BILL'S HOME TECH

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Selling Collectibles on eBay Without Getting Burned

Getting a fair price without getting burned by the scammers

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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THE 60-SECOND VERSION

1 The 60-Second Version

The whole playbook in a breath.

Selling collectibles on eBay safely comes down to a few habits. The single most important: keep every part of the transaction on eBay — the messages, the payment, everything. The moment a buyer talks you into paying 'off-platform' (by Zelle, gift card, wire, or moving to another site, often by promising to save fees), you lose all of eBay's seller protection, and that is exactly what scammers want.

Know the common seller scams: overpayment tricks, requests to change the shipping address, fake 'item not received' claims, and return fraud (returning a fake or a damaged item). Protect yourself by documenting your item thoroughly with photos and an honest description before you sell, shipping only after payment clears, and using tracking — plus signature confirmation on valuable items — so no one can falsely claim it never arrived.

Expect roughly ten percent or more in fees, and know that eBay reports your sales to the IRS once you pass a threshold. Finally, start with smaller, lower-value items to build up your feedback and learn the ropes before listing your most valuable collectibles. Sell this way, and eBay is a safe, effective way to turn collectibles into cash.

- Keep everything on eBay — off-platform payment loses all your protection.
- Know the scams: overpayment, address-change, fake 'not received', return fraud.
- Document thoroughly, ship after payment clears, use tracking and signature confirmation.
- Expect ~10%+ fees and IRS reporting; start small to build feedback first.

THE ONE RULE

2 Keep Everything on eBay

The protection that evaporates the moment you leave.

If you remember one thing from this guide, make it this: keep every part of the transaction on eBay itself — the messages, the payment, the shipping, all of it. eBay offers seller protections, a payment system, and a record of everything, but those protections only apply while you stay on the platform. The instant a deal moves off eBay, you are on your own, with no recourse when it goes wrong.

This matters because the most common scam is precisely a buyer trying to lure you off-platform. They build a little trust, then suggest paying you directly — by Zelle, a gift card, a wire transfer, or moving the sale to Facebook Marketplace or email — often sweetening it by claiming it will save you both the fees, speed things up, or let them pay a premium.

It sounds helpful. But the moment you agree, you have left eBay's protection behind: the 'payment' may be fake or reversible, and when it falls apart, eBay cannot help you because the deal did not happen there. Legitimate buyers pay through eBay.

An insistence on going off-platform is one of the clearest scam signals there is.

WATCH OUT

Never take payment or move the conversation off eBay, no matter how reasonable the buyer's reason sounds ('to save fees,' 'it's faster,' 'I'll pay more'). Off-platform payment by Zelle, gift card, wire, or another app is the number-one way sellers get scammed — once you agree, you lose every protection eBay offers. Keep it all on eBay, always.

THE SCAMS

3 The Common Seller Scams

Know the playbook, and you spot them coming.

Beyond the off-platform lure, a handful of scams target sellers repeatedly, and collectibles are a favorite target because their value makes the con worthwhile. Knowing each one makes it far easier to spot and refuse.

Scam	How it works	Your defense
Overpayment	Buyer 'accidentally' overpays, asks you to refund the difference (the original payment is fake)	Never refund outside eBay; let eBay handle payments
Address change	Buyer asks you to ship to a different address than eBay shows	Only ship to the address on the eBay order
'Item not received'	Buyer claims it never arrived to get a refund and keep the item	Tracking (and signature on valuables) proves delivery
Return fraud	Buyer returns a fake, a damaged item, or an empty box	Document the exact item thoroughly before shipping

The overpayment scam preys on your sense of fairness — they 'overpay' and ask you to send back the difference, but the original payment is fraudulent and will be reversed, leaving you out the refund. The address-change trick aims to ship your item somewhere eBay has no record of, breaking your protection. The 'item not received' claim is a buyer lying that your package never came, which tracking defeats.

