken by eBay, usually prompted by another user alerting eBay customer service. These emails are made up of templates containing tokens, or variable fields, that get populated by data pulled from a variety of sources. (Homer is the name of our content editing interface tool; CW2 and eNotes are related tools.)
eLVIS (eBay Listing Violation Inspection System)	Trust and Safety content that appears in the UI in response to user actions. Used to alert users that they may be about to violate a policy (such as listing a frequently counterfeited item or charging overly high shipping fees).
Contact Us 2.0	Interactive UI for customers who click "Contact Us." Attempts to deliver succinct onsite response to customer's issue while simultaneously offering access to our three main Customer Support channels: email (KANA), chat, and voice. (Built on Virtuoz infrastructure.)
RightNow	Customer support content that was created as part of our previous Contact Us flow. Appears in Q & A format. We have suspended maintenance of this content now that Contact Us 2.0 has gone live (September 2008). (RightNow is the name of the software.)

Customer support voice and tone

The eBay voice is consistent across all channels (see the [eBay Product Voice Guide](#)), though the tone changes depending on the situation and the audience. A help page may have a different tone from an email, but the voice personality for

all customer support content is the same. In general, the customer support voice is:

- **Friendly** – Welcoming and accepting. Encourages users to try something. **Example:** Once you've registered, you'll have your own My eBay page. Visit it often to watch what's happening with items that interested you.
- **Guiding** – Useful, relevant, responsive. Points users in the right direction. **Example:** Some payment options offer more protection than others, so be sure to select a payment method that you're comfortable with.
- **Reassuring** – Understanding, encouraging, and where appropriate, sympathetic. Assumes we're on their side when users have had a bad experience or are confused. **Example:** I understand your concern.
- **Engaging** – Compelling, conversational, creative, and even fun where appropriate. **Example:** Can you sell home-brewed beer on eBay? See our list of banned and restricted items.
- **Straightforward** – Clear and credible. Never condescending, accusatory, punitive, or harsh, even in Trust and Safety content that warns customers that they've violated policy. **Example:** Selling live animals or pets on eBay isn't allowed.

The informality of the customer support tone increases along this continuum:

Less conversational

More conversational

Help > Contact Us > Email > Chat > Phone

Note: Each channel or content type has its own purpose and tone. Topics or sections within each channel also have their own purpose and tone. For example, in the help pages, New to eBay is encouraging and educational, and Transaction Problems is understanding but explicit. To find out more about the tone to use in each customer support channel, see the guidelines for that specific channel.

Approaching customer support content

It's important to think of every communication with a customer within the context of the ongoing relationship. Wherever possible, work to strengthen the customer's relationship with eBay, or to repair it if necessary. Use your judgment, and remember that all customer support content reflects the eBay values:

- We believe people are basically good.
- We recognize and respect everyone as a unique individual.
- We believe everyone has something to contribute.
- We encourage people to treat others the way they want to be treated themselves.
- We believe that an honest, open environment can bring out the best in people.

Identify the context

To write with the appropriate voice and tone, we need context. Without it, we're writing "blind." Be aware of who you're writing to and what you're writing about, but also what has happened and what communications the customer might already have received. Know both the business reason for the content and the customer's goals at the moment the communication is delivered. Remember that when users access help, they could be confused, lost, or even angry.

Ask probing questions such as:

- What are our business goals for this communication?
- What specific information do we need to convey?
- What assumptions are we making about the customer?
 - What is the customer trying to do, and why?
 - What options does the customer have?
 - What options are not available to the customer?
- What previous communication has the customer received?

Ask if there is any user research that might inform your approach. Realize that it might be necessary to balance lessons and wisdom from user studies against business considerations. And finally, ask yourself, "How would I feel if I received this communication in this context?"

Identify the question or the issue

At the beginning of any customer support communication, succinctly capture and acknowledge the member's issue. This lets members know that we understand the situation and we're prepared to offer answers or solutions.

When asked to rate customer support communications, the most frequent complaints members mention are:

- It didn't answer the question.
- It was a "canned" response.

Correct: I'm sorry you're having a problem with this purchase.

Incorrect: I understand you're having problems with a recent transaction.

Correct: Unfortunately, we had to suspend your account because recent activity has raised concerns about its security.

Incorrect: We had to take action on your account due to recent violations of the User Agreement.

A message sounds canned when it doesn't acknowledge and address accurately the member's situation or issue.

Note: Don't offer "additional information" that the member didn't request or that's only somewhat related to the main issue. This can be confusing to the member, and it can seem like we want to avoid contact some other time by providing excessive information now.

Keep it human

Identify opportunities to create a warm, human tone in all customer support communications, including Trust and Safety messages.

Correct: Unfortunately, we had to remove this listing and cancel all bids:

Incorrect: The following listing that you were bidding on has been removed by eBay.

Note: Remember that tone can depend on circumstances. For example, in Trust and Safety communications, we generally assume people might have made a simple mistake and use our usual friendly tone. In certain situations, where members have violated policies deliberately, we need to use a more matter-of-fact tone.

Understand the audience (eBay member and potential member)

Use accurate, understandable, clear, and concise language. Use contractions but don't use words like "yup," "yeah," and "nope." As a general rule, avoid using jargon, acronyms, and slang. Colloquial language can make content more human and friendlier, but should be used sparingly.

Example: Please chat with us online, and we'll give it another try.

Provide expert and specific advice

We do our best to give our members exactly what they're asking for. Our customers want to feel that:

- A knowledgeable person has actually understood the issue.
- The information or response will either answer the question or offer information that can lead to the issue being resolved.

Use persuasion

With new choices in the market, it's more important than ever that we persuade customers to use eBay because of all the benefits eBay offers. Among our challenges in customer support is to appeal to our customers' rational self-interest and subtly convey the eBay value proposition, without turning the messages into marketing pieces. Engage, understand, and encourage, in most cases using the active voice, not the passive voice.

Incorrect: If the seller suggests that you buy the item directly from him or her, we strongly suggest that you not do this. This would be an "off-eBay" transaction and is against the User Agreement. Instead, please report the seller to us.

Correct: Sometimes, instead of relisting an item, a seller will suggest that you buy it directly from him or her. If that happens, please don't accept the offer. (If anything goes wrong with the purchase, you won't be able to leave feedback or use our resolution process to work things out.) Instead, please let us know so we can follow up with the seller.

Write for relevance and simplicity

To support the eBay brand as professional and trustworthy, customer support content involves friendly relevance and findability versus fun and passion. Use your judgment, and write in a tone you'd like to hear.

In general, don't refer to eBay in the third person (*eBay, it, they*) because it creates distance from the customer and has adversarial overtones. Use your discretion, but default to *we* and *our*. (See *I versus you versus we versus eBay* in *Terms, Symbols, and Punctuation*.)

Exception: When the content is sensitive, for example, when an account is being suspended, we use passive language to soften the message, as in "Your account has been suspended."

Always strive for simplicity, using a customer-first approach. Describe what people want to do from their viewpoint instead of how to use named features.

Correct: Do you want to buy this item with a fixed price?

Incorrect: Do you want to Buy It Now?

Correct: If you didn't receive your item, or it doesn't match the listing, you can open a case in our Resolution Center.

Incorrect: You can open an Item Not Received or Significantly Not As Described case in our Resolution Center.

Avoid terse fragments in favor of simple but whole sentences. Our research has shown that overly short sentences make communications sound automated, terse, and without personality, but be careful to keep your sentences clear and to the point.

Correct: Just edit your listing.

Incorrect: If you need to make any changes, you can revise your listing.

- Avoid promotional language (*Bid now!*).
- Avoid technical jargon (*validate*).
- Avoid unnecessary legal language (see *Developing Trust and Safety Content*).
- Avoid eBay jargon and resist making something that's not really a unique feature look like it's a branded feature. **Examples:** *search*, not *Search*, also *view*, not *View Item page*

Additional details and examples are in the guidelines for each channel or content type.

Think visual efficiency

By following basic principles of [content usability](#), you improve the helpfulness of customer support content and help users build trust in the eBay brand. Make sure content is formatted according to the guidelines for the channel, but also to give organization, clarity, and interest.

Present information efficiently by using of concise wording. Use graphics (including screen shots) only where they significantly help the user understand a concept or discover a hard-to-find page element. Use headings to signal change of subject, and elements such as lists, tables, and white space to make information easy to scan.

Note: Avoid using screenshots when they aren't truly necessary. Some users mistake them for functioning pages and try to click on them. Additionally, screenshots can be difficult to recreate and maintain.

Make findability part of customer support

The value of customer support increases when it is easy to find—when it includes multiple access points and clear paths. Develop customer support content to accommodate these finding features: the information architecture (IA), the A-Z Index, and the help search engine. Use precise wording for link names, telling users exactly what will be "behind" a link.

Correct: Learn more about [Reviews & Guides](#).

Incorrect: [More information](#).

Be sure to update these finding features when you are developing new pages.

Summary: Applying the customer support voice

The [eBay Product Voice Guide](#) covers general guidelines for the eBay voice. This summary for producers of customer support content provides a tool to emphasize and adapt the eBay voice to provide assistance for our customers—so they can complete a task or solve a problem with speed and clarity.

Ask yourself how any piece of customer support content you're working on communicates and represents eBay as a personality.

Does it reflect these qualities?

- Trustworthy – Accurate information, presented confidently, free of typos and grammatical errors.
- Approachable – Friendly, welcoming, interested in understanding, easy to meet for the first time, casual, speaks in local, everyday language. Respectful, not condescending.

- Straightforward – Gets to the point in understandable, clear, and concise language. Not blunt or scolding.
- Considerate – Mindful of the audience (new users or experienced), considerate of state of mind (confused, frustrated, possibly angry). Understanding of different motivations and backgrounds.
- Adept– Skillful, especially under pressing conditions. Says just the right thing in the right way at the right time.
- Organized – Presents concepts logically and consistently.
- Engaging – Looks for ways to make the content more effective (rather than fun) through formatting, graphics, and examples.

Does it speak in a conversational, yet professional manner?

- Does it sound natural if read out loud? Do any sentences sound terse?
- Is it informative or advisory and not promotional or authoritative?
- Does it exclude feature jargon? Does it not sound computer generated or unnecessarily legalese? **Avoid:** *validate, via, whereas.*
- Is it easy to understand? Does it focus on simplicity and short sentences, with no extraneous words? **Avoid:** *simply, in other words, due to the fact.* Are there sentences you have to read twice?
- Does it sound like it is from a trusted, engaging, empowering expert who enjoys helping you, and who cares about you as a partner and ally? Does it use *you* when possible, instead of *member, buyer, or seller*? **Exception:** Use third person to soften a negative situation.
- Is the content in an active voice? Or, if it is a sensitive message, is the passive voice preferable?

Samples: Rewriting to reflect the brand

Here are some examples of how customer support content can be reworked to better reflect the eBay voice.

1. Write text that is clear, direct, and helpful.

Before	After
eBay encourages open and honest communication between members.	Often, we find that members can resolve problems with a quick conversation.
If you and the seller are in serious disagreement and attempts to resolve the conflict by phone haven't worked, consider using one of our dispute resolution options, including:	If talking to the seller doesn't work, you can try opening a case -- that's a formal process for resolving problems.
eBay makes it easy for you to contact a seller if you have questions.	The easiest way to get in touch with a seller is from the item page.
I'll be happy to explain how to request your password. To request that your password be sent to your email address on file, please follow these steps:	To protect your privacy, we don't have access to your password. I can tell you how to change it though...

2. Streamline the language.

Before

After

Select the check box labeled abcd.	Select the abcd check box.
If you've completed a transaction with a seller,	If you win or buy an item from a seller,
Primary phone number:	Phone:
I believe the problem you're experiencing will be resolved if you clear out your Web browser's cache and cookies.	It sounds like your cache is full.

Part 3. Developing Trust and Safety content

This section is relevant to all content types.

The main challenge in Trust and Safety content is that it carries legal implications. For this reason, the content often comes to us in formal language. However, we need to rewrite the language in the eBay voice and tone without changing the meaning.

Many types of communications have a Trust and Safety component. For example, a message about forgetting your password could easily include a reference to an account takeover.

This isn't the place for flights of imagination. As an example, inserting a creative analogy is risky because, without knowing it, you might increase legal liability just by saying that one thing is like another.

Rewrite Trust and Safety content for voice and tone, but remember that it's important to have the content reviewed by the Trust and Safety team—to ensure accuracy and completeness—before it's implemented.

<p>Note: Be sympathetic and express regret when something goes wrong, but don't apologize for eBay policies.</p>

Trust and Safety messaging tone and themes

As with other content on eBay, Trust and Safety content should be simple and easy to understand. However, the tone varies depending on the situation. It should always be helpful at first and more directive when necessary.

- We want members to understand our trading policies and use our tools to trade safely.
- Following eBay guidelines and using common sense enables members to trade safely.
- We encourage communication between members and we don't want to assume there is a problem.

Trust and Safety content strikes a balance between eBay's commitment to safeguard the marketplace and members' responsibility to protect themselves. As a writer, you can do this by:

- **Encouraging self-reliance** – Letting users know clearly what they can do to accomplish their task or solve their problem.

