

**Is it safe
to buy
counterfeit
goods?**



**Buying counterfeit goods
is risky for your security,
your health and your wallet.**

**So don't
do it!**



You're not sure?

Ask yourself these questions:

- Are your fake sunglasses really protecting your eyes?
- Is the fake toy for your baby girl free of toxic substances?
- What might be in your fake perfume?
- Are you sure your fake battery won't explode when you're using it?
- And what if your fake product is defective? Do you have a guarantee?
- Or what if you receive a letter from the right holder saying that you will have to pay the destruction costs for the fake mobile you just bought in Asia?

You want to be sure you aren't buying fake products?



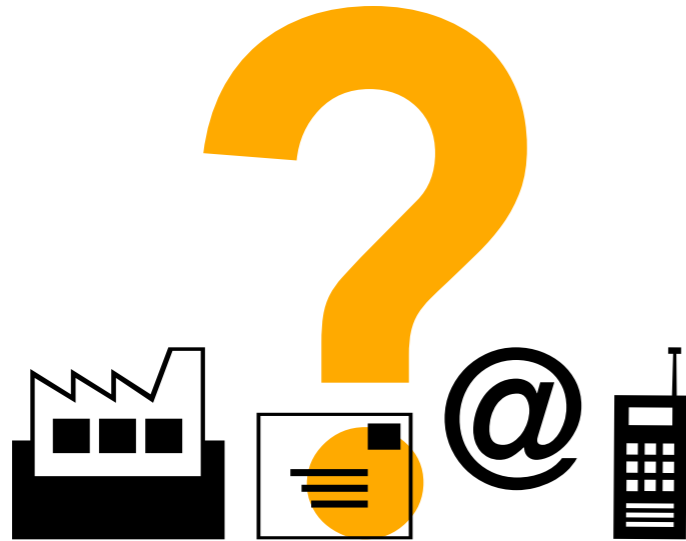
Check out the 10 ECC-Net tips on how you can avoid buying fake products on the Internet.

1. Check the identity of the seller
2. Search other consumers' reviews
3. Check whether the website benefits from a trust mark
4. Assess the general layout of the website
5. Check your consumer rights on the trader's website
6. Check the picture of the product
7. Watch the price of the good
8. Check the official website of the brand for authorized and black-listed sellers
9. Pay with a secured means of payment
10. Pay attention to refurbished products



ECC-Net tip 1

Check the identity of the seller



- ✓ name of the company
- ✓ geographical address
- ✓ e-mail address
- ✓ phone number(s)

Always check the contact details of the webshop to verify if it really exists, and where and how to complain in case of a problem.

Here are the details to verify:

- the name of the company,
- the geographical address,
- the e-mail address or a genuine contact form,
- the phone and fax number(s) if available.

Do not trust the URL address. Just because an address ends with “.be”, “.fr”, “.nl” or any other European extension does not necessarily mean that the company is actually located within the EU.



ECC-Net tip 2

Search other consumers' reviews

Use Internet search tools to check whether other consumers have left any good or bad comments about the trader. Read these comments carefully, and keep a critical eye. Excessively positive review? The same person reviewing the same product on several websites? Review too vague? Be careful! It could be a review left by the webshop itself, which is, of course, illegal.



★	★	★	★		Alex A.
●	●	●	●	●	Bea B.
★	★	★	★		Carla C.
★	★	★	★	★	Dirk D.
●	●	●	●	●	Fabienne F.
★	★	★	★		Evert E.



★	★	★	★	★	Xavier X.
●	●	●	●	●	Yolanda Y.
★	★	★	★	★	Zora Z.
★	★	★	★	★	Xavier X.
●	●	●	●	●	Zora Z.
★	★	★	★	★	Xavier X.



ECC-Net tip 3

Check whether the website benefits from a trust mark



A trust mark is a stamp that an objective third party awards to a webshop that meets the trust mark quality requirements and that guarantees a safe online purchase. Does the trader's website mention a trust mark? To be sure the trustmark is justified and trustworthy, go to the trust mark's website to check whether the webshop was actually awarded this quality label.





