



Foreword by
Craig Newmark,
Founder
of craigslist

craigslist® 4 Everyone

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craigslist 4 Everyone

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Foreword

I started craigslist as a service to share information with my friends and neighbors. Now craigslist is a platform where over 50 million people, living in some 550 cities located in over 50 countries, help each other get through the day. Our focus is on everyday needs like getting a job or place to live, connecting with other people, or maybe selling or finding new stuff.

From one perspective, we're like a flea market, which is as much about community as it is about commerce. craigslist is a marketplace in the ancient sense—"chaotic, sometimes unruly, and vividly human" writes Penelope Green of the *New York Times*. "craigslist is about us, not them," wrote David Weinberger, regarding community perception.

Our community and company have built a culture of trust, where the usual trustworthiness of people effectively works. That trust derives from a near-universal shared value—the notion that you should treat people like you want to be treated. Sure, that's a platitude, but we transform it by putting everyday practice into a real way of doing business. Like any community, there are some bad people out there, so be careful, but those are a tiny fraction of humanity, and the overwhelming majority of well-intentioned people help detect and counteract the bad guys.

craigslist is a serious business that offers a serious community service. We're not altruistic, noble, or pious, we just follow through with our values. As a business, we feel that we do well by doing good for our members. We follow through on shared values, each and every day. That means that much of our decision-making is driven by community needs, not our personal needs and desires.

We hope this book helps you gain a better understanding of how to get the most of these values within your own craigslist community, no matter where you live. And in that vein, we ask for your help to keep us following through on our commitment to our community values. We welcome your participation and feedback as one of the craigslist community members.

Have fun!

—Craig Newmark
craig@craigslist.org

Introduction

In an online world crammed with flash, hype, and fly-by-night, Craig Newmark has grown a single good intention into one of the top 50 most visited websites in the world! With more than 40 million users to craigslist a month, a lot is happening there. And this book will help you to make the most of all of it.

You won't find a better site to buy, sell, or advertise on than craigslist. Think about it: Where else can you sell a \$5 kids' toy, a \$15,000 car, or a \$500,000 house without paying to list or handing over a chunk of change from the selling price? Find a date, find a friend, or find your lost dog without spending a dime. Market your business, join a class, or land your dream job without ever leaving the site. And those are only a few of the many possibilities.

Think of craigslist as the online gathering place for your offline activities—a way for you to connect with other people in your area. Whatever you want to accomplish, craigslist can help you do it. And this book shows you how you can become a part of the craigslist community.

Whether you're in need of something, hoping to get rid of something, or wanting to promote something, the opportunities for you on craigslist are very exciting. Following the steps and strategies covered in this book gives you a big advantage over the typical craigslist community user.

Craig and staff have never saddled the website with lengthy rules and restrictions, which is one reason why so many users

put little thought and planning into creating successful listings. In this book, you'll learn how to create attention-grabbing listings, what information to include, and how to write ads that get attention and motivate people to act.

You'll learn not only how to list, but also how to find what you want—and get it. And you'll learn how to protect yourself, your computer, and your personal information when online and when using craigslist.

How This Book Is Organized

This book is organized into three main parts, as follows:

- Part I, “craigslist 101,” covers how craigslist went from a simple idea to a collection of more than 500 communities. You'll gain insights on Craig Newmark, craigslist's fascinating founder and customer service rep. These chapters also cover creating an account and navigating around the site. And you'll learn everything you need to know to keep your computer, your information, and yourself safe when using craigslist.
- Part II, “Posting on craigslist,” starts by showing you the steps to follow to post a listing on craigslist. You'll also learn marketing strategies to design successful listings that set your advertisements apart from the pack. These chapters cover the individual craigslist sections and categories, showing you exactly how to create successful listings and take advantage of all their features.
- Part III, “The Other Side of craigslist,” lays out the steps for responding to craigslist postings. You'll learn what to look for—and look out for—when searching listings in each category.

Together, the 15 chapters in this book show you the ins and outs of craigslist and online marketing so that you'll be able to create stand-out listings that grab attention or quickly find whatever you need. Before long, you'll be telling your friends about all the successful deals you've made using craigslist.

Conventions Used in This Book

I've tried to make this book entertaining and easy to read. It shouldn't require any coaching, but you might find it helpful to know how specific types of information are presented.

Capitalization and Special Formatting

craigslist doesn't follow standard rules of capitalization. Craig purposely chose not to capitalize the craigslist name or any titles used on the site, and I've followed his lead in this book.

