

Online selling scam

You are likely to do this increasingly these days. You have an item, furniture, a bike, some books, etc. that you have grown out of and you decide to sell. You go on online marketplaces – local or overseas – and advertise the sale. Be aware that in selling an item online you can be scammed. There are various ways this can be done.

This is what you should look for:

There is no legitimate reason for someone who is giving you money to ask you to wire money back.

Being asked to ship the item outside of the address stated online in the e-selling online platform.



A buyer from overseas – this goes against the normal, as data shows that most buyers tend to be local.

A buyer from overseas who wishes to buy the item when this is easily available in his/her country of origin and likely to be cheaper considering the freight costs.



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Action you should take:

Do not accept cheques or money orders. When selling to someone you do not know, it is safer to accept cash or credit card payments.

Do not accept overpayments. When selling online, do not accept payments for more than the sale price, no matter what convincing story the buyer tells you.



Do not resend the money. Immediately inform your bank.

Always confirm the buyer has paid before handing over the item. Do not take the buyer's word for it.



Be wary of individuals claiming to be "overseas". In many different types of scams, con artists claim to be living abroad to avoid contact in person. Consider this a red flag.

Meet potential buyers in person and in a safe place. Never invite buyers into your home. Suggest meeting in a public area. This might be enough to scare off a scammer.