And return fraud is a buyer sending back something other than what you sold — a counterfeit, a damaged version, or an empty box — which thorough documentation of your actual item helps you dispute. All of these are defeated by the same discipline: stay on eBay, ship only to the order address, and document and track

everything.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Collectibles are targeted more than ordinary items precisely because they are valuable and sometimes hard to tell apart from fakes — which is what makes return fraud (swapping your genuine item for a counterfeit) a real risk. Documenting the exact item you shipped, including any unique identifying marks, is your best defense against a swapped return.

DOCUMENT

4 Document and Photograph Everything

Your proof if a dispute arises.

Thorough documentation is both good selling (buyers trust and bid on well-shown items) and your protection if a dispute arises. Before you sell a collectible, capture it so completely that no one can later claim it was different from what you described, or swap it in a fraudulent return.

- Photograph the item thoroughly from all angles, in good light, showing its true condition — including any flaws honestly.
- Capture close-ups of any unique identifying features — a serial number, a certification number, a distinctive mark, wear pattern, or flaw — that prove this exact item.
- Describe the item honestly and accurately in the listing, including condition and any defects, so there is no basis for a 'not as described' claim.
- Keep your own copies of all the photos and the listing, and photograph the item again just before you pack it.
- For valuable items, consider photographing or filming the packing process, so you can show exactly what went in the box.

The honest, thorough approach does double duty. An accurate description and clear photos attract serious buyers and fair prices, and they remove the main excuse for a dispute — a buyer cannot credibly claim the item was not as described when your listing showed and stated its condition plainly. And documenting unique identifying

features protects you against the nastiest scam, the swapped return: if a buyer sends back a different or counterfeit item claiming it is yours, your photos of the genuine article's specific marks are your evidence.

Honesty plus thorough documentation is both the fair way to sell and the safe one.

> **TIP**
>
> For a valuable collectible, note and photograph something unique to your specific copy — a certification number on a graded item, a serial number, a distinctive scratch or marking. If a buyer ever tries a swapped return, that record proves the item that comes back is not the one you sent — the single best defense against return fraud on collectibles.

SHIPPING

5 Shipping Safely

Tracking and signatures protect the sale.

How you ship is a big part of protecting yourself, because a lot of seller scams revolve around delivery — claims that an item never arrived, or arrived broken. The right shipping habits shut those down.

1. Ship only after the payment has fully cleared through eBay — never before, and never to any address other than the one on the eBay order.
2. Always use tracking, so there is a record the item was sent and delivered — this defeats false 'item not received' claims.
3. For valuable items, add signature confirmation, so delivery requires a signature and cannot be denied (eBay often requires this above a certain value anyway).
4. Pack fragile collectibles very well — proper padding and a sturdy box — since damage claims are a headache and often fall on the seller.
5. Consider insuring high-value shipments, and keep all your shipping receipts and tracking records.

Tracking is non-negotiable: it is your proof the item was sent and delivered, and it defeats the common scam of a buyer falsely claiming the package never came. For

anything genuinely valuable, signature confirmation adds another layer — the buyer (or someone at the address) must sign, so there is no denying delivery. And packing well matters both to protect the item and because damage disputes are a hassle you want to avoid.

Buying your shipping label through eBay is usually cheapest and keeps the tracking tied to the order automatically. Ship carefully and trackably, and you remove a whole category of ways to be burned.

WATCH OUT

Buy your shipping labels through eBay itself — it is often discounted, and the tracking number is automatically linked to the order, so eBay sees the delivery proof without you having to enter it. That automatic link is exactly what protects you if a buyer later claims the item never arrived.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

RETURNS

6 Handling Returns and Disputes

Deciding your policy, and standing on your proof.

Returns and disputes are part of selling, and how you handle them — and what policy you set up front — affects both your sales and your exposure to fraud. There is a balance to strike between being buyer-friendly and protecting yourself from return scams.

Many collectible sellers set a 'no returns' policy to reduce fraudulent 'not as described' returns — though be aware eBay's buyer protections can still allow certain returns regardless, so no-returns is not absolute. The stronger protection is the

documentation and tracking already covered: if a buyer opens a dispute, your thorough photos, honest description, and delivery tracking are your evidence.

When a return does come, inspect it carefully against your documentation before accepting — especially on valuables, to catch a swapped or damaged item. And lean on eBay's own dispute process, providing your evidence, rather than trying to resolve a conflict off-platform.

