

Pointers For Parents

Going Online Makes Shopping For Hard-To-Find Toys Easy

(NAPSA)—Faced with a shorter than normal holiday shopping season, parents are feeling the pressure to gobble up this season's favorite toys—quickly! According to a recent survey by Intellitrends, more than 20 percent of consumers will park themselves in front of a computer and shop online for toys, where convenience is the driving factor.

"With the start of the shopping season delayed due to a late Thanksgiving, more people will likely jump online to maximize their time," says toy and children's lifestyle expert, Chris Byrne, also known as The Toy Guy™. "The ease of the Internet allows consumers to click their way to the year's best toys and to buy hard-to-find items. On eBay, we've developed a list of our favorite picks to help take the search work out of gift-giving."

Here are some helpful tips for making online holiday shopping for new and collectible toys a snap:

Getting Started: Register by clicking the "Welcome New Users" box on the home page on eBay (www.ebay.com).

Search: Type the name of the toy you're looking for into the search box on the main page.

Get Inspired: For great ideas on the season's most popular toys,

eBay's Top 20 Toys

according to Chris Byrne,
"The Toy Guy"

Baby Born
Barbie Inspiration Station
Barbie in Swan Lake
Care Bears
GI Joe 40th Anniversary Figures
Leapster
Lord of the Rings: Return of the King Figures
Micropets Series 3
Neopets Voice Activated Plush
PowerTouch Learning System
Video Now
Bratz Formal Fun Runway Disco
DJ Skribble Spinheads
Hokey Pokey Elmo and Limbo Elmo
Learn through Music
McDonald's McFlurry Maker
My Little Pony
Pixter Color
Strawberry Shortcake
Wiggles Talk 'n Sing Dolls



log onto www.ebay.com/hot-toys picks for the site's most popular playthings, as recommended by Chris Byrne.

Decide Whether to Bid or Buy: Items listed for sale are presented in either auction-style format or through a fixed-price format called Buy It Now. If your time is limited, look for things marked Buy It Now. You can also place a bid by entering the maximum amount you're willing to spend. eBay will alert you by mail whether you've won the item or been outbid.

Check the Seller's Feedback: Before you bid or buy, be sure to check a person's feedback rating. Simply click on the number in parentheses next to the member's User ID to find out how he or she rates according to other registered eBay users.

Ask Questions: Look for a link called "Ask the seller a question" before committing to a purchase. Feel free to get all of your questions answered before bidding on an item.

Peruse the Seller's Policies: Read the seller's payment and shipping terms carefully. Many accept credit cards.

Customer Service: During the holidays, some sellers offer gift-wrapping and direct shipping to make gift-giving even easier. Look for these offers in sellers' listings.