

How to stay safe when you buy things:

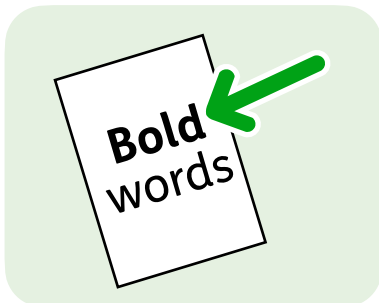
- Online
- On your phone
- From someone at your door
- From a shop



Easy Read



This Easy Read information uses easier words and pictures. You may still want help reading it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker.



These are words that some people will find hard. When you see a bold word, we will explain it in the next sentence.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

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About this guide



Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards has written this guide to help you stay safe when you buy things:



- Online - like websites, social media and dating apps.



- On your phone - like email, text or speaking to someone.



- From someone at your door.



- From a shop.

Buying from a website or social media



Never buy anything from a website or **social media** without making some checks first.

Social media is websites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok.



Things to check

- Does the price look right? Check the price on other websites.



- Do you need to buy it?



- Can you afford to buy it?

More things to check



- What do other people say about that website?



You could:

- Ask a friend that you trust.

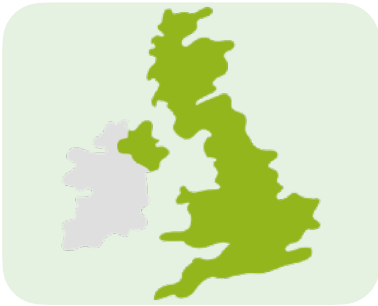


- Look at what people have said about the website on:
- Trustpilot:
www.uk.trustpilot.com



- Google Maps:
www.google.com/maps

Also check



- Is the company, that runs the website, based in the UK?



If not you may have to pay:

- A lot for postage.



- Tax to bring the thing you want into this country.



- Will you have to pay for postage?



- Will you have to pay to send the things back if you don't like them?

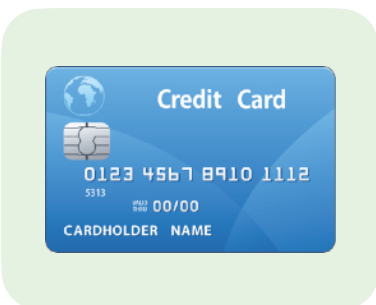
Remember



- You should get your money back if the thing you buy:
 - Doesn't work.



- Is not the same as the pictures on the website.



- If you buy things with a credit card, and they cost more than £100, your bank may give you your money back if things go wrong.

Social media scams



There are a lot of **scams** on social media.

A **scam** is where someone is trying to steal money or information from you.



Lots of messages on social media look like they are from well-known companies. But many are fake.



It is probably fake if a message is from:

- A supermarket saying they will give you some money.
- A travel company saying they will give you a holiday.





The scammers want you to fill in surveys so they can steal your personal information.



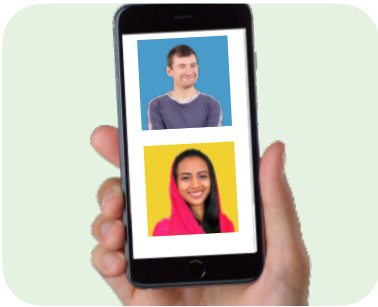
You can get more information about the latest scams here:

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/BucksSurreyTS



- Twitter: [@Bucks_SurreyTS](https://twitter.com/Bucks_SurreyTS)

Dating apps



Dating apps are used to help you find a new partner or friend.



Before you go on a dating app, speak to someone you trust.



Ask someone you trust to help you get started on the dating app.



Chat with people on the app. Don't chat with them by text or WhatsApp.



Some people are not who they say they are.



If someone says they need money, you should block them and tell someone you trust.

Buying on your phone



Do not buy from someone who calls you on the telephone.



They may not be telling the truth.



It may look like a local number, but it might be someone calling from another country.



Never give out your bank details or **PIN numbers**.

PIN numbers are the 4 numbers you use to pay with your bank card or get money out from a cash machine.



If the person on the phone says they are from the Police or your bank, they could be lying.



It is a scam if:

- You hear a computerised voice asking you to press a number on your phone keypad.



- Someone asks to access your computer.



Just hang up to stop the phone call.



If you keep getting calls asking you to buy something or give information, we can help you.



Let us know or ask someone you trust to contact us on: 0808 223 1133 and ask for a call blocker for your landline.

Email, text and WhatsApp



If you get a message by email, text or WhatsApp that you weren't expecting:

- Don't reply to the message.



- Ask someone you trust for help.



It will be a scam if someone sends you a message and asks for money, even if they say they are a friend or family member.



Do not click on any links.

Buying from someone at your door



If someone knocks on your door, think about whether you know who the person is.



If you have a chain, use it before you open the door.



Do not buy things from people you don't know that come to your door.



If you do need jobs done in the house or garden, ask someone you trust to get help from people they know.

Buying from a shop

Food



If you are buying food:

- Look at the 'Use by' date. The food needs to be eaten by this date. It should not be sold after this date.



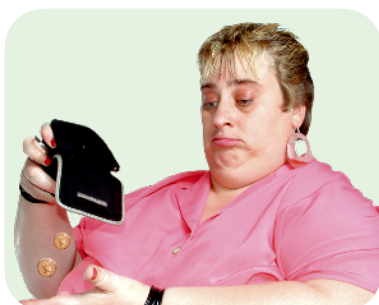
- Look at the 'Best before' date. You can still eat food after the best before date - but it might not taste so nice.

Other shopping



When you are looking at things in a shop, you should think:

- Do I need it?



- Can I afford it?

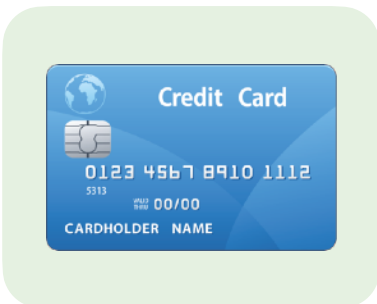
Remember:



- Some shops won't give you your money back if you change your mind.



- Keep the receipt. You will need this if you want to get your money back.



If you are buying something worth over £100, use a credit card.



If you buy with a credit card the bank may be able to give you your money back if things go wrong.

Find out more



You can look at our website here:

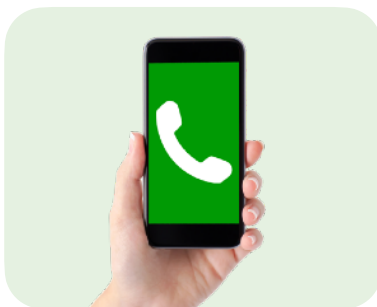
www.bucksandsurreytradingstandards.gov.uk

If you need more information please contact us by:



- Post:

Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards
Woodhatch Place
11 Cockshot Hill
Reigate
Surrey
RH2 8EF



- For advice or to report a scam phone: 0808 223 1133



- Email:
trading.standards@surreycc.gov.uk