- Decide your returns policy before listing; many collectible sellers choose no-returns, knowing buyer protections still apply in some cases.
- When a dispute opens, provide your documentation and tracking to eBay — that evidence is what protects you.
- Inspect any returned item carefully against your photos before accepting it, to catch a fraudulent swap.
- Keep communications in eBay's messaging, so there is a record.
- Do not be bullied into off-platform 'resolutions' — use eBay's process.

The honest truth is that eBay's protections lean somewhat toward buyers, so a determined scammer can sometimes cause trouble — but thorough documentation, delivery tracking, and sticking to the platform's own process stack the odds heavily in your favor and resolve the vast majority of disputes fairly. Set a sensible returns policy, keep your evidence, and work within eBay's system, and returns become a manageable part of selling rather than a source of dread.

MONEY

7 Fees and Taxes

Knowing what you'll really keep.

Before you price an item, understand what you will actually keep after eBay's cut and taxes, so there are no unpleasant surprises and you price sensibly.

The fees

eBay charges selling fees — commonly around ten percent or more of the sale price (the 'final value fee'), plus a fee on the shipping you charge, plus payment processing.

The exact rates vary by category and change over time, so check eBay's current fee schedule, but as a rule of thumb, expect to lose somewhere in the range of ten-plus percent to fees. Factor that in when you price, along with your packaging and shipping costs, so a sale that looks profitable actually is.

The taxes

Money you make selling can be taxable income, and eBay reports sellers' earnings to the IRS once you pass a reporting threshold (via a form called a 1099-K). That threshold has been changing — it has been lowering in recent years — so check the current figure and, if you sell much, keep records of what you paid for items and what you sold them for.

This is a point where a tax professional's advice is worth getting if your selling is substantial; I am not a tax advisor, and the rules here genuinely matter.

> **WATCH OUT**
>
> Selling income can be taxable, and eBay reports your sales to the IRS past a threshold that has been dropping. If you sell more than occasionally, keep records of your costs and sale prices, and consider talking to a tax professional — this is not an area to guess at, and I am not a tax advisor. Price with fees in mind, and keep good records for tax time.

START SMALL

8 Build Up Before the Big Stuff

Feedback and practice first.

A smart and often-overlooked piece of advice: do not make your first-ever eBay sale your most valuable collectible. Start with smaller, lower-value items to build up your seller feedback and learn the process, then list the good stuff once you know what you are doing and have a track record.

- Feedback matters: buyers trust sellers with a history of positive feedback, and a brand-new account with no history can struggle to attract serious bidders — or draw scammers who target inexperienced sellers.
- Practice the process: your first few sales teach you the listing, shipping, and payment flow without much at stake, so you are confident by the time a valuable item is on the line.
- Learn the pitfalls cheaply: a small item is a low-cost way to encounter (and handle) your first tricky buyer or shipping hiccup.
- New sellers also face some eBay limits at first, which ease as you establish a history.

By the time you list a valuable collectible, you want to be an experienced seller with solid feedback, familiar with the whole process and alert to the scams — not a nervous first-timer learning everything at once with your most precious item exposed. Starting small costs you a little patience and builds you a foundation of feedback, confidence, and know-how that protects your eventual big sales. It is the difference between selling your treasures from a position of strength and from one of vulnerability.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Building feedback with small items also makes your valuable listings perform better — serious collectors bidding real money are far more comfortable buying from a seller with a long, positive history than from a new account with none. So starting small is not just safer; it genuinely helps you get a better price when you do list the good pieces.

QUESTIONS

9 Plain Questions and Answers

The things sellers ask most.

"A buyer wants to pay me directly to save fees. Should I?"

No — this is the classic scam. Taking payment off eBay (by Zelle, gift card, wire, or another app) strips away all of eBay's seller protection, and the 'payment' is often

fake or reversible. Legitimate buyers pay through eBay. Any pressure to go off-platform, however reasonable it sounds, is a reason to refuse and be wary.

"How do I avoid getting scammed on a valuable collectible?"