- **Communicating eBay's role in the process** – Explaining that eBay is here to help, but that buyers and sellers own the transaction.
- **Reinforcing our commitment to fight fraud** – Communicating that eBay facilitates safety mechanisms against fraud to protect the entire community, while promoting legitimate trade.
- **Communicating that eBay is active in industry-wide safety issues** – Noting where appropriate that eBay contributes to all members' safety by working with e-commerce leaders, regulators, and law enforcement agencies.

Writing and editing Trust and Safety content

We look to the Trust and Safety team for accuracy and completeness of content. But it's our responsibility to convey that information in a way that reflects the eBay voice and tone.

Ask these questions before working on any Trust and Safety content:

- What are our communication goals for this piece of content?
- What information do we need to convey?
- What's the context?
 - What has the customer done? Was it clearly intentional?
 - What messages were received by the customer before this one?
 - Was the message triggered by "suspicious patterns," or are we sure that a violation has taken place?
- What assumptions are we making about the customer?
- Have we given the customer a way to save face?
- What eBay-centric terms can be rephrased in customer-centric terms?
- How can we be more transparent?

In case of a policy violation, remember:

- The customer might not be in the wrong, and might have been unfairly accused.
- The violation could be unintentional.
- The customer might be a long-standing customer with an excellent trading history.
- The customer might be brand new.

For messages that are triggered by "suspicious patterns," remember:

- The customer might not have done anything wrong. Good people can get lumped into our filters, and we lose nothing by being nice to the "bad guys."
- The customer might be unaware of the policy.

Instead of blaming the customer, try one of these:

- Persuade the customer that playing by the rules is better for them. It gives them access to our huge community, dispute resolution services, integration with PayPal, and so on.
- Appeal to shared interests: profitability, finding a good deal, fairness, security, and so on.

Note: If the customer is out of chances for redemption, be matter-of-fact, not punitive.

Here's an example Trust and Safety message reworked to reflect the eBay voice.

Before: Old Template

Dear <TD_RECIPIENT_ID> (<TD_RECIPIENT_EMAIL>),

Your eBay account has been suspended. eBay took this action after determining that your account was **acting inconsistently with the letter or spirit of our policies.**

Vague and opaque.

Harsh; sounds final.

You are prohibited from using eBay in any way. This includes using another existing account or registering a new account. Any seller fees that are still owed are due to eBay immediately. eBay will charge any amounts that you have not previously disputed to the billing method that is currently on file.

Sincerely,
eBay Trust and Safety

Saves customer's face. Leaves the door open.

After: New Template

Dear <TD_RECIPIENT_ID> (<TD_RECIPIENT_EMAIL>),

Unfortunately, we had to suspend your eBay account because recent account activity has raised serious security concerns. We've taken this precaution to protect our members while we make sure that the activity doesn't cause harm -- **however unintentionally** -- to the eBay community.

Describes path to reinstatement, and grounds for our decision.

You can appeal this suspension. If, after reviewing your appeal, we're confident that this activity poses no risk to the community, we'll be happy to reinstate your account. For information about how to appeal this suspension, please go to:

Customer is just as suspended, but it sounds much less harsh.

<http://pages.ebay.com/help/account/RegisterVerifyPSU.html>

Unfortunately, during the suspension you won't be able to use eBay. This includes using another existing account or registering a new account.

Again, expresses regret and tacitly invokes "security concerns."

Any outstanding selling fees are due immediately, and any amounts that you haven't previously disputed will be charged to the billing method currently on file.

We're sorry about the inconvenience. Thanks for understanding.

Sincerely,
eBay Trust and Safety Team

eBay company and product names

Please refer to Part 4, the terminology section, for a complete list of names for eBay products, services, programs, and features. When you use these names in text, spell them and use the casing shown in the list.

Part 4. Terms, symbols, and punctuation

This section provides usage guidelines for content writers, managers, and editors and is relevant to all channels and content types.

24/7	<p>To indicate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, either write it out entirely, or abbreviate.</p> <p>Example: Live Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Example: Live Help is available 24/7.</p>
abort (n, v)	<p>Don't use this term. This word doesn't translate well. Use the word <i>end</i>, <i>quit</i>, <i>close</i>, or <i>stop</i>, depending on your meaning.</p> <p>Example: Close your browser window. Example: To stop the process, on the File menu, click Quit.</p>
About Me	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay member feature. This feature lets you tell the eBay community about yourself and your interests.</p>
above	<p>Avoid <i>above</i> or other directional terms (such as <i>below</i>) to describe where page elements appear in the user interface. Instead, be specific about where and how the item does appear.</p> <p>Example: Click the See all items link under the Options heading on the left side of the page.</p> <p>Don't use for system requirements.</p> <p>Correct: Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 or newer Incorrect: Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 or above</p>
account	<p>Avoid using the word <i>account</i> when addressing buyers and new eBay members or when referring to the user ID and password.</p> <p>The word <i>account</i> can refer to the account sections of My eBay and the information available there. Buyers and new members often don't realize they have an account. Be specific—if you are referring to the user ID and password, or any other information that's in a user's account, refer specifically to that information.</p> <p>Set the generic term <i>account</i> in lowercase.</p>
acronyms	<p>Avoid, except for commonly understood acronyms such as <i>ATM</i> or <i>GPS</i>. If using a less common acronym is necessary, write out the full term on first use and put the acronym in parentheses. You can then use the acronym for any subsequent reference.</p> <p>Correct: secure sockets layer (SSL) Incorrect: (SSL) secure sockets layer</p> <p>Exception: In chat, use chat acronyms (LOL, and so on) only if the member uses them first.</p>

addresses	<p>Use this formatting for addresses:</p> <p>eBay Inc. P.O. Box 1469 Draper, UT 84020</p> <p>The first line should have the first and last name of the addressee. The second line should have the full street address. Abbreviate street addresses and P.O. boxes. The third line should include the city and state, separated by a comma, and the 5-digit ZIP code.</p> <p>John Smith 123 Main Street Auction City, CA 99999</p> <p>Exception: Where necessary because of space limitations (in the UI, for example) the address can appear on one line:</p> <p>John Smith 123 Main St. Auction City, CA 99999</p>
adult, adult item	Lowercase these generic terms. See <i>Adult Only category</i> .
Adult Only category	Capitalize as shown when referring to the category name, formerly known as the <i>Mature Audience category</i> . Use the singular form <i>Adult Only</i> , not <i>Adults Only</i> . See <i>adult, adult item</i> .
advanced search	Set these generic terms in lowercase. See <i>search</i> .
affect versus effect	<p>The word <i>affect</i> as a noun refers to "behavior." As a verb, <i>affect</i> means "to influence or to produce an effect upon." The word <i>effect</i> as a noun means "a result." As a verb, <i>effect</i> means "to cause something to happen." However, don't use <i>effect</i> as a verb.</p> <p>Correct: Offering free shipping has a positive effect on sales. Correct: Bid retraction can affect the outcome of an auction. Incorrect: To effect a higher feedback rating, keep buyers happy. Incorrect: Sellers with an affect for listing items they don't yet have are why we had to put this new rule in place.</p>
aliases, registrations	Don't use. Use <i>multiple user IDs</i> instead. See <i>user ID</i> .
allow	<p>Use the word <i>allow</i> only to discuss permissions or privileges. The word <i>let</i> is often preferable. Don't use <i>enable</i> and <i>allow</i> interchangeably. See <i>enable</i>.</p> <p>Acceptable: The system allows multiple user IDs. Preferred: The system lets you have multiple user IDs. Incorrect: The system enables you to have multiple user IDs.</p>
AM/PM	<p>Indicate the time by using all caps, instead of lowercase with periods. Leave a space between the hour and <i>AM</i> or <i>PM</i>.</p> <p>Specify <i>noon</i> or <i>midnight</i> to prevent confusion with 12:00 AM and 12:00 PM.</p> <p>Example: 3:30 PM Example: 12:00 midnight</p>

ampersand (&)	Avoid using the ampersand (&). Use an ampersand (&) only on an as-needed basis, for example, in exceptionally long headings, buttons, or other page elements, and in any eBay features or products if it's part of the feature or product's official name.
Anchor Store	Capitalize as shown when referring to this Store feature.
and/or	<p>Don't use. Rephrase your sentence to avoid ambiguity, choosing either <i>and</i> or <i>or</i>.</p> <p>Correct: Enter the number of entitlement units that should be granted based on years of service, job function, or both. Incorrect: Enter the number of entitlement units that should be granted based on years of service and/or job function.</p> <p>Correct: When you create a password, type letters and numbers. Incorrect: When you create a password, type letters and/or numbers.</p>
anonymous email	Don't use. Refer to email addresses such as @yahoo.com, @hotmail.com, @gmail.com as <i>webmail services</i> , <i>web e-mail services</i> , <i>web e-mail</i> , or <i>webmail</i> instead.
Answer Center	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay (site) center.
apologies	Limit apologies to situations where eBay or a person made a mistake, especially if eBay made a mistake and the user can't recover. An example is when a user submits information, it's lost, and they have to enter it again. Use expressions of regret (such as <i>unfortunately</i>) for situations that are truly upsetting, or after multiple emails about the same situation. Don't apologize for situations in which the member can take action to resolve the issue, should take responsibility, or has violated a policy. Don't apologize for eBay or eBay policy.
apostrophe (')	<p>Use apostrophes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In contractions, for example, <i>can't</i>, <i>isn't</i>, <i>won't</i>, <i>it's</i> • For possessives (except <i>its</i>), for example, <i>boy's</i>, <i>girl's</i>, 1995's • In place of numerals when shortening a year, for example, <i>class of '75</i>. <p>Don't use apostrophes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To form plurals for single letters and numbers, as in <i>Mind your Ps and Qs</i> or <i>Count by 10s</i>. • When forming the plural of two or more letters or numerals, for example, <i>1990s</i>, <i>PCs</i>, <i>FAQs</i>, and <i>123s</i>. • In plural words or phrases, for example, <i>the Murrays</i>.
appears versus displays	<p>The word <i>appears</i> is an intransitive verb. Use the word <i>displays</i> when a transitive verb is needed.</p> <p>Example: If you try to quit a program without saving a file, a message appears. (There's no object of the verb, so it's intransitive.)</p> <p>Example: The screen displays a message if you don't log on accurately. (It displays something—the message, which in this case is the object—so use the transitive verb.)</p>

assist versus help	Use the verb <i>help</i> instead of <i>assist</i> wherever possible.
assure versus ensure versus insure	Use these terms correctly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>assure</i> means <i>to give confidence to someone</i>. Example: Providing a clear photo can assure buyers of the item's condition. • <i>ensure</i> means <i>to make certain</i>. Example: To ensure that the item is protected, package it carefully. • <i>insure</i> means <i>to protect against loss</i>. Example: You can insure the item against damage during shipping by paying the postal service a small fee.
asterisk (*)	Asterisks can be used in specific ways to format text in specific content types, such as email, to identify additional notations on a page, or indicate a required field. Follow each content type's rules for using asterisks as shown in that content type's guide.
at symbol (@)	To tell members to enter or type the "@" symbol, write the symbol. In email addresses, use the symbol. In all other cases, write the word "at" instead of "@".
Attn:	Capitalize as shown to indicate a specific department in mailing address and fax formats. It should appear on a separate line after eBay Inc. Example (mailing address): eBay Inc. Attn: INV Appeals P.O. Box 1469 Draper, UT 84020 Example (fax): eBay Inc. Attn: INV Appeals 1-877-684-7340
auction-style	Use the word <i>auction-style</i> to describe the selling format where sellers list an item for sale with a starting price, buyers place bids on the item, and the item is sold to the highest bidder. Don't use this word generically to describe <i>all</i> listings on eBay. Lowercase and hyphenate as shown.
Auction Co.	Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. Include a period after <i>Co.</i> <i>Auction Co.</i> is the localized eBay website for South Korea. When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase: www.auction.co.kr
audio book	Two words. Don't use <i>audiobook</i> .
back end (n) back-end (adj)	Don't use these terms. They are jargon. Instead, use a more specific term such as <i>server</i> , <i>operating system</i> , or <i>network</i> .
back up (v) backup (n, adj)	Use as two words when it's a verb. Use one word when it's a noun or adjective. Note the different spellings, depending on the usage. Example (v): Remember to back up your files. Example (n): Save the backup on a disk. Example (adj): Make sure your backup system is working.

