

Department of Trade and Industry

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DTI dishes out tips to consumers on making online purchases

In the age of Covid-19, the internet has made online shopping seamless – find an item you love, click the “buy” button and get a package delivered right at your doorstep. The prevalence of online shopping also heightened the use of digital payments such as e-wallets and online banking. However, these transactions do not always go smoothly and there are still plenty of reasons to safeguard one’s personal and financial information.

The Department of Trade and Industry - Consumer Protection Group (DTI-CPG) receives queries and complaints from consumers daily. In the recent months, most of those received and acted upon were related to online shopping.

The DTI reminds the public to be vigilant especially when engaging in online transactions. The following are some consumer tips:

- Use hard to guess passwords. Do not use the same password for online shopping websites that you use for logging onto your bank, home, or work computer. Never share your login information with anyone. Secure these passwords but ensure easy retrieval.
- Always check the website if it has a Secured Socket Layer (SSL) Certificate to confirm its legitimacy. This protects information (such as credit card number, addresses, and password) sent to the website.
- Select merchants carefully. Confirm the online seller’s physical address and phone number beforehand and review its return policy to avoid product return issues.
- Check the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) at the beginning of the website. When providing your personal address, make sure that the URL starts with https://. The “s” stands for “secure” and indicates that the communication with the website is encrypted.
- Keep a record of your transactions. Ask for an Official Receipt/Sales Invoice
- Check for reviews posted by customers.

“The DTI urges consumers to buy only from secured websites. Be wiser and more alert in order not to be taken advantage of by dishonest online sellers. We also urge online sellers to register their businesses with the government for them to avail of its services and to avoid unnecessary legal complaints.” DTI Consumer Protection Group Undersecretary Atty. Ruth B. Castelo underscores.

For consumer-related concerns and queries, you may send an email to ConsumerCare@dti.gov.ph or reach us thru the One-DTI (1-384) Hotline. **END**