Most of the websites selling original products look professional.



Most of the websites selling counterfeit products don't look very professional.



ECC-Net tip 4

Assess the general layout of the website

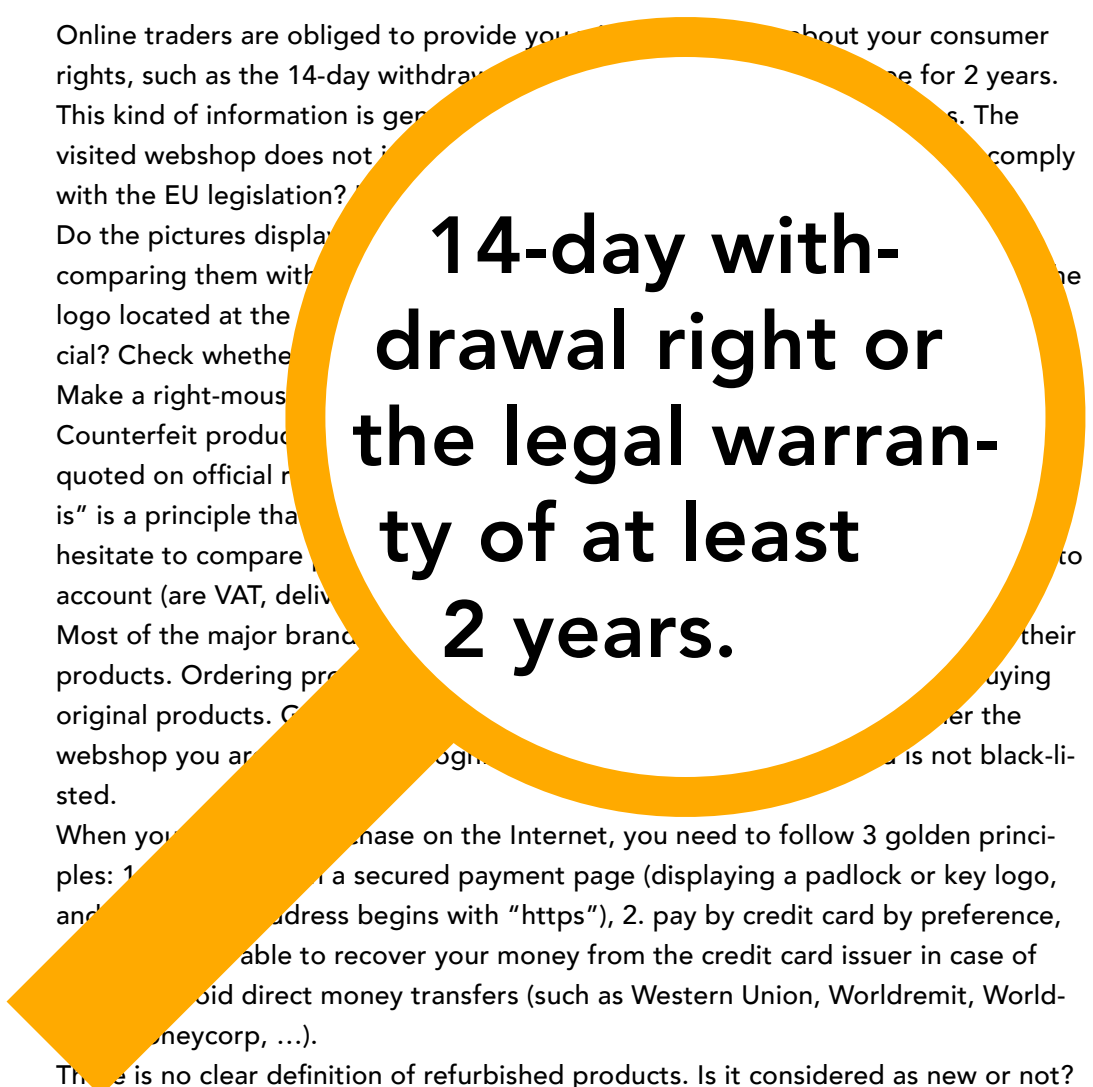
Most of the websites selling counterfeit products do not look very professional: they often have spelling mistakes and grammatical errors, poor quality pictures of the products being sold or of the logos for the means of payment, etc. The fact that the website is in your language doesn't mean that it's actually based in your country. Do not trust websites whose URL links the name of a brand with terms such as "cheap", "outlet" or other expressions suggesting low prices.



