

# FAKE MERCHANSIDE

**So you found something that looks like a really good deal. OR, you clicked on a FACEBOOK ad to buy something. Don’t do it!**

**Counterfeit Merchandise:** Name brand goods are prime targets for unauthorized duplication, from sporting goods to designer apparel and handbags. If you purchase any of these products you may run the risk of not only receiving a poor quality product, but it may not meet environmental and safety regulations either.

Look out for red flags. This includes items that are priced significantly lower than what other retailers are charging, spelling and grammatical errors in the advertisements, and poor quality images. These are all signs that the advertisement may be for a counterfeit product.

* **Do your research.**Before making a purchase, do a quick search for the business in question. Do they have valid contact information? Don’t be fooled by professional photography or consumer reviews on their website. These can be lifted from other sites. Check [BBB Scam Tracker](https://www.bbb.org/ScamTracker) to see if others have been duped.
* **Search for previous complaints.** Do a Google search of the business name followed by “complaints,” “reviews,” or “scam” and see what pops up. If you find other people have been cheated by this business, steer clear.
* **Use good judgment.** Many con artists play on consumers’ desire to help those in need. Keep this in mind and use your head, not just your heart, when supporting charitable causes. Go to [Give.org](https://www.give.org/) to research organizations before giving.

*\* Better Business Bureau Scam Tracker in 2020*