Keep everything on eBay, document the exact item thoroughly (including unique identifying marks), ship only to the order address with tracking and signature confirmation, and inspect any return carefully against your photos. Those habits defeat the main scams — off-platform fraud, fake 'not received' claims, and swapped returns.

"What will eBay's fees cost me?"

Commonly around ten percent or more of the sale (the final value fee), plus a fee on shipping and payment processing — the exact rate varies by category and changes, so check eBay's current schedule. Factor roughly ten-plus percent in fees, plus your packing and shipping costs, into your pricing so the sale is actually worthwhile.

"Do I have to pay taxes on what I sell?"

Selling income can be taxable, and eBay reports your sales to the IRS past a threshold that has been lowering. If you sell more than occasionally, keep records of your costs and sale prices and consider a tax professional — I am not a tax advisor, and the current rules are worth confirming. Occasional sales of personal items have their own treatment; a professional can clarify your situation.

WRAP UP

10

Sell Smart, Keep Your Treasures Safe

On-platform, documented, tracked, and patient.

eBay is a genuinely good way to turn collectibles into cash, and you can do it safely by following a few disciplined habits. Above all, keep every part of the transaction on eBay — the moment a buyer lures you off-platform, you lose all protection, and that is the scammers' favorite move. Know the common seller scams (overpayment, address-change, fake 'not received,' and return fraud) so you can refuse them, and defeat them with thorough documentation of your exact item, shipping only to the order address with tracking and signature confirmation, and honest listings that leave no room for false claims.

Price with the fees (around ten percent or more) in mind, keep records for the taxes eBay reports, and — crucially — start with smaller items to build feedback and skill before you list your most valuable pieces. Sell this way, from a position of experience and protection, and eBay becomes exactly what it should be: a safe, effective marketplace for your treasures, not a place you got burned.

- Keep everything on eBay — off-platform payment loses all your protection.
- Know and refuse the scams: overpayment, address-change, fake 'not received', return fraud.
- Document the exact item, ship to the order address with tracking and signature.
- Expect ~10%+ in fees and IRS reporting; price and keep records accordingly.
- Start small to build feedback and skill before listing your valuable collectibles.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you have collectibles to sell and want to do it without getting burned, I am glad to help you get started safely — setting up your eBay selling, photographing and describing items well, learning to spot and refuse the scams, and getting the shipping-with-tracking routine down. We can start with a few small items to build your feedback, so by the time your valuable pieces go up, you are selling from a position of confidence and protection.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this page handy. It points you straight to what to do for each task.

I want to...	Do this...
Keep it all on eBay	Never take payment or talk off-platform — you lose all protection
Know the scams	Overpayment, address-change, fake 'not received' and return fraud
Document everything	Photograph thoroughly and describe honestly before selling
Ship with tracking + signature	Tracking, and signature confirmation on valuable items
Mind fees and taxes	Expect roughly 10%+ in fees, and sales may be reported to the IRS
Start small	Build feedback with low-value items before listing the good stuff
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along



Illustration — a schematic. Set-up screens differ; each takes only a few minutes.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

A Safe Sale

Four steps

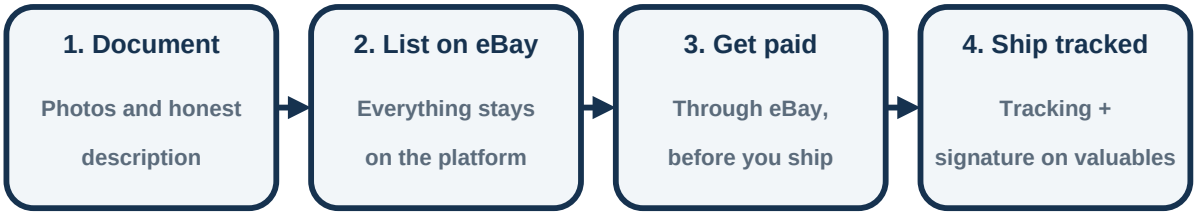


Illustration — a schematic. The order is a suggestion; do one box at a time.

A schematic of the plan — company steps vary; the order does not have to.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

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