ECC-Net tip 5

Check your consumer rights on the trader's website

Online traders are obliged to provide you with clear and correct information about your consumer rights, such as the 14-day withdrawal right or the legal warranty of at least 2 years. No information on your EU consumer law? No indication of the ODR platform for redress? Look somewhere else!



14-day withdrawal right or the legal warranty of at least 2 years.

Online traders are obliged to provide you with clear and correct information about your consumer rights, such as the 14-day withdrawal right or the legal warranty of at least 2 years. This kind of information is generally required to be displayed on the trader's website. The visited webshop does not indicate whether it complies with the EU legislation? Do the pictures displayed on the website match the actual product? Are you comparing them with the original product? Is the logo located at the bottom of the page? Check whether the trader is a professional. Make a right-mouse click on the product page. Counterfeit products are often sold at a lower price than the original products. Quoted on official websites, the "14-day withdrawal right" is a principle that you should not hesitate to compare. Check whether the trader's website is secure (are VAT, delivery costs, etc. clearly indicated). Most of the major brands have their own websites. Ordering products from their websites is often cheaper than buying original products. Check whether the trader's website is not black-listed. When you purchase on the Internet, you need to follow 3 golden principles: 1. use a secured payment page (displaying a padlock or key logo, and the address begins with "https"), 2. pay by credit card by preference, and 3. be able to recover your money from the credit card issuer in case of a problem. Avoid direct money transfers (such as Western Union, Worldremit, Worldmoneycorp, ...). There is no clear definition of refurbished products. Is it considered as new or not? This makes a difference to your guarantee, and to what you can expect from such a product. Consider the price you pay. Compare it with other original products.



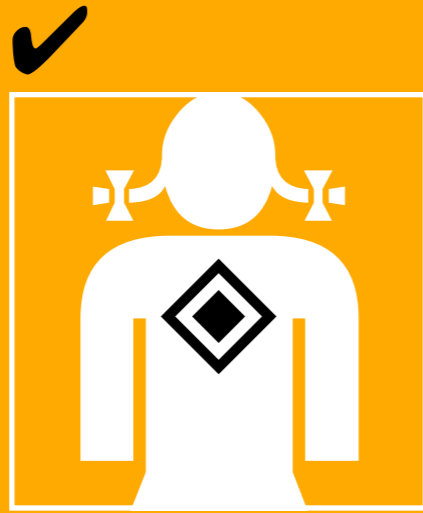
ECC-Net tip 6

Check the picture of the product

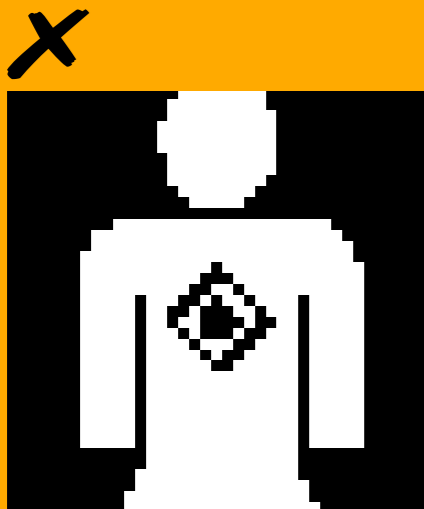
Do the pictures shown on the webshop look unprofessional? Is there something wrong with the logo or does the background look strange? Are the photos of low-quality? Is it impossible to zoom in? Is only part of the item displayed? These may be indicators of a website that is selling fake products.



www.brand.xx



www.brand.xx



www.webshop.xx



www.webshop.xx



ECC-Net tip 7

Watch the price of the good

Counterfeit products are often sold at a price considerably lower than the price quoted on official retailer webshops. "If the price is too good to be true, it usually is" is a principle that you should bear in mind when buying on the Internet. Do not hesitate to compare prices on several websites, and always take the total price into account (are VAT, delivery cost, banking fees, custom duties, etc. included?)

