

# Holiday Shopping Online

## Ten Tips For Safe Shopping On The Web

(NAPSA)—For years people have known the do's and don'ts of shopping in busy malls—do protect your wallet or purse and don't forget to keep the receipt just in case a gift needs to be returned.

What are the rules for shopping online?

With more than 100 million people shopping online these days—and \$9 to \$11 billion spent on the Internet during the holiday season, VeriSign, a leading Internet company, has come up with 10 rules to follow when browsing the digital aisles.

VeriSign, a California-based leader in digital trust services, is the company that not only enables you to click to [toysrus.com](http://toysrus.com) or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) but also makes those sites safe to buy your presents.

“By following some simple, common-sense guidelines, consumers can enjoy a safe and hassle-free Internet shopping season,” said VeriSign's Ben Golub. “I think we'll see the biggest Internet shopping season yet.”

Here's what VeriSign suggests:

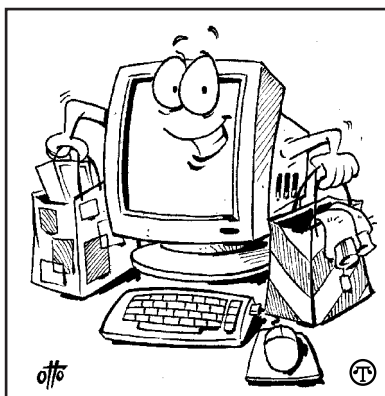
1. Look for the lock. If you don't see a solid padlock, be aware that information to and from the site is not encrypted. Encryption means your correspondence is encoded and therefore unreadable to an outside party.

2. See the sign. To identify companies that are real businesses, look for and click on the VeriSign Secure Site Seal for authentication.

3. Credit cards are best. You have a greater likelihood of recouping money or goods when you use a credit card rather than a personal check or money order.

4. Compare, compare, compare. Compare online prices on other Web sites and seek out customer chat rooms where you can speak directly with satisfied customers.

5. Know before you go. Just as you would do at the mall, check out the company you're going to do business with. You should



**Know before you go. That's important advice for people who are taking the plunge into shopping online.**

always obtain a final price quote, electronic receipt, delivery date and customer contact information before buying something online.

6. Know your rights. Privacy can be safeguarded. Buy from Web sites that display privacy seals indicating that information about your transaction will not be shared with others.

7. Passwords are private. It's wise to change your Internet passwords often and never share them with others.

8. Protect your identity. You wouldn't tell a shop clerk all your personal details if you didn't have to, so don't do it online if you can avoid it.

9. Malls vs. garage sales. As in the physical world, you can buy from a registered business or from individuals. While most people are honest, you'll have more recourse when you buy from a business.

10. It's important to secure your e-mail messages to your online merchant.

Be sure to encrypt the contents of your e-mail with a digital certificate to keep that information safe from online intruders.

To learn more about safely surfing the Net, visit the Web site at [www.verisign.com](http://www.verisign.com).