



BBB® Online Shopping Fraud Study

Why Should You Care About Online Shopping Scams?

Online shopping accounts for the most complaints and fraud reports reported to BBB last year.

More than a third of reports to BBB Scam TrackerSM in 2021 involved online purchases.



Online storefronts have more BBB “F”-rated companies than any other type of business.

Electronic shopping generated **106,326 complaints** to the BBB in 2020, up 40% from 2019.

FTC projects **\$384,000,000** in online shopping losses in 2021. **based on FTC online shopping complaint data*

Top Types of Fraud Purchases



Vehicles



Pets



Products/Services



Trial Offers

Facebook/Instagram’s Role

- BBB Scam Tracker victims who were not actively looking for a product, but wound up losing money in a fraudulent transaction, began with Facebook or Instagram 70% of the time.
Source: BBB Institute for Marketplace Trust
- Many businesses report stolen photos and names used on cloned websites, resulting in consumers receiving inferior knockoffs or nothing at all.
- Despite marketers in China not having access to Facebook, they spend billions on Facebook advertising.



How the scam works.

- An ad appears in the feed of a social commerce shopping platform – like Facebook or Instagram.
- The user makes an online purchase – often from a site that stole content from a legit business.
- The shopper receives an inferior product, a counterfeit item or nothing but a fake tracking number.
- The Refund/Return Dilemma:
 - The website may disappear.
 - Returning the package (often to China) costs more than the original order.
 - The social platform is difficult or slow in helping resolve the issue.
- Legit businesses deal with lost sales and complaints from angry victims who contact them after being scammed by the fake businesses.

Protect yourself from online shopping scams. Read the complete BBB report: [BBB.org/ScamStudies](https://www.bbb.org/ScamStudies)

Report scams on

