

# Christmas Shopping advice

With the festive season fast approaching, The City of Edinburgh Council's Trading Standards team has put together their top ten Christmas Shopping Tips to help consumers plan for a wonderful Christmas.

Colin Baxter, Trading Standards Manager, said: "These useful suggestions will help residents to plan their Christmas shopping carefully so that they can enjoy the festivities in style. At Christmas, it's important to think about consumer rights and make sensible purchases."

1. Avoid buying on impulse. Shop around to get the best price before you buy. Decide in advance what you plan to buy, and budget accordingly.
2. Don't make any spur-of-the-moment decisions to buy on credit. Compare and consider the total cost and how long you will have to make payments for.
3. Check what the shop's returns policy is. Can you return unwanted or unsuitable goods? There may be a time limit, and they may only exchange, or issue a credit note.
4. Check goods carefully before you buy, and again when you get home. If there is a fault, return the item as soon as you can.
5. Always keep receipts. If goods do turn out to be faulty, the receipt is the best 'proof of purchase'.
6. If you buy something that can't be examined until Christmas Day, ask the shop to make a note of this on the receipt and to sign it to confirm.
7. Don't buy unlabelled toys or electrical equipment – make sure that these bear the CE mark, meaning that they conform to safety standards.

8. Remember that a toy can become unsafe in the hands of a child who is younger than the toy is designed for. Look for safety warnings and labels

9. Make sure that electrical equipment comes with a fitted plug.

10. When shopping online, only use secure sites (padlock symbol) and never send credit card or bank details by email