

Keep Safe Online Shopping

October 2020 by Steven Dunwell

I have recently been asked a lot of questions about online shopping, so I thought I would revisit this subject and give you some advice on how to make this a safer and stress-free experience.

One of the most important things to cover is:

Never, ever send anyone your credit card or bank details over an email or other messaging service. Ever!

Shop Only with Trusted Companies

Always stick with trusted, familiar companies like **amazon.co.uk**, **tesco.com**, **ebay.co.uk** or other retailers that you're familiar with.

Beware of misspellings in their web address, for example using ".net" instead of ".com or .co.uk" as that is one of the most common ways scammers trick consumers.

Look for secure "S" and the lock symbol

The best way to ensure that the website you're visiting is secure is to look at their address, if it starts with **https://** then it's secure.



Another way to tell if a site is secure is there will be a small lock symbol showing in the address bar:



Keep it updated

Always keep your computer up to date with latest security patches and a good antivirus program, it all helps to keep you secure.

Use a stronger password

We all use online accounts for banking, credit cards, e-mail etc. and it's sometimes easier to reuse the one simple password for each site.

However, try to use more complex passwords wherever possible, especially when banking and shopping online.

Your password is weak if:

- It uses numbers or letters in the order they appear on the keyboard for example "1234" or "qwerty".
- It's the name of your children, pet, favorite football team or city of birth.
- It's your date of birth, anniversary or your car license plate number
- It's "letmein," or especially, "password."

Are you sharing too much?

One extremely important online shopping safety tip is to keep your personal information protected. No online store needs your National Insurance, Fiscal number etc. Combine this with your credit card details and some serious damage could be done. Always give the least amount of personal information possible.