Because many of the craigslist section names, category names, and so on are ordinary words, I've used a special format for onscreen items to help distinguish them from regular text. For example, when you read about the **community** section, the special formatting of the word *community* indicates that you'll be able to click that word on the craigslist screen—in this case, to go to the main community page. For simplicity, this book uses that special formatting for any craigslist screen item you can click or select, including menu items, buttons, and links.

Web Page Addresses

There are many web addresses in this book, including sites that offer valuable information to help you make better use of craigslist. If the site requires the World Wide Web (www) designation to be typed, I've included it in the web page address; otherwise, I've left it out. For example, you could type either of the following to get to the web page for this book:

`www.craigslist4everyone.com`

`craigslist4everyone.com`

Technically, either address should start with `http://` (as in `http://www.craigslist4everyone.com`). Because Internet Explorer, Firefox, and most other web browsers automatically insert this part of the address, however, you don't have to type it—and I haven't included it in any of the addresses in this book.

Special Elements

You'll also come across a few special elements in this book that provide additional information to supplement the main text. These elements are designed to make your learning faster, easier, and more efficient.

Info 4U An Info note includes useful information that will help you to better understand or make better use of the text you're reading.

Warning 4U A Warning highlights information about a potentially dangerous situation. I don't use it lightly, so pay special attention when you come across this type of item.

Tip 4U A Tip is a helpful piece of information—a little trick, actually—that helps you increase the odds of success on craigslist.

Let Me Know What You Think

I enjoy hearing from readers. If you have a question, a story to share, or something you just have to set me straight about, feel free to email me at c4e@craigslist4everyone.com. I read every email message personally and respond to as many as time permits.

If you want to learn more about what's happening on craigslist, take advantage of some free offers, and find out about any updates to this book, check out the website at www.craigslist4everyone.com.

Safety First

The mission of craigslist is to use the Internet to bring people together offline. When using craigslist, you need to protect yourself both online and in the real world. Staying safe on the Internet is a growing concern. There are bound to be more than a few bad apples online, and this chapter shows you how to spot and avoid the rotten ones.

Internet Safety

True Internet security means protecting yourself and your computer. Although the topic may seem daunting, we all need to take the steps necessary to protect ourselves.

Secure Your Computer

Protecting yourself online means keeping your information private and your computer off-limits to cyber-criminals. Here's a brief list of important security measures to take for your PC:

- **Use a firewall.** Firewalls protect your computer from incoming attacks and can also block outgoing transmissions should your computer become infected with a virus or malware. Firewalls can be in either hardware or software form.

- **Update your Internet browser.** Software manufacturers often release updates to address new security issues and fix program bugs. Whether you prefer Internet Explorer (IE) (www.microsoft.com/ie), Mozilla's Firefox (www.mozilla.org), or another browser, be certain to use the most recent version. Both IE and Firefox have settings that allow the programs to update automatically.
- **Run antivirus software.** Viruses can destroy your computer, steal your information, or run malicious programs without your knowledge. Install an antivirus program and keep it up to date. Several free or low-cost programs are available.
- **Run antispyware software.** Spyware can be simply annoying or completely destructive. While some viruses and spyware work together and may be stopped with antivirus software, keep an up-to-date spyware detection program running for increased protection.
- **Secure your wireless network.** Wireless Internet access (WiFi) is wonderful. If you use a wireless device in your home, however, follow the instructions in the user manual to set up security, or you're giving hackers and freeloaders an open door to enter your world.
- **Turn on your spam filters.** Most email programs include a spam filter that you can customize to your liking. Stopping spam before it reaches your inbox is another way to protect your computer from attacks. Antispam programs are available in case you want additional protection. I discuss this topic further in the next section.
- **Back up your computer.** Performing regular computer backups protects your data and your sanity. Depending on your needs and budget, backups can be performed using a mix of external drives, software programs, or online resources.

Although nothing is foolproof, and new threats are always on the horizon, following the preceding recommendations provides a first line of defense. For more information about any of these items, I recommend that novice computer users pick up the latest edition of Michael Miller's *Absolute Beginner's Guide to Computer Basics*, available

at most libraries and bookstores. Get Safe Online (www.getsafeonline.org) offers free expert advice about Internet security, including instructions for Linux and Mac users, and Tech Support Forum (www.techsupportforum.com) offers helpful details on security options, including how to diagnose and resolve security problems.