because versus since versus as	Use the word <i>because</i> to refer to a reason and the word <i>since</i> to refer to the passage of time. Avoid using <i>as</i> because it sounds formal or legal. Correct (<i>because</i>): Because I installed a fast modem, I can download messages quickly. Correct (<i>since</i>): Since installing a fast modem, I can download messages quickly. Incorrect (<i>as</i>): As you have...
below	See <i>above</i> .
Best Offer	Use <i>Best Offer</i> when referring to this eBay feature, and use <i>offer</i> on subsequent references if the reference is generic.
Beyond the Basics	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay University name.
bid, bidder	Use <i>bid</i> or <i>bidder</i> only when referring to auction-style only listings. Use <i>buy</i> or <i>buyer</i> instead of <i>bid</i> or <i>bidder</i> in most instances to include both auction-style and fixed price formats. See <i>buy, buyer</i> .
Bold	Capitalize as shown only when referring to this listing upgrade. Example: The Bold option adds instant emphasis to your listings. Lowercase the generic term. Example: Make a bold statement by using a close-up photo. See <i>listing upgrade</i> .
Border	Capitalize as shown when referring to this listing feature. Don't capitalize the generic term (as in <i>The photo's faded border gives it an antique look</i>). See <i>listing upgrade</i> .
brackets, angle (< >)	Don't use in place of parentheses. Use only to indicate that the system will populate the content automatically. Example: Contact <userID>.
brackets, square ([])	Don't use in place of parentheses. Use only in navigational text to indicate conditional or optional copy. Example: You can pay using your [type of account] account.
brands (non-eBay)	Whenever possible, refer to a product by its full name on the first reference, and its common name in subsequent references. For example, use <i>Microsoft Word</i> on the first reference, and then just <i>Word</i> .
browser	Set the word <i>browser</i> in lowercase. Use the word browser correctly: a <i>browser</i> is software used to interact with the web. A <i>window</i> is a rectangular area where content and interactive elements are displayed by the browser. A <i>dialog box</i> appears on screen to provide a message or request some action, and usually closes once that's done.
bug	Don't use to describe a system error or technical glitch. Use <i>issue</i> or <i>problem</i> instead.
bulleted list	See <i>lists</i> .
business relationship	A specific third-party relationship with eBay. Don't use this term to

	describe a relationship between eBay and buyers or sellers. See <i>partner</i> .
button	In instructional text, be specific and clear about this UI element. Correct: Click the Continue button. Incorrect: Click Continue .
Buy It Now	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature. Don't use the acronym (<i>BIN</i>) or hyphens (<i>Buy-It-Now</i>). Example: Set a Buy It Now price for your fixed price listing.
buy, buyer	Use <i>buy</i> or <i>buyer</i> in most instances to include both auction-style and fixed price formats. Set in lowercase as shown. See <i>bid</i> , <i>bidder</i> and <i>trading partner</i> .
Buyer Central	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay Discussion Board.
buyer protection claim	Set this Half.com feature in lowercase. Don't use <i>Buyer Protection Report</i> .
buyer requirements	Set this feature in lowercase.
call out (v) callout (n, adj)	Use as two words when it's a verb and one word when it's a noun or adjective. Example: You can call out special features. Example: Add callouts to the art. Keep the callout wording brief.
call to action	See <i>My eBay</i> , and <i>multiple options</i> .
can versus might versus may	Use the word <i>can</i> to imply capability. Use the word <i>might</i> to imply possibility—to describe a hypothetical situation or when included in consequence language. Use the word <i>may</i> to imply permission. Don't use <i>may</i> to imply that the user has permission to do something. Use <i>might</i> instead of <i>may</i> when you want to recommend that members take an optional action, for example, in cases like "You might consider...." In chat, use <i>may</i> when asking a question. Correct (can): You can now create your listing. Correct (might): The buyer might appreciate measurements. Correct (may): How may I help you? Correct (may): May I ask for your name and phone number? Incorrect: You may create your listing.
cancel a listing	Don't use. See <i>end a listing versus remove a listing</i> .
cancel, canceled, canceling (v) cancellation (n)	Use the word <i>clear</i> for check boxes and radio buttons. Don't use the word <i>canceled</i> or <i>canceling</i> when referring to check boxes and radio buttons. Spell <i>cancel</i> , <i>canceled</i> , <i>canceling</i> with one "l". Use two "l"s in the noun form only (<i>cancellation</i>). Exception: the eBay feature <i>Good 'Til Cancelled</i> .
can't, cannot	Use <i>can't</i> , or the phrases <i>it's not possible to</i> or <i>you won't be able to</i> when appropriate. Use <i>cannot</i> in rare instances, and only to stress an important point, for example, in Trust and Safety content when member security is in question. See <i>contractions</i> .

capitalization	<p>Capitalize eBay products, features, and so on as shown for each individual product or feature in this style guide. See individual product or feature names for additional guidelines.</p> <p>Don't use capitalization for emphasis. Follow each content type's rules for emphasis, headings, and other elements as shown in that content type's guide.</p> <p>Don't use capitalization to make a user interface feature look like a branded feature. Consider using more generic terms when possible. The View Item page is referred to within eBay, for example, but <i>item page</i> or <i>listing</i> may be more appropriate phrasing for members.</p>
CarAd	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay Motors feature. One word, not two. Use initial capital "C" and internal capital "A."
case	Members open a <i>case</i> in the Resolution Center when there's a problem with a transaction. Don't use the word <i>dispute</i> or <i>claim</i> .
case-sensitive	Hyphenate in all cases.
Category Featured category names	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay Motors feature.</p> <p>Capitalize specific category names but not the word <i>category</i> when it appears in inline text. See <i>capitalization</i>.</p> <p>Use plain text—no quotes, bold, italics, etc. Use a > to describe sub-categories or the progression to get to a certain category.</p> <p>Examples: If you can't find what you're looking for, try browsing the Clothing & Accessories category.</p> <p>Digitally delivered items must be listed in the Classified Ad format in the Everything Else > Information Products category only.</p> <p>See <i>greater-than-symbol</i>.</p>
charge	<p>When referring to credit card authorization, don't use the word <i>charge</i> or the phrase <i>charge your credit card</i>. Use <i>hold</i> or <i>authorization hold</i> instead.</p> <p>Example: eBay will apply a \$1.00 authorization hold to your account temporarily to confirm that the credit or debit card is valid.</p>
check box	Two words. Don't use the word <i>box</i> to refer to a check box. Note that you <i>select</i> and <i>clear</i> check boxes. Don't use <i>check</i> , <i>turn off</i> , <i>unmark</i> , <i>uncheck</i> , or <i>deselect</i> . See <i>select</i> .
check in (v) check-in (n, adj)	<p>Use as two words when it's a verb and one word with a hyphen when it's a noun or adjective.</p> <p>Example (v): Check in the most current version of your document. Example (adj): The check-in feature enables you to track multiple versions.</p>
check out (v)	Use two words when it's a verb; one word (no hyphen) when it's a

checkout (n)	noun. Set generic references and the eBay feature in lowercase. Example (v): When you're ready to check out, click the Pay Now button. Example (n): To enable the checkout feature, click the Checkout button.
checklist	One word.
choose	Use <i>choose among</i> if there are 3 or more options. Use <i>choose between</i> if there are 2 options. Don't use <i>choose from</i> for any number of options.
choose versus select	Use <i>select</i> . Example: On the Tools menu, select the All option. Example: Select all the check boxes that apply.
claim	Don't use. Use <i>case</i> instead.
clear	Use the word <i>clear</i> to describe removing a check from a check box. Don't use <i>turn off</i> , <i>unmark</i> , <i>uncheck</i> , or <i>deselect</i> . See <i>check box</i> and <i>select</i> . Example: Clear all the check boxes that don't apply.
click	Don't use the phrase <i>click on</i> . You <i>click</i> a button or a link on a page. You <i>select</i> and <i>clear</i> check boxes. You <i>press a key</i> on the keyboard. Correct: Click the Save button. Incorrect: Click Save . Incorrect: Click on the Save button. Correct: Press the Enter key. Incorrect: Press Enter . Incorrect: Hit Enter .
colon (:)	Use a colon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To introduce a list or a long quotation. Example: To become a PayPal member, you're required to complete three steps: sign in, create an account, and get verified. After <i>Note</i> or <i>Important</i>. Example follows. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Note: This option is not available with Netscape or MSN® TV (formerly WebTV®) browsers.</p> </div> <p>Don't use a colon between a verb and the rest of the sentence or between a preposition and its object.</p> <p>When using a colon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the colon with a single space. Place the colon outside any closing quotation marks. <p>Don't use a colon in the title of a help page. Use a hyphen (-) instead. Don't use a colon after a label in the UI.</p>

<p>comma (,)</p>	<p>Use a comma:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a series of words, as a "serial comma," before <i>and</i> or <i>or</i>. Example: The logo colors are blue, black, and white. • In a date to set off the year. Example: February 14, 2004, is the deadline. • To set off components of an address. Example: eBay, 2145 Hamilton Avenue, San Jose, CA • With introductory words or phrases, such as <i>however</i> and <i>generally</i>. Example: Generally, the website is faster. However, it was hit by a virus. • With appositives. Example: The customer, Jim, was pleased with the company's service. • To enclose parenthetical expressions. Example: The website, hit by a virus, was shut down. • To separate independent clauses that are joined by coordinating conjunctions: <i>and</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>yet</i>, <i>for</i>, and <i>or</i>. Example: The medical plan was expensive, but it offered the best doctor choices. • To separate two or more coordinating adjectives Example: The convenient, low-cost way to pay. <p>Correct: He's a <i>talented, creative</i> writer. Incorrect: He's a <i>talented, law</i> student.</p> <p>Tip: If you can replace the comma with <i>and</i> between two adjectives, then use the comma.</p>
<p>Community, community</p>	<p>When referring to the <i>Community</i> area of the eBay site, initial cap <i>Community</i>. Use lowercase for the generic word <i>community</i>. Also use lowercase <i>community</i> to describe eBay members (buyers and sellers) as a whole.</p>
<p>complement, compliment</p>	<p>Both words can function as either a noun or a verb. A <i>complement</i> is something that completes or makes perfect. A <i>compliment</i> is an expression of praise.</p> <p>Example (n): This accessory is a perfect complement to the jacket. Example (n): The buyer's praise is a real compliment. Example (v): This accessory complements the jacket. Example (v): The buyer complimented eBay's ease of use.</p>
<p>complete the transaction</p>	<p>Don't use. Use <i>send payment to the seller</i> or <i>send the item to the buyer</i> instead. See <i>transaction</i>.</p>
<p>compose versus comprise</p>	<p>These words are not interchangeable. The parts of something <i>compose</i> (or make up) the whole. Don't use the word <i>comprised</i> or the phrase <i>comprised of</i>, both of which are too formal. The word <i>of</i> is correct, however, in <i>composed of</i> and <i>consists of</i>.</p>
<p>Condition Guaranteed by Seller</p>	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay Motors program.</p>
<p>contractions</p>	<p>Use contractions whenever possible—they're friendly and conversational.</p>

	Example: eBay doesn't permit the sale of firearms.
cookie	Avoid this term, except when helping the user clear cookies. Don't say, "We will place a cookie on your system." Instead, use phrases such as <i>this information will be saved (or remembered)</i> .
Craigslist	Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase: www.craigslist.org .
cursor	Don't use. Use <i>pointer</i> instead.
customer	See <i>eBay customer versus eBay member</i> .
Customer Service, customer service	Don't use for eBay Customer Support team or customer support provided by eBay. See <i>Customer Support, customer support</i> . For any company that uses the term <i>Customer Service</i> to describe their own team, or uses the term <i>customer service</i> to describe the support provided by that company, using those terms is OK.
Customer Support, customer support	Capitalize as shown when referring to the eBay Customer Support team. Set in lowercase if referring to the support that's provided by the team, or customer support for third-party service providers.
dash, em (—)	An em dash (—) is approximately the width of the uppercase letter "M" in any font. Use an em dash: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To break up a thought, add a phrase for emphasis or explanation, or to separate two clauses. Example: Creating an account is easy—it only takes a few minutes. With an appositive series. Example: These features—Custom Payment Page, Payment Data Transfer, Auto Return—are the latest tools for merchants. Use the em dash with no space on both sides. Always lowercase the word following an em dash, unless it's a proper noun. Note: In plain text emails, use the double hyphen (--) instead of the em dash.
dash, en (-)	An en dash (–) is approximately the width of the uppercase letter "N" in any font. Use an en dash: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To indicate a negative quantity. Don't insert a space following the en dash. Example: A negative value (for example, –100 items) indicates that the order is on backorder. For a minus sign. Insert a space preceding and following the en dash. Example: The ledger balance is based on the following calculation: 29.7 × 0.605 – 17.881 = 0.0875. In a range of values, such as pages, dates, and amounts of money, to mean <i>to</i> or <i>through</i>. Don't use <i>between</i> or <i>from</i> with the en dash, and don't insert a space preceding or following the en dash. Example: A range of dates (for example, 1995–1998). If two quantities with symbols—for example, \$ or %—are separated by an en dash to express a range, repeat the symbol with each quantity. Example: Payments of \$6000–\$10,000 are considered optimal. After an introductory word or phrase in a bulleted list. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> eBay Security Center – Access programs for safe

