

Factsheet

Online shopping

Commerce between private individuals via online marketplace

It's important to distinguish between professional online shops (B2C) and commerce between private individuals (C2C) via an online marketplace such as ebay, Ricardo, Vinted or Facebook marketplace. C2C by way of online marketplaces like these is popular because it makes selling and buying (mostly) used items relatively easy. Alec and Emina could also find an outfit for their graduation ceremony on such a platform, perhaps even cheaper than on a professional online shop. To do so, however, they need a user account – and, of course, some luck while searching. But how exactly can Alec and Emina check whether something is a serious offer? And what else do you have to consider when buying or bidding on goods from a private individual?



✓ Ratings and badges

- Check reviews: In most cases, you can see reviews from previous buyers on the seller profile.
- Pay attention to badges: Some online marketplaces mark particularly highly rated sellers with special symbols.
- Ask the seller questions if you are unsure or something is not clear. Legitimate sellers are happy to answer questions, and do so quickly.

✓ Listings and payment methods

- Read the listings carefully: What are the shipping costs and customs duties? Who is paying for them? Does the seller give me a guarantee?
- Check payment method: What payment options do you have? Tip: Never settle payments to an unknown seller via cash transfer services (fraud protection).
- Check that the name of the seller matches the name of the bank account holder.

✓ Legal and security considerations

- Mind the legal situation: The purchase contract is concluded between seller and buyer. The platform itself is not a party to the contract. In Switzerland, there is no right of withdrawal (as long as the goods correspond to the description) nor are there statutory delivery times.

✓ Item description

- Read the item description carefully: Is the product new, as good as new, or used? Will it be delivered in its original packaging? Are any defects described and clearly visible in the photos?

✓ Price comparison and bid limit

- Price comparison: Calculate the total price (including shipping and possibly customs) and compare it with the original price from a store or online shop.
- Bid limit: Set a clear price limit when bidding to avoid spending too much in the heat of the moment.

✓ Facebook marketplace

- Unlike with online marketplaces such as Ricardo or ebay, users do not have to prove their identity when registering (beware of fake accounts), and you cannot see reviews. You should therefore research details of the seller and the exact condition of the goods. Ask questions!