Now that your computer is protected, we can move on to protecting your information.

Protect Your Information

As in the real world, honest, law-abiding citizens far outnumber the criminals, so this chapter *is not* meant to scare you away. I want to empower you—to give you the knowledge and tools to use craigslist wisely and safely. Most Internet crime starts when unsuspecting users give out their personal information (directly or indirectly). Protecting your privacy is key to staying safe on the Internet. Let's look at ways to keep your information out of the wrong hands.

Choose Your Email Address Wisely

Many people don't realize how much information they reveal in their email address. Personal email addresses should never include your full name, your birth date, or other identifying information.

Guard Your Email Address

Never use your primary email address to register on any community-based or social networking site, sign up for a newsletter, or join a forum or group. Give your primary email address only to people you know and trust. When spammers learn your email address, your inbox will overflow with bogus offers and virus-packing email. Valid email addresses are sold from one spammer to another, so it's nearly impossible to close the floodgates after you start receiving spam.

Spammers use harvesting programs and other devious tricks to steal people's email addresses off websites and from forums. During my research for this book, I was shocked to discover a simple and free technique for gathering email addresses off the Internet. Without sharing the details, I tested it and was able to collect close to 1,000 addresses in less than 20 minutes (which I promptly deleted). But my

test was enough to make it clear to me that using my actual email address for replies left me begging to be spammed.

Having multiple email addresses may seem like too much work, but using disposable email addresses (DEAs) can simplify things. A DEA is a temporary email address (alias) that you give out in place of your real email address. DEAs are useful for online shopping, signing up for websites and newsletters, or joining forums and user groups. Email sent to an alias is forwarded to the target address you specify, until the alias is turned off or expires. If you use a separate alias for each contact and begin to receive spam through a particular alias, you will know who compromised your information and can disable that alias without disrupting your other email.

A number of convenient disposable email services are available, but not all offer a way to reply to email by using your alias—and without that feature, you'll still disclose your real address when you respond to email. TrashMail (www.trashmail.net) and spamgourmet (www.spamgourmet.com) are free services with good features and flexibility. Both allow you to reply to forwarded email without disclosing your true email address.

ShieldedMail (www.shieldedmail.com) and Emailias (www.emailias.com) are virtual email services that cost less than \$20 per year. These web-based programs act as a protection layer between your inbox and the Internet. In addition to unlimited DEAs, features include virus scanning, multiple target addresses, and email header customization.

The downside of DEAs is that because people use them to send spam or flame mail anonymously, their domains are sometimes banned by group and list owners. Because both ShieldedMail and Emailias allow you to use your own domain name, you can use their services and not worry about this issue, if you want to take the time to set them up. Alternatively, you can use a domain seller, such as One World Domains (www.oneworlddomains.com), to register your own domain name for under \$10 per year. This option gives you the freedom to use an address that's more personal (and usually more interesting) than a typical Yahoo! or Hotmail address.

ZoEmail (www.zoemail.com) and Yahoo! Mail Plus (mailplus.mail.yahoo.com) are full-service web-based email programs that you can use as your primary email address. Both allow you to create disposable email addresses for your account to keep your inbox spam-free. ZoEmail pricing starts at \$11.88 per year; Yahoo! Mail Plus will cost you \$19.99 annually. Both are low-cost solutions when you consider the time saved by avoiding handling spam.

If you're adamant about sticking with a single email address, try Gmail (mail.google.com). Google's free email program offers one of the most powerful and customizable email services available. Part of its appeal is Google's highly effective spam filter, which works with surprising accuracy to identify unwanted email. Spam is sent to a separate folder and deleted automatically after 30 days. Gmail is highly customizable, can act as a command center for multiple email addresses, and works with email clients such as Outlook and Mozilla.

Use Spam Filters and Blockers

If you've followed the recommendations in the previous section, you already have some type of spam filter running. But if you're getting pummeled, this level of protection may not be enough. Consider adding one of the many antispam programs available today. These programs use a variety of technologies to identify, quarantine, and block spam before it hits your inbox.

Compatible filters are available for just about every email program. Here are three of the many available:

- **ChoiceMail One**—www.digiportal.com/homeproducts.html
- **vqME AntiSpam**—www.vanquish.com/products/products_personal_antispam.shtml
- **MailWasher Pro**—www.firetrust.com/products/mailwasher-pro

Because these filters work in different ways and have different features, take some time to research spam filtering and find the filter that works best for you.