	<p>trading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <u>Dispute Resolution</u> – See how SquareTrade.com can help you resolve a dispute that may arise with another member.
dates	<p>To indicate a date, use the format <i>month day, year</i>, as in <i>November 30, 1997</i>. Don't use an all-number method, as in <i>11/30/97</i> or <i>11/30/1997</i>. Don't style the date <i>November 31st</i>. When the date appears in the middle of a sentence, set off the year with commas. Example: On October 19, 2005, the site was launched. To indicate a month and year without a specific date, don't use commas. Example: In October 2005, eBay acquired Skype.</p> <p>Avoid abbreviating months unless necessary. If abbreviations are necessary, for example, to save space, use these three-letter abbreviations: <i>Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., May, Jun., Jul., Aug., Sep., Oct., Nov., and Dec.</i></p> <p>Avoid using dates to describe product products and features that have been discontinued (end-of-life projects). Before you use a date, make sure that the date is important and relevant information for the user to know. The most important information is that the product or feature is no longer available.</p> <p>Do not use a date to "announce" new features or products. In most cases, it's enough to just have the content available for use.</p> <p>You can use a date for promotion content--such as contests or fee discounts.</p> <p>If you do need to use a date, you must have a plan to update this content after a certain period. Discontinued dates (and products) should not exist in content permanently.</p>
date-sensitive (adj)	Hyphenate in all cases.
delete (v) deletion (n)	<p>Use the lowercase word <i>delete</i> as a verb. Don't use it as a noun. The noun form is <i>deletion</i>.</p> <p>Example (v): Delete the information that isn't important.</p> <p>Don't use <i>delete</i> to mean <i>remove</i>.</p> <p>Correct: Remove the information from the listing. Incorrect: Delete the information from the listing.</p>
Delivery Confirmation	Capitalize as shown for the U.S. Postal Service shipping service with this trademarked name. Lowercase for general confirmation and tracking options used by other shipping carriers.
department	Refer to <i>teams</i> , not <i>departments</i> . Example: <i>Trust and Safety team</i> . Also, avoid referring to specific internal group names (such as <i>List Policies</i>). Use the umbrella group name instead, for example, <i>Trust and Safety</i> .

deselect	Don't use. For check boxes, use the word <i>clear</i> instead. See <i>check box</i> and <i>select</i> .
desire	Don't use. Use the word <i>want</i> instead. See <i>you want versus you'd like</i> .
desktop (n, adj)	Use only when specifically necessary. One word. Can be used as an adjective or alone as a noun to refer to a personal computer. Can also be used as a noun to describe a computer's desktop. See <i>laptop</i> , <i>eBay Desktop</i> . Preferred: Save the file on your computer. Acceptable (n): Save the file on your computer's desktop. Acceptable (adj): She uses a desktop computer to search the Internet.
detailed seller ratings	Set in lowercase as shown. Full name is preferred, but acronym (DSR) is acceptable. Always use the full name for the first reference. Example: Buyers can leave detailed seller ratings (DSRs) for sellers.
different from versus different than	Don't use the phrase <i>different than</i> . Use the phrase <i>different from</i> instead. Example: A cat is different from a dog.
disable	Don't use. Use <i>stop</i> or <i>turn off</i> instead.
disc versus disk	Use the word <i>disc</i> when referring to a <i>compact disc</i> (CD) or <i>digital versatile disc</i> (DVD). Use the word <i>disk</i> when referring to a <i>hard disk</i> .
discrete versus discreet	The word <i>discrete</i> means "constituting a separate entity." The word <i>discreet</i> means "showing good judgment in conduct, or prudent."
display-only (adj)	Hyphenate before or after the noun or phrase it modifies. Don't hyphenate if the words are not used as a compound adjective. Example (compound adj): This is a display-only field. Example (compound adj): This field is display-only. Example: This field is for display only.
displays versus appears	The word <i>displays</i> is a transitive verb. Use the word <i>appears</i> when an intransitive verb is needed. See <i>appears</i> . Example (intransitive): If you try to quit a program without saving a file, a message appears. (No object of the verb, so it's intransitive.) Example (transitive): The screen displays a message if you don't log on accurately. Note: It displays <i>something</i> —the <i>message</i> is the object—so use the transitive verb.
dispute	Don't use. Use <i>case</i> to describe an issue that has been reported in the Resolution Center. To describe an issue between members that has not be reported in the Resolution Center, use <i>problem</i> instead.
double-click double-clicking	Always hyphenate. Use instead of the word <i>select</i> when referring to a mouse action. Don't use the word <i>choose</i> or the phrase

	<i>double-click on.</i>
drop-down menu	Hyphenate as shown. Use the word <i>select</i> when referring to selecting a value in a drop-down menu.
Dutch Auction	Don't use. See <i>Multiple Item Auction versus Dutch Auction</i> .
e.g.	Don't use. Use the phrase <i>for example</i> instead. Also see <i>i.e.</i>
eBay (the brand)	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. The way we write the word <i>eBay</i> can help add consistency to our brand and reinforce brand attributes. Use lowercase letter "e" and a capital "B" even when the name begins a sentence. Don't use ® or ™ after <i>eBay</i> in text. For <i>eBay Inc.</i>, no comma after <i>eBay</i>.</p> <p>Don't use the possessive form, as in <i>eBay's policy</i>. Don't refer to eBay as <i>it</i>, and don't use the possessive form <i>its</i> when referring to eBay. See <i>I versus you versus we versus eBay</i>.</p> <p>In some instances, when eBay needs to appear in all caps, use <i>EBA Y</i>. Don't use <i>Ebay, EBay, eBA Y, ebay, or eba Y</i>.</p> <p>Don't use the term <i>the site</i> when referring to eBay. Many eBay members don't understand that <i>site</i> is short for eBay.com. Use <i>eBay</i> instead of <i>the site</i>, and see <i>I versus you versus we versus eBay</i> for additional guidelines.</p> <p>Exception: You may use <i>site</i> in a reference to a specific area, such as <i>the eBay Motors site</i>, or in reference to <i>other eBay sites</i> or <i>international eBay sites</i>.</p> <p>The following words, phrases, and sentences will give you an idea of how we describe eBay:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eBay is an efficient global marketplace where individuals and merchants have an opportunity to buy and sell an incredible variety of new and used goods at fair market prices. • A global online marketplace • A place to buy, sell, or trade virtually anything <p>For legal as well as practical reasons, some descriptions of eBay and its brand can cause trouble.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid terms and phrases such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Seller of merchandise</i> ○ <i>Auction site, auction house, auctioneer</i>, and so on ○ <i>Flea market, garage sale, swap meet</i>, and so on ○ <i>An auction format only</i> • Use <i>Find just about anything at eBay</i> or <i>... on eBay</i>. • Don't use <i>Buy stuff [in or from] eBay</i>. • Listings are never <i>eBay auctions</i>. <p>See eBay Brand Guidelines for more information on using the name <i>eBay</i> in text.</p>
eBay (the URL)	See eBay Brand Guidelines for information on how to present the eBay URL for different audiences. See the tone and formatting

	guide for the specific channel or content type for information about presenting URLs in that channel.
eBay Affiliate	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Affiliate</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>affiliate</i> . Use only <i>eBay Affiliate</i> or <i>affiliate</i> . Don't use <i>affiliate with eBay</i> .
eBay Affiliate Program	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name.
eBay Anywhere	Capitalize as shown when referring to this service. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name.
eBay Blackthorne	Capitalize as shown when referring to this product. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Blackthorne</i> during the first occurrence. Subsequent occurrences can appear as <i>Blackthorne</i> . Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.
eBay business	Avoid referring to an <i>eBay business</i> . Instead refer to it as a <i>business on eBay</i> . This avoids the implication that an "eBay business" is a business owned or sponsored by eBay Inc. <i>eBay business</i> too closely implies "subsidiary."
eBay Buying Guides	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name when referring to the suite of guides on eBay. When referring to a specific guide, use <i><category name> Buying Guide</i> . Within each guide, you can refer to the guide generically as a <i>buying guide</i> .
eBay Certified Service Provider	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name.
eBay Certified Solution Provider	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name.
eBay community	See <i>community, Community</i> .
eBay Compatible Application	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Compatible Application</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Compatible Application</i> .
eBay customer versus eBay member	Both <i>customer</i> and <i>member</i> are acceptable, but used differently. Use <i>customer</i> to generally refer to eBay users. Use <i>eBay member</i> in the context of Trust and Safety or the eBay community. Use the term <i>user</i> only internally, not in customer-facing content. See <i>community, Community</i> .
eBay Desktop	Capitalize as shown when referring to this product. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name.
eBay Developers Program	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name.
eBay Editor's Kit	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay Partner Network name. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Editor's Kit</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Editor's Kit</i> . Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.

eBay File Exchange	Capitalize as shown when referring to this product. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name.
eBay Gift Cards	Capitalize as shown when referring to this product (available in select stores). The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name. Use the lowercase term <i>gift card</i> if you are making a general reference to a gift card.
eBay Gift Certificates	Capitalize as shown when referring to this product. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name. Use the lowercase term <i>gift certificate</i> to refer to a generic gift certificate.
eBay Giving Works	Capitalize as shown when referring to this marketplace name. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name. See <i>MissionFish</i> .
eBay Inc.	When it's necessary to refer to <i>eBay Inc.</i> (rather than <i>eBay</i>), don't include a comma between <i>eBay</i> and <i>Inc.</i> Include a period after <i>Inc.</i>
eBay Keywords	Capitalize as shown when referring to this program. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name. Don't refer to this program as <i>Keywords on eBay</i> .
eBay Live!	Capitalize and punctuate as shown.
eBay member versus eBay customer	See <i>eBay customer</i> versus <i>eBay member</i>
eBay Merchant Kit	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Merchant Kit</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Merchant Kit</i> . Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.
eBay Motors	Capitalize as shown when referring to this marketplace name. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name.
eBay Picture Manager	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
eBay PowerSeller	Capitalize as shown when referring to this program. Spell <i>PowerSeller</i> as one word. Use initial capital "P" and internal capital "S." The official name should appear as <i>eBay PowerSeller</i> during the first occurrence. Subsequent occurrences can appear as <i>PowerSeller</i> or <i>PowerSellers</i> . Use the plural <i>PowerSellers</i> when referring to group benefits or <i>PowerSellers</i> as a group. Example: Titanium <i>PowerSellers</i> receive additional benefits when they participate. Example: <i>PowerSellers</i> and top sellers attending eBay Live! receive a free gift at registration. Exception: <i>PowerSeller-only discussion board</i> . Example: Join our <i>PowerSeller-only</i> discussion board.
eBay PowerUp	Capitalize as shown when referring to this service. Use initial capital "P" and internal capital "U." Spell <i>PowerUp</i> as one word, not two. The official name should appear as <i>eBay PowerUp</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>PowerUp</i> .

	<p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Pulse	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.</p>
eBay Sales Reports	<p>Capitalize as shown when making a general reference to these reports. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Sales Reports</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Sales Reports</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Sales Reports Plus	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this product. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Sales Reports Plus</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Sales Reports Plus</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Seller Alert	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this service. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Seller Alert</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Seller Alert</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Seller OnRamp	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this service. Spell <i>OnRamp</i> as one word, not two. Use initial capital "O" and internal capital "R." The official name should appear as <i>eBay Seller OnRamp</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Seller OnRamp</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Seller Outreach	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this service. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Seller Outreach</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Seller Outreach</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Selling Manager	<p>Capitalize as shown when making a general reference to this product. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Selling Manager</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Selling Manager</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Selling Manager Pro	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this product. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Selling Manager Pro</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear</p>

	<p>as <i>Selling Manager Pro</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Solutions Directory	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Solutions Directory</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Solutions Directory</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay Stores	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this marketplace name. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name. When referring to a seller's Store on eBay, it is acceptable to use the term <i>Store</i>. Capitalize as shown. Don't use <i>eBay stores</i>, <i>Stores</i>, or <i>eBay Storefront</i>.</p> <p>Example: Want to open your own Store? Learn more about eBay Stores.</p>
eBay Toolbar Featuring Yahoo!	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this product. Use an exclamation mark after Yahoo! to indicate their brand. The name <i>eBay</i> should always be part of the official name. This official name should not be preceded by the articles <i>the</i> or <i>an</i>. Refer to eBay Toolbar as <i>eBay Toolbar Featuring Yahoo!</i> and not <i>the eBay Toolbar</i>. On subsequent occurrences, refer to <i>eBay Toolbar</i>. Any generic references to <i>eBay Toolbar</i> should appear as <i>the toolbar</i>.</p>
eBay Trading Assistants, eBay Trading Assistant	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this program. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Trading Assistants</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Trading Assistants</i>.</p> <p>When referring to a qualified person, use <i>eBay Trading Assistant</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Trading Assistant</i>.</p>
eBay Turbo Lister	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this product. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Turbo Lister</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences should appear as <i>Turbo Lister</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>eBay</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
eBay user versus eBay member	<p>See <i>eBay member versus eBay user</i>.</p>
eBay Verified Rights Owner (VeRO) Program	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this program. The official name should appear as <i>eBay Verified Rights Owner (VeRO)</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Use the abbreviation <i>VeRO</i> for all subsequent occurrences.</p>
eBay's	<p>Don't use. See <i>eBay (the brand)</i>.</p>
ecommerce	<p>Set the word <i>ecommerce</i> in lowercase and don't hyphenate. Capitalize the "E" if the word begins a sentence. In most cases,</p>