✓
99€

www.brand.xx

✓
93€

www.webshop.xx

✓
99€

www.webshop.xx

✗
33€

www.webshop.xx





www.brand.xx/retailers

- ✓ www.webshop-authorized.xx
- ✓ www.webshop-gemachtigd.xx
- ✓ www.webshop-autorisé.xx
- ✓ www.webshop-autorisiert.xx
- ✗ www.webshop-black-listed.xx

ECC-Net tip 8

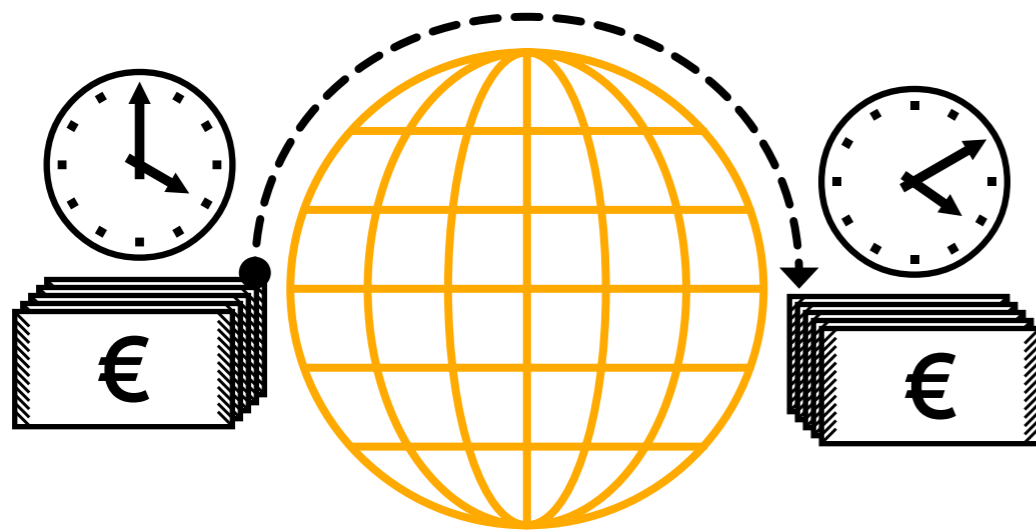
Check the official website of the brand for authorised and black-listed sellers

Most of the major brands only give specific retailers their authorisation to sell their products. Ordering products from those retailers guarantees that you are buying original products. Go to the official website of the brand to check whether the webshop you are visiting is recognized as an authorised retailer, and is not black-listed.





https://



ECC-Net tip 9

Pay with a secured means of payment

When you pay for a purchase on the Internet, you need to follow 3 golden principles:

1. always pay on a secured payment page (displaying a padlock or key logo, and whose URL address begins with "https"),
2. pay by credit card by preference, as you may be able to recover your money from the credit card issuer in case of fraud,
3. avoid direct money transfers (such as Western Union, Worldremit, Worldplay, Moneycorp, ...).



ECC-Net tip 10

Pay attention to refurbished products

There is no clear definition of refurbished products. Is it considered as new or not? This makes a difference to your guarantee, and to what you can expect from such a product. Consider the price you pay. Compare it with other original products.



This publication is part of the action 670706 – ECC-Net BE FPA which has received funding under a grant for an ECC action from the European Union's Consumer Programme (2014-2020).

The content of this publication represents the views of the author only and it is his/her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency or any other body of the European Union.

The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for the use that may be made of the information it contains.

http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/solving_consumer_disputes/non-judicial_redress/ecc-net/index_en.htm

Author: ECC Belgium

Co-funded by the European Union

