

Neighbourhood Support New Zealand



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Neighbourhood Support Fact Sheet

Buying secondhand goods

When buying secondhand goods from a private seller, be careful to look out for signs that the goods could be stolen.

If the deal seems too good to be true or the price too cheap, be suspicious. Criminals selling stolen goods try to get rid of them as quickly as they can to avoid getting caught with them.

Be cautious when dealing with a seller who only provides a mobile phone number and DO NOT deal with a seller on the street or in a hotel etc.

Go to where the seller lives rather than have the person bring the goods to you. A dishonest seller is unlikely to allow a prospective purchaser to visit a home address.

When at the seller's address, try to work out if the seller actually lives there. Keep a lookout for signs the seller has unusual items or quantities of goods for sale.

If the item is one that should have a serial number, make sure that the serial number is intact and there has been no attempt to remove or disguise it. The seller should be familiar with the operation of the goods and be able to state their age, where they were purchased, and a genuine reason for selling them. The seller should also be able to provide instruction manuals and remote controls or have a reasonable explanation for their absence.

Know who you are dealing with. Ask for some personal identification.

Always obtain a receipt! Ensure the receipt is detailed, showing name, address, date and description of item, purchase price and signature of seller.

With more expensive items such as refrigerators and furniture, you may want to check that there is no money owing or a security interest registered over it. You can do this by checking the [Personal Properties Security Register](#), which is an Internet accessible register created by the Ministry of Economic Development for secured parties to register security interests in any property someone can own other than land. The PPSR can be searched by debtor name and by certain collateral details. There are small fees for registering (\$5) and searching the register (\$3 & \$1.50).

It is a serious crime to sell or knowingly purchase stolen property. If you suspect you are being offered stolen goods, contact the Police.