	use <i>buying and selling online</i> or <i>shopping online</i> instead.
Education Specialist, Trained by eBay	Capitalize as shown when referring to this program.
effect versus affect	See <i>affect versus effect</i> .
effective immediately	Avoid. Instead, use <i>starting now</i> .
either/or	Don't use. Fill out the sentence construction. Example: You can either close the document or quit the program.
ellipsis (...)	An ellipsis indicates an omission of words in quoted text. Don't use it as a pause in a sentence. In general, avoid using ellipses in inline text. Incorrect: Sign up now and you'll start enjoying all the great features, such as Merchant Tools, Buy Now Buttons...plus much more.
email	Don't use as a verb. Use the word <i>send</i> or the phrase <i>send an email</i> instead. Set the word <i>email</i> in lowercase and don't hyphenate. Capitalize the "E" if the word begins a sentence. Exception: It's OK to use <i>email</i> as a verb in chat or phone.
email notification	Don't use. This is redundant. Use <i>email</i> instead. See <i>email</i> .
enable	Avoid. Use <i>lets</i> , not <i>enables</i> , to discuss what a product or system makes possible. Also use the word <i>let</i> to indicate that you're providing a means or opportunity. See <i>allow</i> . Example: eBay Sales Reports let you track your sales performance and optimize your business on eBay. Example: eBay enables the community to provide Feedback using various features on eBay. Don't use enable in the UI. Sales Reports let you (or help you) track your sales performance.
encrypted	Don't use. Use <i>protected</i> instead.
end a listing versus remove a listing	Sellers <i>end a listing</i> . eBay <i>removes a listing</i> .
ended auction page	Don't use. Use <i>ended listing page</i> instead.
engineered	Don't use. Use <i>created</i> or <i>developed</i> instead.
ensure versus insure versus assure	See <i>assure versus ensure versus insure</i> .
enter (v)	Use to indicate that you can either type or select a value. Example: In the shipping address field, enter the buyer's shipping address.
et al.	Don't use. Use the phrase <i>and others</i> instead.
etc.	Don't use. Use the phrase <i>and so forth</i> or <i>and so on</i> instead. Exception (chat): Limited use of <i>etc.</i> where it would occur in natural language is OK. Acceptable (chat): The system checks the info you entered (name, address, ZIP code, etc.) against the info on file for your

	card at the issuing bank. Acceptable (chat): Your title, description, etc. won't be changed automatically in the Relist Your Item page.
exclamation point (!)	Avoid in product content. Use only very sparingly in chat. Do not use in other CS content types. Limited use can convey energy and enthusiasm, but excessive or inappropriate use undermines credibility. Acceptable: Congratulations! Incorrect: Learn more! Incorrect: I can help you with that! Incorrect: Let me get that for you!
E.U., European Union	Use periods when abbreviating <i>European Union</i> . See <i>U.K.</i> and <i>U.S., USA</i>
execute	Avoid using the word <i>execute</i> . For commands, use the phrase <i>carry out</i> . For programs and macros, use the word <i>run</i> .
exit	Use only to refer to the command name. Use the word <i>quit</i> as a transitive verb, as in <i>quit the program</i> .
fax (v, n, adj)	Set this abbreviation for the word <i>facsimile</i> in lowercase. Don't spell out.
Featured Plus!	Capitalize as shown when referring to this listing feature.
Featured Store	Capitalize as shown when referring to this Store feature.
fee, fees	Set the words <i>fee</i> and <i>fees</i> in lowercase. These generic nouns differ from <i>Final Value Fee</i> or <i>Insertion Fee</i> , which are proper nouns and should appear with each word in initial capitals. See <i>Final Value Fee</i> and <i>Insertion Fee</i> . Also see <i>seller fees</i> and <i>selling fees</i> .
Feedback	Capitalize as shown when referring to the eBay Feedback system. For generic references, avoid using the word <i>feedback</i> . Use words such as <i>opinion, input, or comments</i> .
Feedback Forum	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay (site) center.
Feedback page	Don't use. Use <i>Feedback Profile</i> instead to refer to the page where members leave Feedback. See <i>Feedback Profile</i> .
Feedback Profile	The page where members can view their Feedback. Capitalize as shown. Don't use <i>Member Profile</i> .
Feedback rating	Capitalize as shown. When referring to the <i>Feedback rating</i> , they should always appear in this order: +1 (positive), 0 (neutral), or -1 (negative).
Feedback score	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature. The <i>Feedback score</i> is the sum of all the Feedback ratings that a member has received from unique users. See <i>Feedback rating</i> .
fewer (adj) versus less (adj)	Use the word <i>fewer</i> when referring to countable items (as in <i>fewer than expected</i>). Use the word <i>less</i> for measurable, noncountable items (as in <i>less than 25</i>). Don't use the word <i>under</i> to refer to a quantity or number. Correct: Vague search terms deliver fewer relevant results. Correct: Sellers who offer free shipping receive less negative feedback.

	Incorrect: We used under 50 pages.
field	Use <i>field</i> , <i>box</i> , or <i>information</i> . You enter information into a field or fill in fields. See <i>enter</i> . Example: Enter the title in the Title field. Example: Fill in all the fields. Example: Enter your payment information.
Final Value Fee	Capitalize as shown. Avoid repeated use of this term. After first mention, use day-to-day language wherever possible instead of this eBay branded term. See <i>fee</i> , <i>fees</i> .
Final Value Fee credit	Capitalize as shown.
Financing Center	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay Motors (site) center.
fixed price	Set in lowercase. Example: Try the fixed price format when selling multiple items.
frequently asked questions versus FAQs	Use the acronym <i>FAQs</i> as the last word in a page title when you need to keep it to one line. Capitalize as shown. Otherwise, write the phrase out. Example: Turbo Lister FAQs. Example: Frequently asked questions about Turbo Lister.
frustrating	Use with caution. Avoid being negative or condescending by assuming that the member is frustrated. Avoid: We understand that it can be frustrating when you've done everything you were supposed to do and the buyer doesn't respond.
functionality	Avoid. Rewrite to use <i>feature</i> , <i>function</i> , <i>works</i> , or <i>working</i> instead.
Gallery	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
Gallery Featured	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
generalizations	Don't generalize about how the site usually works. Refer only to the individual situation. Incorrect (customer support): Sometimes circumstances create these unfortunate issues. Although we work hard to minimize them, sometimes the situation is beyond our control.
get	Avoid using this word to refer to obtaining or retrieving data. Use a stronger, more descriptive word instead. [NEED EXAMPLES]
GIF (.gif)	In the first occurrence, use <i>GIF</i> (.gif). Capitalize as shown and include the file extension in parentheses. For subsequent occurrences, use the acronym <i>GIF</i> .
GittiGidiyor	Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. <i>GittiGidiyor</i> is the localized eBay website for Turkey. Use initial capital "G" and internal capital "G." When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase: www.gittigidiyor.com
Good 'Til Cancelled	Capitalize as shown and spell Cancelled with two "l"s when referring to this eBay Stores feature. However, in all other cases, follow the guidelines in the entry for <i>cancel</i> , <i>canceled</i> , <i>canceling</i> (v) and for <i>cancellation</i> (n).

greater-than symbol (>)	<p>You can use a greater-than symbol (>) in instructional content to let the user know which items to choose in succession in completing a task within a menu. Avoid using the symbol to indicate steps in a process.</p> <p>Correct: ...on the Windows toolbar, select Tools > Language > Thesaurus.</p> <p>Incorrect: You can do this in My eBay > Sold > Your listing.</p> <p>See <i>category names</i>.</p>
Groups (eBay Groups)	Capitalize as shown. The first reference is branded as <i>eBay Groups</i> and any subsequent references appear as <i>Groups</i> .
guideline	One word.
Half.com	Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase: www.half.com .
Half.com Gift Certificate	Capitalize as shown when referring to this Half.com product. The name <i>Half.com</i> should always be part of the official name. Use the lowercase term <i>gift certificate</i> if you are making a general reference to a gift certificate.
hard copy (n) hard-copy (adj)	<p>Avoid. Use <i>printed copy</i> instead.</p> <p>Example (n): Please print me the report. Example (adj): Give me a printed report.</p>
he/she or his/her versus they or their	<p>Except when referring to a specific person, using <i>he</i> or <i>she</i> alone in text to refer to eBay members is considered "sexist language." Avoid these terms whenever possible. Rewrite to make the sentence gender-neutral, or use the plural <i>they</i> or <i>their</i> instead.</p> <p>Correct: All sellers are required to pay their fees. Incorrect: A seller is required to pay his or her fees.</p> <p>Correct: As a seller, you are required to pay your fees. Incorrect: If your seller has mostly positive feedback, he probably has a legitimate reason for the delay in delivering your item.</p> <p>Correct: I can give you the buyer's phone number if you want to get in touch. Incorrect: I can give you the buyer's phone number if you want to get in touch with them.</p> <p>Exception: In chat, a Customer Support agent may reword the sentence to indicate gender only if the member has already referred to someone as "he" or "she."</p>
help	Do not capitalize references to the eBay help system.
high bidder	<p>Use <i>buyer</i> or <i>winning bidder</i> instead, except in the following instances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a reserve price Auction, use <i>high bidder</i> when the reserve price isn't met at the end of the auction. • In the bidding flow when the auction hasn't ended, use <i>You</i>

	<p><i>are the high bidder.</i> See <i>buy, buyer.</i></p>
Highlight	Capitalize as shown when referring to this listing feature. See <i>listing upgrade.</i>
Home Page Featured	Capitalize as shown when referring to this listing feature.
home page	Two words. Set this generic term in lowercase.
hover over	Don't use. Use <i>place your pointer over</i> instead.
HTML	Capitalize as shown. Because this is a technical term that many users might not know, use only when appropriate (for example, in instructions for sellers about item descriptions).
hyperlink	Don't use. See <i>link.</i>
hyphen (-)	<p>Don't use a hyphen (-) in place of an em dash or en dash. See <i>dash.</i> Use a hyphen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To join words to avoid ambiguity. Example: More large-merchant groups are using PayPal. To join compound modifiers. Compound modifiers are related words that express a single idea. Examples: The first-quarter earnings were reported. On the pull-down menu, click XYZ. Note: Preceding a noun, use a hyphen. Following a noun, don't use a hyphen. To avoid confusion after a <i>to be</i> verb. Example: eBay is first-rate. To join related adjectives or numbers in a series. Example: small-, medium-, and large-size businesses. Example: one-, two-, and three-year plans. To join a prefix to a word only if the word following the prefix is capitalized. Example: pre-Columbian. <p>Never hyphenate <i>anti, auto, bi, co, de, extra, hyper, hypo, infra, inter, intra, macro, meta, micro, mini, multi, non, over, post, pre, pro, pseudo, re, semi, sub, supra, un, under.</i> Don't use a hyphen for adverbs that end in <i>ly</i>. Example: An orderly cubicle...</p> <p>Consult <i>Merriam-Webster's Eleventh Edition</i> for spelling guidelines.</p>
I versus we	See <i>I versus you versus we versus eBay.</i>
I versus you versus we versus eBay	<p>Use the word <i>you</i> in your text as often as possible to make eBay members feel they are addressed directly and personally. In particular, use <i>you</i> and <i>your</i> to tell members that they can take action in the situation. Example: You can file an unpaid item case between 7 and 45 days after the transaction date.</p> <p>Use "I" to communicate involvement by an individual person in a specific member's situation. It lets the member know that the problem was personally reviewed or resolved. Example (email, chat): I've reviewed your account, and I don't see any strikes on your record.</p> <p>Use <i>we</i> rather than <i>eBay</i> to help the member feel engaged in most communications. Example: Please send us more information, and</p>

	<p>we'll follow up immediately. Example: We hope you win.</p> <p>Use <i>eBay</i> when discussing policy issues or in other situations that benefit from creating a little distance. Example: eBay is concerned about any potential policy violations.</p> <p>Note: Each content type has specific standards for this topic. Refer to guidelines for individual content types for more information.</p>
i.e.	Don't use. Use the phrase <i>that is</i> instead. Also see <i>e.g.</i>
IC3	Internet Crime Complaint Center. Use the web address http://www.ic3.gov . See <i>IFCC</i> .
if	<p>In general, use direct, actionable statements. Though we use conditional statements (<i>If...</i>), be careful that they don't appear ironic, sarcastic, or judgmental.</p> <p>Correct: If you haven't received any bids, you might consider lowering your starting price.</p> <p>Avoid: If you haven't received any bids, rewrite your title.</p>
image	Don't use. Use <i>picture</i> or <i>photo</i> instead.
impact (n)	Don't use as a verb. Use the word <i>affect</i> instead. See <i>affect versus effect</i> .
Important Note	<p>Don't use. Use <i>Important</i> or <i>Note</i>, not both.</p> <p>Note: Each content type has specific standards for using and formatting "notes." Refer to guidelines for individual content types for more information.</p>
in a page	Don't use. Use the phrase <i>on a page</i> instead.
information about versus information on	Don't use the phrase <i>information on</i> . Use the phrase <i>information about</i> .
Insertion Fee	Capitalize as shown. Use <i>Insertion Fee</i> instead of <i>Listing Fee</i> .
insure versus assure versus ensure	See <i>assure versus ensure versus insure</i> .
interface (n)	Avoid using as a verb (as in <i>interface with</i>). It's jargon. Use <i>interact</i> or <i>communicate</i> instead.
Internet	Capitalize this proper noun as shown in all cases.
invoice	This term should appear as <i>invoice</i> on the U.S. site. For other countries, refer to specific guidelines for that country.
ISBN	Use <i>ISBN</i> . Don't use <i>ISBN number</i> or <i>ISBN code</i> . Both these terms are redundant.
ISP, Internet service provider	At first mention, use full spelling followed by the acronym in parentheses: <i>Internet service provider (ISP)</i> . In subsequent mentions, it's OK to use only the acronym.
it versus they	<p>When referring to the departments or people of a company, use <i>they</i>. However, when it is necessary to refer specifically to a company, use <i>it</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Don't use <i>it</i> or the possessive <i>its</i> to refer to eBay. See <i>eBay (the brand)</i> for information about how to refer to eBay.</p>
item description versus listing description	Use <i>item description</i> .

