

## Selling on eBay

by Dick Evans

I am not an expert on this subject, but I have sold a number of items. And I purchase an item now and then as well. In addition to being on the Internet and having something you want to sell, there are a couple of FREE things you should have,

1. An eBay account.

This is easy to set up. There are no charges for using eBay. The only time you are charged is when you post an item for sale and request some special services and when you sell something, eBay bills you for a percentage of the sale.

2. A PayPal account.

Now, you do not need to have this, but it is also FREE to sign up. It is the best way to receive payments from people you do not know. PayPal backs up the transaction and they can pay you by credit card or a check. (FYI--PayPal is owned by eBay).

Now that the details are done, find something to sell. We all have things hanging around gathering dust. This last year we have stopped at a few estate sales and looked around. All we could think of is would this be us years from now. All our stuff being put on tables and being sold for peanuts. So, if we are not using it, why keep it?

I always remember that old adage my mother used to quote. "One persons junk is another's treasure." So why not put our own "junk" on eBay and see what happens?

I have put a number of items up for auction in this past year. Even a couple of non-working old laptop computers--no hard drives or memory. Average sale was over \$30 each. That was much better than sending them to the junk pile.

Found an old stopwatch I purchased in the 60's for use on sports car rallies. It sold for \$1,626! Now that is the exception. Most of my sales are less than \$20. But you never know what that item you have gathering dust is worth to someone else.

When you have located the item to sell, clean off the dust and take a picture of it. Depending on the item you might want to get various views of it.

Next attempt to locate an item that is for sale or has been sold that is just like yours. You might need to vary the description a few times to find it. "Wow, they sold it for @%\$!" What someone else got for it might determine your starting price.

Once you have found a match, review how they described it. Copy and paste and add your specifics. Describe any flaws in detail.

You need to know what it will cost to ship it. Reduced pricing through eBay on USPS and UPS, so use their methods. Find a box, packing material, and weight it. Now use the estimator on eBay to find your price. Add a couple of dollars and round up to the next whole dollar. The couple of extra dollars covers your trip to the Post Office and the packing materials. Remember that the Post Office has FREE boxes for Priority Mail.

Unless you have figured shipping International, be sure to specify shipping to USA only. You might want to include Canada as the extra charges to ship there are not too bad, but figure the prices ahead of time.

Now you are ready to sell your item. If a similar item sold for big bucks, you might want to set a reserve price so yours does not sell at a much lower price just because the right person did not happen to see it. That does cost even if you do not sell the item. Starting price of .99 cost nothing, but you may just end up selling it for that price!

I sell my items AS-IS and do not allow returns. Remember that used is not new meaning not sealed in original packaging. In the description you can explain it was opened and is like new.

Best to leave the item on for 7 days and to have it end on a Sunday evening. Most of the real bidding occurs at the end of the auction, even the last few minutes. Weekends are when most people are home with time to watch the bidding.

Now that you have sold an item and shipped it, here are the approximate charges you will incur and the net profit on the sale. Sell Price + Shipping - Actual shipping - Packaging - eBay charges - PayPal charges = net profit.

The eBay charges include any extras, like setting a reserve price or a starting price, an insertion fee and 9% of the sell price with a max of \$100. If you figure roughly 10%, you will be close. For details see <http://pages.ebay.com/help/sell/fees.html>.

On the other end, PayPal charges you to process the payment and add it to your PayPal balance. Their fee is 2.9% of the amount received + .30 per transaction. Figure 3% and you will be close.

Sell Price	\$100.00	\$10.00
Shipping	\$6.00	\$6.00
Actual Shipping	\$4.95	\$4.95
eBay Fees	\$10.00	\$1.00
PayPal Fees	\$3.00	\$0.60
Net Profit	\$88.05	\$9.45

eBay is an auction site. You can list an item with a buy it now price. This gives the bidder an idea of how much you are looking to get. Good news is that some will buy it now. Bad news is that nobody will higher than your buy it now price.

Another site where you can sell items is Craigslist (<http://sarasota.craigslist.org/>). List anything and tell them what you want to get for it. Negotiate shipping; local pickup works good since most are in your area.

We have been successful listing a few items, like a trundle bed last year, on this site. They came to us and paid our price to pick it up. We have also used it to rent out a timeshare we own in Newport, RI each year. We send the renter a contract and they send us a check. We finalize the deal when the check clears.

The most current items are listed on the top of the list, so re-post your items on a regular basis

to keep them on top of the list.

Be VERY careful of payment. Cash is best. Or you can use your computer and run their payment through PayPal--or have them submit the payment before they come to pick up the item.

To sum it up. eBay is an auction site and you sell to anywhere in the world. You are responsible for shipping. Craigslist is more like a yard sale. You set the price and they come to you to pick up the item.