



Drop Shipping Scams

A popular business model that's frequently abused by scammers as a subtle and easy way to take your money. Familiarize yourself with the trend to avoid getting scammed.

What is drop shipping?

Drop shipping is a general term for selling products that are not kept on inventory. The seller accepts the order from the buyer and forwards the buying information to the manufacturer, who then ships the product to the buyer. While this is generally an acceptable practice, it has been frequently abused over the last few years as a method to scam buyers by charging premium prices for cheap, low-quality products.

What is a drop shipping scam?

A drop shipping scam is performed using a cheap and easily marketable product, creating advertisements that embellish the quality and capabilities of the product, and then selling the product through online stores at an inflated price. Price gouging on these sites can exceed 1000% the original value of the product.

Why is it something I should worry about?

Because the operations of these sites appear to be legal and there are no repercussions to the drop shipper for scamming buyers. If a buyer falls prey to a drop shipping scam and is tricked into overpaying for a poor-quality product, there is usually no recourse for the buyer. It's highly unlikely the seller will refund your money.

It's difficult to determine a legitimate product from a false one, and any red flags on drop shipping sites and advertisements are not always easy to spot. Fraudulent drop shipping sites do their best to lie about the quality of the product and create a façade of a legitimate retailer.





How do I protect myself?

Remember these five tips when considering purchasing a product online:

- **Check if the advertisement of the product is done in a professional manner.**

Most drop-shipping scams are advertised through social media feeds on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter. The advertisements are commonly filmed by influencers or are copy and pasted throughout many drop shipping outlets. Drop shipping sites are known to hire influencers to advertise their products, or will create an advertisement themselves, with a noticeable lack of production quality.

- **Determine if the seller's site lacks important information.**

Most fraudulent drop shipping sites will lack important information like certain policies or terms of service. Look for typos and signs of illiterate and hasty writing. Is the product page the only page that looks like there has been any effort put into it? Is there a contact page or an about page? Do they have any contact information or a listed business address? If not, it's likely the seller didn't want to spend the time fabricating content.

- **Verify the authenticity of buyers' reviews of the product you intend to buy by using a reputable review service (separate from the site you intend to buy from).**

This is tricky. There is no real way to determine the legitimacy of a review on a site. Scam sites will usually generate fake five-star reviews and place them on the site or attach them to the product page. If it's too good to be true, it probably is. Instead, look for reviews on trusted sources like Google Reviews or Trustpilot.

- **Reverse image search the product.**

You can reverse image search the product on tools like Google's Reverse Image search or TinEye Reverse Image Search Engine. If you find multiple sites selling the exact same product, using the exact same pictures, sometimes even using the same product copy, then you've found a drop shipping scam.