item number	Lowercase as shown.
item page	Don't use. Use the word <i>listing</i> instead.
Item Specifics	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
item, items	Use to describe the tangible object being sold in a listing. Don't use <i>item</i> and <i>listing</i> interchangeably. See <i>listing</i> .
its versus our	See <i>eBay (the brand)</i> and <i>it versus they</i> .
JavaScript	One word. Capitalize as shown. Use initial capital "J" and internal capital "S." Because this is a technical term that many users might not know, use only when appropriate (for example, in instructions for sellers about item descriptions).
JPEG (.jpg)	In the first occurrence, use <i>JPEG (.jpg)</i> . Capitalize as shown and include the file extension in parentheses. For subsequent occurrences, use the acronym <i>JPEG</i> .
just, simply	Avoid the words <i>just</i> or <i>simply</i> in directions. The word might irritate members who don't think the directions are simple.
keyword	One word. Don't confuse with the program titled <i>eBay Keywords</i> . See <i>eBay Keywords</i> .
laptop (adj, n)	Use only when specifically necessary. Otherwise, refer generically to <i>computer</i> . Use as an adjective (<i>laptop computer</i>) or alone as a noun (<i>laptop</i>) when referring to a <i>laptop computer</i> . One word. See <i>desktop</i> . Preferred: Save the file on your computer. Example (adj): If you're using a laptop computer.... Example (n): If you have a laptop...
Latin	Don't use Latin words or phrases, such as <i>et al</i> , <i>pro bono</i> , <i>quid pro quo</i> , or <i>non sequitur</i> . Don't use abbreviations for Latin phrases. See <i>e.g.</i> , <i>etc.</i> , <i>i.e.</i>
Learning Center	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay University (site) center.
less (adj) versus fewer (adj)	See <i>fewer</i> , <i>less</i> .
let, lets	See <i>enable</i> .
like versus such as	Don't use the word <i>like</i> to mean <i>such as</i> . Use <i>like</i> to indicate <i>resemblance</i> and <i>such as</i> to introduce examples.
link (n)	A link might be the text or graphic that users click to go to a file, the location of a file, an Internet or intranet site or location, and so on. In the link text, inform users of the destination. In a sentence that ends in a linked phrase, don't include the ending punctuation in the link. Correct: You can view all listings . Incorrect: You can view all listings. Correct: Want to view all listings ? Incorrect: Want to view all listings? Exception: When a standalone link is a short, complete sentence, for example, in the UI, do not include the ending punctuation.

	<p>Example: <u>See listings</u></p> <p>Refer to the name of the link with the exact name and capitalization that appear in the user interface.</p> <p>Correct: Find out more about our <u>Item Not Received or Significantly Not As Described process</u>.</p> <p>Incorrect: Find out more about out <u>item not received/significantly not as described</u> process.</p> <p>Don't use <i>hot spot</i>, <i>hot link</i>, <i>hyperlink</i>, or <i>shortcut</i> to refer to a link.</p> <p>You can use the words <i>followed link</i> to refer to a destination that the user has already visited.</p> <p>Use the word <i>access</i> to describe the process of going to another page, and use the word <i>create</i> to describe writing the HTML code that forms the link. Don't use <i>click here</i> or <i>visit</i>.</p> <p>In instructional text, be specific and clear about this UI element.</p> <p>Correct: Click the Subscribe link. Incorrect: Click Subscribe.</p> <p>Note: Refer to guidelines for individual content types for specific standards for using and formatting links.</p>
listing	Use to describe the "ad" for an item (the way a seller displays item information to buyers). Don't use <i>item</i> and <i>listing</i> interchangeably. See <i>item</i> , <i>items</i> .
listing description	Don't use. Use <i>item description</i> instead.
Listing Designer	Capitalize as shown when referring to this listing feature.
listing fees	Use <i>listing fees</i> to refer to the fees a seller is charged to list an item. Listing fees include the Insertion Fee and Final Value Fee. Listing fees don't include PayPal fees or subscription fees, such as fees for Stores, Selling Manager, or other subscriptions. Don't use <i>Listing Fee</i> to refer to the Insertion Fee. Use <i>Insertion Fee</i> instead. See <i>Insertion Fee</i> , <i>Final Value Fee</i> .
Listing Icons	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay Motors feature.
listing upgrade	Use the term <i>listing upgrade</i> when referring to options sellers can select for a fee (Gallery, Featured Plus!, and so forth).
lists	<p>Use numbered and bulleted lists appropriately. Use a numbered list only when the list refers to a specific sequential order.</p> <p>Examples: Use a numbered list for directions that appear in a list of consecutive steps, as in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a user ID and password. 2. Log in. 3. Create your listing. <p>Use a bulleted list (replacing bullets with hyphens for content types</p>

	<p>that don't support bullets) when the items listed are not consecutive or sequential. A list of <i>apples</i>, <i>oranges</i>, <i>grapes</i>, for example, has no sequential order, and should be bulleted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples • Oranges • Grapes <p>You can also use a numbered list to show a factual, sequential hierarchy, as shown in this example:</p> <p>The best-selling items are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apples 2. Oranges 3. Grapes <p>Include end punctuation only if bulleted or numbered items are complete sentences. Avoid mixing sentences and phrases in a list.</p> <p>See <i>Writing for Web Usability</i> (in this document) for more information about making information scannable and readable.</p>
<p>lower left (n), lower-left (adj) lower right (n), lower-right (adj)</p>	<p>Use these terms instead of the terms bottom left and bottom right. Hyphenate when used as adjectives. See <i>above</i>, <i>below</i>, and <i>hyphen</i>.</p> <p>Example (adj): lower-left region Example (adj): It's in the lower-left corner.</p>
<p>main product page</p>	<p>Set in lowercase. This Half.com page features general buying information for a specific product.</p>
<p>manufacturer's part number</p>	<p>Use the correct possessive: manufacturer's part number. Don't use <i>manufacturers part number</i> or <i>manufacturers' part number</i>.</p>
<p>Mature Audiences category</p>	<p>Don't use. See <i>Adult Only category</i>.</p>
<p>may versus might versus can</p>	<p>See <i>can versus might versus may</i>.</p>
<p>measurement</p>	<p>In the U.S., avoid abbreviating units of measurement such as <i>inch</i>, <i>foot</i>, and <i>mile</i>. When necessary, however, <i>inch</i> can be abbreviated <i>in.</i> and <i>feet</i> can be abbreviated <i>ft.</i>, but don't use a double quotation mark (") for <i>inch</i> or a single quotation mark (') for <i>feet</i>. The abbreviation <i>mph</i> for <i>miles per hour</i> is also acceptable when necessary. Remember that most countries use a metric system of measurement, however, and whenever appropriate, include the metric equivalent in parentheses.</p>
<p>member</p>	<p>See <i>eBay member versus eBay user</i>.</p>
<p>member ID</p>	<p>Don't use <i>member ID</i>. Use <i>user ID</i> instead. See <i>user ID</i>.</p>
<p>Member Profile</p>	<p>Don't use. Use <i>Feedback Profile</i> instead.</p>
<p>MercadoLibre</p>	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this Spanish-language (Argentina, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela) eBay brand. Use initial capital "M" and internal capital "L." When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase:</p>

Comment [BK1]: Needs a noun example?

	<p>www.mercadolivre.com.ar (Argentina) www.mercadolivre.com.mx (Mexico) www.mercadolivre.com.pe (Peru) www.mercadolivre.com.uy (Uruguay) www.mercadolivre.com.ve (Venezuela)</p> <p>Note: Use <i>MercadoLivre</i> when referring to this Portuguese-language (Brazil) eBay brand. Use initial capital "M" and internal capital "L." When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase: www.mercadolivre.com.br</p>
merchant	A specific third-party relationship with eBay. Don't use this term to describe sellers or a relationship between eBay and buyers or sellers. See <i>partner</i> .
might versus may versus can	See <i>can versus might versus may</i> .
minimum bid	Use the term <i>minimum bid</i> only when referring to the lowest bid in an auction-style listing that has received at least one bid. Do not use <i>minimum bid</i> to refer to the starting price set by the seller. See <i>starting price</i> .
MissionFish	Capitalize as shown. MissionFish is a licensed nonprofit service of the Points of Light Foundation that serves as the dedicated solution provider for eBay Giving Works. See <i>eBay Giving Works</i> .
Mobile.de	Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase: www.mobile.de .
modify	Don't use. Use <i>change</i> , <i>edit</i> , or <i>revise</i> instead.
Money Back Guarantee by Seller	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay Motors program.
mouse-click	Don't use. Use the words <i>click</i> , <i>double-click</i> , or <i>right-click</i> , depending on your meaning. See <i>click</i> .
mouse over	Don't use. Use <i>place your pointer over</i> instead. See <i>place your pointer over</i> .
multiple item auction versus Dutch auction	Use the term <i>multiple item auction</i> . See <i>auction-style</i> . Example: If you have several of the same items to sell, create a multiple item auction. Unlike a regular eBay auction, multiple item auctions can have many winners. Note: This format is being discontinued in mid-May 2009.
multiple options	Don't recommend multiple possible options for doing the same thing. Correct: If A doesn't work, then try B... Incorrect: Try A, B, or C... Note: Each content type has specific standards for this topic. Refer to guidelines for individual content types for more information.
multi-quantity listing	Use this term when referring generically to fixed price listings with more than one item.
Multi-SKU or MSKU	Don't use. Use <i>multi-quantity listing with variations</i> or <i>listing with</i>

	<i>variations</i> instead.
must	<p>Avoid using this word. Say <i>you need to</i> or <i>it's important to</i> rather than <i>you must</i>—even then, it is preferable to cast the sentence in terms of the <i>listing</i> rather than something a member must do. See <i>strong directives</i>.</p> <p>Exception: When it's a matter of safety or security, or if the matter is otherwise time-sensitive or truly critical, using <i>must</i> is OK.</p> <p>Example: You must click the Get cashback button in this message to redeem this offer.</p> <p>Example: Images of replica firearms must clearly display the orange plug.</p>
My eBay	<p>Two words. Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature. Always capitalize the "M." Don't write the "M" in lowercase even if <i>My eBay</i> is in the middle of a sentence.</p> <p>Example: Click My eBay at the top of most eBay pages. You may be asked to sign in.</p> <p>Don't refer to <i>pages</i> in My eBay. You can refer to sections or just name the section.</p> <p>Example: "Go to the Account section of My eBay." or "Go to Account in My eBay."</p> <p>Note: My eBay is not a page, so content is not found <i>on</i> it, but <i>in</i> it. Use <i>in</i> to describe what users can find in My eBay. Do not use <i>on</i>.</p>
My Messages	Don't use. Use <i>eBay Messages</i> or the Messages tab in <i>My eBay</i> instead.

navigation, navigation bar, nav bar	Don't use. If necessary, use directional language instead, but be aware that the locations of navigation and other page elements are subject to change.
non-selling seller	Don't use. Use phrasing such as <i>when a seller doesn't send the item....</i>
normal, normally	Avoid. Use words such as <i>standard, typical, usual, usually, or commonly</i> instead.
numbered list	See <i>lists</i> .
numbers	<p>Use numerals for all numbers, except at the beginning of a sentence and with the exception of years. (See <i>Millions, billions</i> in this entry.)</p> <p>Example: Your account will be suspended for 7 days. Example: One million members responded to our survey. Example: 2005 was a profitable year.</p> <p>Use numbers for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses: 8 Hamilton Ave. (See <i>addresses</i>) • Ages: 2-year-old building • Cents: 5 cents • Character counts: 9 characters • Dollars: \$5.00 • Dates: June 6 (See <i>dates</i>) • Decimals: 0.02 • Dimensions: 6 feet tall, 9-by-12 rug • Fractions: 1¼ inches • Highways: U.S. Route 1 • Millions, billions: 3 million people • Page numbers: page 6 • Percentages: 4 percent (See <i>percent</i>) • Product versions: Internet Explorer 6 • Proportions: 2 parts water • Ratios: 2:1 • Speed: 7 miles per hour • Temperatures: 9 degrees • Times: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM PT (See <i>AM, PM</i>) • Units of measure: 3 feet, 9 pounds, 44 square inches, 100 meters <p>For plural numbers, add an "s" without an apostrophe.</p> <p>Example: 20s Example: 1950s</p> <p>Use numbers for any ranges, but don't use hyphens to separate the numbers. (See <i>hyphen</i>.)</p> <p>Correct: Your balance will post within 2 to 3 days.</p>

	<p>Incorrect: Your balance will post within 2-3 days.</p> <p>Note: Each channel might have specific guidelines for formatting numbers, or special exceptions for how to use numbers. Follow the guidelines for the content type you're working on, as shown in that content type's guidelines.</p>
offline	Use only to mean <i>not online</i> , but keep in mind that the word <i>offline</i> isn't understood by all users. Don't use <i>offline</i> to describe transactions that take place outside of the eBay system. Use <i>outside of eBay</i> instead.
OK	Capitalize as shown. Don't use <i>okay</i> , <i>o.k.</i> , or other spelling variations.
on a page	Use the words <i>on a page</i> rather than the words <i>in a page</i> .
online	One word. Don't hyphenate.
only	<p>Use correctly: put this modifier immediately before its subject. Putting a modifier in the wrong place often changes the meaning and can easily confuse members.</p> <p>Correct: We recommend that you make your listing private <i>only</i> if you have a specific reason.</p> <p>Incorrect: We recommend that you <i>only</i> make your listing private if you have a specific reason.</p>
opening bid	Don't use. Use <i>starting price</i> instead. See <i>starting price</i> .
opt in (v), opt-in (adj)	<p>For the verb, consider using <i>choose</i> or <i>try</i> or another specific verb instead. Hyphenate when used as an adjective.</p> <p>Preferred (v): You can choose to get emails.</p> <p>Preferred (v): You can try out the beta.</p> <p>Avoid (adj): It's an opt-in program.</p>
opt out (v), opt-out (adj)	<p>For the verb, consider using <i>choose</i> instead. Hyphenate when used as an adjective.</p> <p>Preferred (v): You can choose not to get emails.</p> <p>Acceptable (v): You can opt out of this beta.</p> <p>Acceptable (adj): Click the opt-out link.</p>
or versus slash symbol (/)	Don't use the slash symbol. Spell out the word <i>or</i> .
our versus its	Don't use <i>its</i> to refer to eBay. Use <i>our</i> instead. See <i>it versus they</i> .
over versus more than	<p>Don't use <i>over</i> in reference to a number or an amount.</p> <p>Correct: Because more than 30 days have passed since the refund was processed . . .</p> <p>Incorrect: Because over 30 days have passed since the refund was processed . . .</p>
page titles with colons	<p>Use sentence case before and after the colon.</p> <p>Examples: Selling Manager Pro: Subscribing and unsubscribing Listing your item: Selecting a shipping service</p>

page view	Two words. Set in lowercase as shown.
parentheses (())	<p>Don't overuse. Too many parentheses can clutter text and cause the reader to pause. Use parentheses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enclose an entire parenthetical sentence. Periods and question marks go inside parentheses when they enclose a complete sentence. • To enclose an incomplete sentence. Periods and question marks go outside parentheses when they enclose a partial sentence that's within a complete sentence. <p>Example (enclosed sentence): PayPal is safe and secure. (See our Privacy Policy.)</p> <p>Example (incomplete sentence): PayPal is safe and secure (as stated in our Privacy Policy).</p> <p>Commas, colons, semicolons, and dashes go outside parentheses.</p> <p>Exception: A comma separating two adjectives may appear inside parentheses.</p> <p>Example: PayPal (a safe, secure payment system) is easy to use.</p>
partner	<p><i>Partner</i> is a legal term that refers to companies that eBay "owns" or "has a partnership" with. The terms <i>sponsor</i>, <i>merchant</i>, <i>business relationship</i>, and <i>service provider</i> describe other specific third-party relationships with eBay.</p> <p>Example: eBay has a business relationship with IBM.</p> <p>Example: Companies may advertise on eBay or sponsor a page on eBay.</p> <p>Example: Companies that provide services for eBay could be considered merchants or service providers.</p>
password	One word. Set this generic term in lowercase.
PayPal	Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. Always use initial and internal capital "P." Spell as one word, not two. When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase: www.paypal.com .
PayPal Buyer Credit	<p>Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. The official name should appear as <i>PayPal Buyer Credit</i> during the first occurrence in plain text. Subsequent occurrences can appear as <i>buyer credit</i>.</p> <p>Exception: Keep the name <i>PayPal</i> as part of the official name if deleting it from subsequent occurrences would cause confusion.</p>
PayPal Buyer Protection	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. <i>PayPal</i> should always be part of the official name.
PayPal Money Back Guarantee	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. <i>PayPal</i> should always be part of the official name.
PayPal Seller Protection Policy	Capitalize as shown when referring to this name. <i>PayPal</i> should always be part of the official name.
PayPal Verified	Use this term to refer to PayPal accounts that have been verified. Always capitalize the words <i>Verified</i> and <i>PayPal</i> when referring to this type of account.
PC Selling Zone	Capitalize as shown when referring to this <i>Rethink Initiative</i> feature

	on eBay.
percent (%)	Use the symbol (%) instead of writing the word <i>percent</i> . Example: You may qualify for 25% credit on your Final Value Fees.
perhaps	Don't use. Use <i>maybe</i> instead.
phishing	See <i>spoof, phishing</i> .
phone numbers	Use hyphens between parts of a phone number, including after the area code and before the local phone number. For U.S. long distance numbers (such as 800 numbers), do not include the country code, which is the number 1. Correct: 800-555-1212 Incorrect: 1-800-555-1212 Incorrect: (800) 555-1212
Picture Gallery	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
Picture Manager	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
Picture Pack	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
picture services	Set in lowercase. Refers to a generic collection of picture uploaders and hosting options.
Picture Show	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
picture, photo	Use either of these terms instead of <i>image</i> .
place your pointer over	Use this term instead of <i>mouse over</i> or <i>hover over</i> . Example: From My eBay, place your pointer over the Account tab and click the Feedback link.
please	Don't overuse. Our research showed that members prefer direct communication. Excessive courteousness undermines credibility and detracts from the user experience. <i>Please</i> is acceptable when offering a solution to a user error. For example: <i>Please enter a valid starting price.</i>
plural	Use either singular phrasing or plural phrasing. Don't add "s" in parentheses to indicate both. For example, don't use <i>listing(s)</i> , <i>item(s)</i> , and so on.
pointer	Use instead of <i>cursor</i> .
policy	Lowercase. Does not need to have "eBay" in front of policy, but in most cases should be followed by the word "policy" Example: In a sentence: You can learn more in our firearms, weapons, and knives policy . As a title: Firearms, weapons, and knives policy Exception: Always capitalize the "P" when referring to the <i>eBay Privacy Policy</i> . See also <i>Privacy Policy</i> .
pop-up (adj, n), pop up (v)	Avoid. Use phrasing such as <i>the new window that opens</i> or <i>the box that opens</i> instead. Hyphenate when using pop-up as an adjective and as a noun.

	<p>Preferred: Close the box that opens. Incorrect (adj): Close the pop-up box. Incorrect (n): In the pop-up that appears...</p> <p>Preferred: A new window appears. Incorrect (v): A window pops up.</p>
portal	Use only to refer to a site serving as a guide or entry point to other sites. Set in lowercase.
prefilled item information	Don't use. Use <i>product details</i> (lower-case) instead.
prepopulated	Don't use. Use <i>included</i> or <i>added</i> instead.
preposition at end of sentence	Acceptable to use (because it sounds conversational) if it does not cause confusion and is the best way to convey the information.
press	You <i>press</i> a key on the keyboard. See <i>click</i> .
printer version	Use this term when naming a link that will allow you to preview a page and then print it. Don't use <i>printer-friendly version</i> , <i>printer-friendly page</i> , <i>print</i> , or <i>printable view</i> . Example: A printer version of the invoice is available.
prior	Don't use. Use <i>before</i> instead.
Privacy Central	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay (site) center.
Privacy Policy	Capitalize as shown when referring to the eBay Privacy Policy. See <i>policy</i> .
problem	Use the word <i>problem</i> to describe an issue between a buyer and seller. If a case has been opened in the Resolution Center, use the word <i>case</i> instead.
product details	Use <i>product details</i> instead of <i>prefilled item information</i> or <i>pre-filled item information</i> .
product detail page	For eBay, use this term only to refer to a product page. Note that a listing associated with a catalog appears on a product page. For Half.com, use this term for a page that features the seller's description. Always set in lowercase.
prohibited	Don't use. Use <i>not permitted</i> or <i>not allowed</i> instead.
ProStores	Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. Always use initial capital "P" and internal capital "S." Spell as one word, not two. When referring to an online web store created using ProStores, use <i>a ProStores web store</i> .
provide	Don't use. Use <i>give</i> instead.
proxy bidding	Avoid this term when possible (it's not understood by many eBay users). Use <i>on your behalf</i> instead. Example: eBay will bid on your behalf up to your maximum bid.
punctuation, ending	Use only one space after a period or any punctuation at the end of a sentence.
query	Don't use. Use <i>question</i> or <i>search</i> instead. See <i>search</i> .
quotation marks (" ")	Use quotation marks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around a quoted sentence or piece of dialogue. Example: The FAQ answers the question: "What is the Receipt ID for?" • Around single letters. Example: The letter "x" marks the

	<p>spot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around a single word or phrase to call it out. Example: Fake emails are also referred to as "spoofs." • Around eBay-specific terms only sparingly. In most content types and instances, use bold instead. See specific guidelines for each content type. <p>Commas and periods always go inside quotation marks. Colons, dashes, and semicolons always go outside quotation marks. Question marks and exclamation points can go inside or outside quotation marks, depending whether they're part of the quoted material. Example: How do I get the "Receipt ID"? Don't use quotation marks for pages Example: Go to the Reviews & Guides page. Don't use quotation marks for features Example: If you're having problems with eBay Toolbar...</p>
radio button	Avoid. Refer to <i>selecting an option</i> or <i>selecting a value</i> instead.
read-only (adj)	Hyphenate when used as an adjective.
real-time (adj) real time (n)	Hyphenate when used as an adjective. When used as a noun, don't hyphenate. Example (adj): Real-time operations happen at the same rate as human perceptions of time. Example (adj): In Internet chat rooms, conversations are real-time. Example (n): In chat rooms, users communicate in real time.
regarding	Don't use <i>regarding</i> . Use <i>about</i> instead to keep it informal.
Registered eBay Drop Off Location	Capitalize as shown when referring to this program. Don't hyphenate <i>Drop Off</i> .
registrations, aliases	Don't use. Use <i>multiple user IDs</i> instead. See <i>user ID</i> .
reinstate versus restore	Accounts are <i>reinstated</i> , listings are <i>restored</i> . See <i>restored listing versus reinstated</i> .
relist	One word. Don't hyphenate.
remove a listing versus end a listing	See <i>end a listing versus remove a listing</i> .
rep, representative	Don't use. Rewrite to use <i>we</i> when possible, or use <i>customer support agent</i> or <i>agent</i> . Example: We're always available to chat.
reserve price	Set this generic term in lowercase.
reserve price auction	Use the full name as shown. Don't refer to a <i>reserve auction</i> . See <i>auction</i> .
Resolution Center	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay (site) center (formerly the <i>Dispute Console</i>). This is separate from the <i>Security Center</i> . Don't use <i>Dispute Console</i> .
restored listing versus reinstated	Use <i>restored</i> when referring to a listing, <i>reinstated</i> when referring to an account. Example: We have restored your listing in My eBay Unsold items. Please write to us again to have your account considered for reinstatement.
restricted	Sellers aren't <i>restricted</i> . Accounts, listings, or sales can be

	restricted. This is an important distinction. Note that <i>account restrictions</i> and <i>account suspensions</i> are not the same. <i>Account restrictions</i> limit specific activities. <i>Account suspensions</i> prevent the member from engaging in any new buying or selling activity.
review	Set in lowercase when used as a standalone, generic noun or verb. Example: Write a review.
Reviews & Guides	When specifying this eBay area, capitalize as shown and use the ampersand.
Reviews page	Capitalize as shown when referring to this page name.
right-click (v)	Hyphenate when used as a verb. Example: Right-click to select the file. See <i>click</i> .
Scheduled Listings	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
screen shot	Avoid in user-facing content. Two words. Set this generic term in lowercase.
scroll	Set this generic term in lowercase.
scroll bar	Two words. Set this generic term in lowercase.
search (v, n)	Set in lowercase when used as a generic term. Example (v): Use eBay to search for items. Example (n): Use keywords to refine your search.
Second Chance Offer	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
second person, you	See <i>you</i> .
Security Center	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay (site) center.
security settings	Don't provide instructions for how to lower the security settings in a member's computer. Instead, refer members to the help files and tech support of their particular software. Provide a link to the software's website, if possible. If we need members to disable their spyware or pop-up blockers, we must emphasize that they should enable them again as soon as the problem is resolved.
select	<i>Select</i> and <i>clear</i> check boxes and radio buttons. Don't use the words <i>choose</i> or <i>deselect</i> . See <i>check box</i> and <i>radio button</i> .
Sell Your Item	Avoid, and never use the acronym <i>SYI</i> . Use more general phrasing such as <i>when you sell your item</i> , or <i>on the form when you sell your item</i> . Capitalize as shown if referring to this feature is necessary.
seller	Set in lowercase as shown. See <i>buy</i> , <i>buyer</i> .
Seller Central	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay (site) center.
Seller Dashboard	Capitalize as shown when referring to this My eBay tool.
seller fees	Don't use. See <i>listing fees</i> , <i>Insertion Fee</i> , <i>Final Value Fee</i> .
seller's account	Use <i>seller's account</i> . Don't refer to a <i>seller account</i> . Replace <i>create a seller's account</i> with <i>become a seller</i> . See <i>account</i> .
selling at versus selling on	Both are acceptable. Use <i>selling on eBay</i> .
Selling Basics	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay University name. Also acceptable: <i>Basics of Selling on eBay</i> .
selling fees	Don't use. See <i>listing fees</i> , <i>Insertion Fee</i> , <i>Final Value Fee</i> .

Selling Manager	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay tool.
Selling Manager Pro	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay tool.
Selling Manager applications	Capitalize as shown when referring to the official name for the Echo projects.
Selling Manager applications platform	Capitalize as shown. This is the official, legally-approved name for the Echo platform.
semicolon (;)	Avoid. Separate the text into two sentences, use a conjunction, rework a series to simplify it, or create a bulleted list.
sentence spacing	Use only one space after a period or any punctuation at the end of a sentence.
service provider	A specific, legally defined third-party relationship with eBay; don't use this term for other relationships between eBay and other companies or eBay and members. See <i>partner</i> .
Services Center	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay (site) center.
skill bidding	Set in lowercase except when referring specifically to the <i>eBay Skill Bidding policy</i> .
Shipping Calculator	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
Shipping Center	Capitalize as shown when referring to this eBay (site) center.
Shopping Cart, shopping cart	Capitalize as shown when referring to the Half.com feature. Lowercase as shown when referring generically to a shopping cart. Using <i>cart</i> is also OK.
should	Avoid <i>should</i> because it creates resistance. Correct: If the winning bidder doesn't pay as soon as the listing ends, you can send an invoice. Incorrect: If the winning bidder doesn't pay as soon as the listing ends, you should send an invoice.
simply	Avoid the words <i>simply</i> or <i>just</i> in directions. The word may irritate members who don't think the directions are simple..
since	See <i>because versus since</i> .
slide show	Two words. Set in lowercase.
Social Security number	Capitalize as shown.
sorry	Avoid. See <i>apologies</i> .
Spam, spam	When referring to the branded meat product, capitalize as <i>Spam</i> . When referring to unsolicited commercial email, set this generic term in lowercase.
specialty sites	Avoid. Instead, refer to the specific names of sites such as <i>eBay Motors, ProStores, Half.com by eBay, PayPal, and eBay Business</i> .
split infinitives	Occasionally, if there's no way to rework the sentence, and it's the best way to convey the information, it's OK to split infinitives.
sponsor	A specific, legally defined third-party relationship with eBay; don't use this term for other relationships between eBay and other companies or eBay and members. See <i>partner</i> .
spoof, phishing	Set in lowercase. The first time you use these words, define them. Use strong language for instructions about spoof email or websites. Example: A spoof is a fraudulent email. Never click a link or provide personal information if you think you received a spoof

	email.
SSL	Abbreviate as shown for <i>secure sockets layer</i> . Example: SSL transfers personal information securely and privately over the Internet.
starting price	Set in lowercase. Use this term to refer to the starting price for an auction; don't use <i>minimum bid</i> . However, use <i>minimum bid</i> if a listing has received one bid or more. See <i>minimum bid</i> .
step-by-step (adj), step by step (adv)	Hyphenate as an adjective. Leave unhyphenated as an adverbial phrase. Example (adj): Follow the step-by-step instructions. Example (adv): Follow the instructions step by step.
Store home page	Capitalize as shown when referring to the home page of a seller's Store. When referring to an eBay Store home page, don't use the term <i>storefront</i> .
Store inventory	Capitalize as shown when referring to this listing product. When referring to the listing format with a noun modifier, the following references are acceptable: <i>Store inventory format</i> , <i>Store inventory items</i> , and <i>Store inventory listings</i> . Don't use the acronym <i>SIF</i> .
Store Referral Credit	Capitalize as shown when referring to this Store feature.
storefront	Don't use. When referring to an eBay Store home page, don't use the term <i>storefront</i> . When referring to a seller's eBay Store, use <i>eBay Store</i> (first occurrence) and <i>Store</i> (subsequent occurrences). If referring to the home page of a seller's Store, use <i>Store home page</i> . See <i>home page</i> and <i>eBay Stores</i> .
strong directives	Use <i>you need to</i> or <i>it's important that you</i> , instead of <i>you must</i> . Avoid conditional phrases, such as <i>you should</i> . Don't use future tense, such as <i>you'll need to</i> . See <i>conditional verbs</i> , <i>must</i> , and <i>should</i> .
Subtitle	Capitalize as shown when referring to this listing feature. See <i>listing upgrade</i> .
such as versus like	Don't use the word <i>like</i> to mean <i>such as</i> . Use the word <i>like</i> to indicate resemblance and the phrase <i>such as</i> to introduce examples.
Supersize	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
suspend, suspended	Don't use <i>suspended</i> or <i>unregistered</i> to refer to a specific member's status. Use <i>no longer a registered user</i> . An account can be <i>suspended</i> but use this term carefully, because it's different from an <i>account restriction</i> . See <i>restricted</i> .
system limitations	Don't refer to limitations of eBay systems as a reason for doing/not doing something. This may aggravate members.
thank you	Use <i>thank you</i> or <i>thanks</i> only when there is good reason. Overuse of <i>thank you</i> devalues the meaning. See <i>please</i> .
The Basics	See <i>Selling Basics</i> .
the site, the website	Don't use when referring to eBay. Use <i>eBay</i> instead. However, when referring to "other eBay sites" or "international eBay sites" it's OK to use the word <i>site</i> . See <i>eBay (the brand)</i> .
therefore	Don't use.
they versus it	See <i>it versus they</i> .

third party (n) third-party (adj)	Avoid, except when discussing <i>third-party credits</i> . Use <i>someone else</i> , <i>unauthorized person</i> (or <i>persons</i>), or <i>used by another person</i> (or <i>persons</i>) <i>without your permission</i> when discussing Trust and Safety issues.
third-person (eBay) versus first-person singular (I) and plural (we)	Use <i>eBay</i> when discussing eBay policy or features. See <i>I versus you versus we versus eBay</i> .
thumbnail	Don't use. Use <i>picture</i> instead. See <i>picture, photo</i> .
thus	Don't use.
time zones	Use <i>Pacific Time</i> , <i>Eastern Time</i> , <i>Mountain Time</i> , <i>Central Time</i> , and so on. Don't abbreviate the names of time zones, such as PT, ET, MT, or CT. Don't use <i>Standard</i> or <i>Daylight</i> times.
toolbar	One word. Set this generic term in lowercase. See <i>eBay Toolbar Featuring Yahoo!</i> for information on how the official product name should appear.
Tradera	Capitalize as shown when referring to this brand. <i>Tradera</i> is the localized eBay website for Sweden. When spelling out the URL, always use lowercase: www.tradera.com
trading partner	Avoid. Use <i>buyer</i> or <i>seller</i> if possible. See <i>buy, buyer, and seller</i> .
transaction	If possible, don't use this vague term that some users don't understand. Be more specific—use <i>sale</i> or <i>purchase</i> , or <i>send payment to the seller</i> , or <i>send the item to the buyer</i> . Correct: The buyer sends payment to the seller. Incorrect: The buyer completes the transaction.
Trust and Safety	Capitalize as shown and spell out the word <i>and</i> . Use <i>eBay Trust and Safety</i> to refer to this department when possible. Otherwise, use <i>Trust and Safety team</i> or <i>eBay Trust and Safety team</i> .
Trust and Safety policies	Don't use. Use <i>eBay policies</i> instead.

U.K.	Use periods when abbreviating <i>United Kingdom</i> . See <i>U.S.</i> , <i>USA</i>
U.S., USA	Use <i>U.S.</i> with the periods when abbreviating <i>United States</i> . Similarly, use <i>U.K.</i> , <i>E.U.</i> , <i>U.S.S.R.</i> , and so on. Exception: In postal addresses where it's necessary to indicate the country, use <i>USA</i> with no periods. Exception: Use <i>US\$</i> instead of <i>U.S.\$</i> where necessary to indicate United States dollars versus, for example, Australian or Canadian dollars. Exception: Branded terms such as <i>eBay UK</i> .
uncheck	Don't use when referring to check boxes. Instead, use the word <i>clear</i> . See <i>select</i> .
unpaid item case	Lowercase this term (formerly <i>unpaid item dispute</i>) as shown.
unpaid item dispute	Don't use. See <i>unpaid item case</i> .
unpaid item reminder	Lowercase as shown. <i>Unpaid Item reminder</i> is used to refer to the notification sent to a member for a case that hasn't been closed yet.
unpaid item strike	Lowercase as shown.
unregistered	Don't use <i>unregistered</i> or <i>suspended</i> to refer to a member's account status. Use <i>no longer a registered user</i> instead. See <i>suspend</i> , <i>suspended</i> .
URL	Don't use. See <i>web address</i> .
UPC	Use <i>UPC</i> . Don't use <i>UPC code</i> – it is redundant.
User Agreement	Use <i>the eBay User Agreement</i> . On second references, can be called <i>the Agreement</i> or <i>User Agreement</i> . Capitalize as shown.
user ID	Use as two words. Lowercase <i>user</i> and capitalize <i>ID</i> as shown. See <i>account</i> . Example: Your user ID is the unique name you use to identify yourself on eBay.
venue	Don't use. Use <i>marketplace</i> instead.
VeRO participant versus VeRO member	Use <i>participant</i> (or <i>participate</i>) instead of <i>member</i> (or <i>join</i>) when referring to this program. Trust and Safety says <i>member</i> has negative connotations for many people who might participate in this program. Example: If you would like to participate in the VeRO program and pursue this matter further...
versus	Don't use. Use <i>instead of</i> .
via	Don't use. Use the words <i>through</i> , <i>using</i> , or <i>by way of</i> instead.
View Item	Don't use. Use <i>listing</i> or <i>item</i> instead. See <i>item</i> and <i>listing</i> .
Want It Now	Capitalize as shown when referring to this feature.
we versus eBay	See <i>I versus you versus we versus eBay</i> .
web	Lowercase this generic term.
web address	Use this phrase instead of <i>URL</i> . Note: Each content type has specific standards for using and formatting web addresses. Refer to guidelines for individual content types for more information. Also

	see <i>link</i> .
web form	Don't use. Use <i>contact Customer Support</i> if you're referring to our Customer Support team. Use <i>form</i> if you're referring to a form on eBay or any other website. When referring to a form, identify the form by name or describe it. Example: Enter your address on the registration form.
website	One word. Lowercase this generic term.
whether or not	Avoid this phrase. Write the sentence as a direct statement whenever possible. Correct: You can buy even if you aren't a seller. Incorrect: Whether or not you're a seller, you can buy. Acceptable: You can buy whether or not you're a seller.
Windows-based	Hyphenate. Use initial capitals for the word <i>Windows</i> .
winning bidder versus high bidder	Don't use <i>high bidder</i> . Use <i>buyer</i> or <i>winning bidder</i> instead, except in the following instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a reserve price auction, use <i>high bidder</i> when the reserve price isn't met at the end of the auction. • In the bidding flow when the auction hasn't ended, use <i>You are the high bidder</i>. See <i>buy, buyer</i> .
wish	Don't use. Use the word <i>want</i> instead.
Wish List, wish list	Two words. Capitalize as shown when referring to the Half.com feature. Lowercase when used as a generic term.
you	See <i>I versus you versus we versus eBay</i> .
you want versus you'd like	Both are acceptable. Don't use <i>desire</i> or <i>wish</i> to mean <i>want</i> .
ZIP code	Two words. Capitalize ZIP as shown, and lowercase <i>code</i> . ZIP is an acronym that stands for <i>Zone Improvement Plan</i> .

Appendix A: Additional references

The eBay Content Style Guide provides standards and guidelines on structure, style, and format for eBay. Additional information is available in the following resources:

Primary references

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th edition

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition

The eBay Product Voice Guide

<http://share/sites/ContentMgmt/Content%20Style%20Guide/eBay%20Product%20Voice%20Guide.pdf>

eBay Brand Guidelines

<http://bcx.corp.ebay.com/bcxbrand/BrandBasics.aspx>

Microsoft Manual of Style for Technical Publications, 3rd edition

Useful online resources

North America Customer Support on iWeb

<http://iweb.corp.ebay.com/CS/>

Uselt.com: *Writing for the Web*

<http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/>

Uselt.com: *How Little Do Users Read?*

<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/percent-text-read.html>

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