Don't Let Things Slip

You're not obligated to provide your information to anyone, particularly via email. Some Internet scams are designed to steal a person's

money outright, but the goal of many cons is to trick users into giving out their personal information, which leads to identity theft and can cause much greater damage.

Even if someone requests your phone number, address, or banking information, you don't have to give it to that person. Share your information only when you feel safe doing so. Also, never provide more information than necessary. If someone responds to an ad and wants to contact you by phone (and only if you're comfortable doing so), send only your first name and phone number; the recipient doesn't need your last name or address until you reach the stage where you're ready to meet. If you're following the craigslist model, there's never a reason to share your financial information.

Spot Scammers Before They Spot You

Internet criminals are trying to steal your money, your information, or both. Because knowledge is power, knowing what to watch out for will greatly reduce your chances of being taken for a ride. This section covers the most common scams.

There are red flags to watch for when dealing online. For example, you should be suspicious of oddly worded email when the buyer isn't local. This doesn't mean that anyone with poor writing skills is a cyber-criminal—only that people unfamiliar with English often give themselves away by using words incorrectly. Like most advertisers, scammers work to create a sense of urgency. They want you to act on emotion, before you have time to think logically. They may also try to build trust by being overly friendly and praising you before you've done anything deserving of praise. Look for inconsistencies. Most criminals are corresponding with many people at a time and will get their lies mixed up.

If you receive messages like the ones described, you might be tempted to respond, either in hopes that the sender is legitimate or even to "play the game." My advice: Don't! Delete the email and go on with your life. At best, you're wasting precious time; at worst, you might get drawn in.

Out-of-Area Buyer

Unfortunately, the out-of-area buyer scam is all too common. The good news is that you can avoid being swindled if you know what to look for. The messages included in these examples are real and unedited. They're the result of test listings I ran on several craigslist communities. In each instance, I ran an ad for electronics or jewelry and overpriced the item. I received few or no legitimate responses, but no shortage of offers to pay me even more than my asking price.

The game starts when someone responds to your listing and is a little too eager to throw money at whatever you're selling, most notably high-ticket items such as computers, electronics, and jewelry (see Figure 3.1). The scammer asks few of the typical buyer questions beyond finding out whether the item is still available (see Figure 3.2).

Dear Seller,

I saw your item listing on craigslist and and i just showed the picture to my client of mine who needs item urgently and he has fallen in love with it immediately.... so we are very much serious and interested in purchasing it. We are willing to offer you \$1600.00 USD for it including shipping via Standard Delivery Service and will be making Payment via PayPal which is Fast and Secure . Please do get back to me as soon as possible if this offer agrees with you. We will be responsible for all shipping charges and insurance. Expecting your reply and oblige and i will also appreciate your detailed Name and your PayPal email address so that payment can be made and sent to you asap

Pls do get back asap.
Best Regards

Figure 3.1

If someone is jumping up and down to buy from you, it's likely that he or she is only trying to reach into your wallet.

When you respond, the scammer will begin to press for the sale, as shown in Figure 3.3. There are several tip-offs here:

- Offering to pay more than the asking price before knowing the cost of shipping
- Detailed explanation of why the buyer needs the item shipped to another location—usually as a gift
- Requesting to use little-known or dubious payment methods
- Misrepresenting the security of the payment method

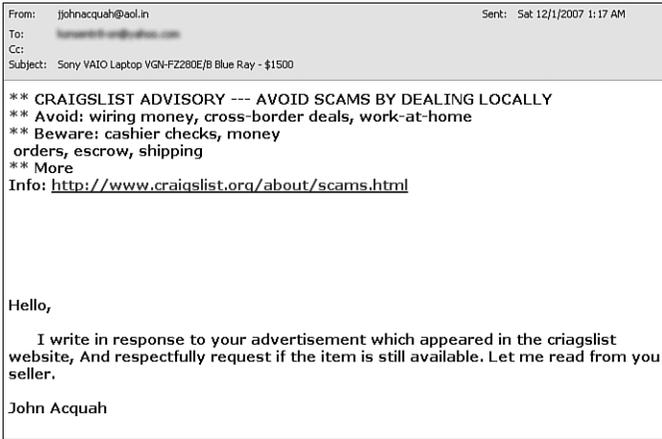


Figure 3.2
Poorly worded email that asks little about your listing is typical for scammers.

These are common statements for this type of scam. They play both to people’s desire to bring joy (via the gift) and to our desire for the big score (by receiving more than asked).

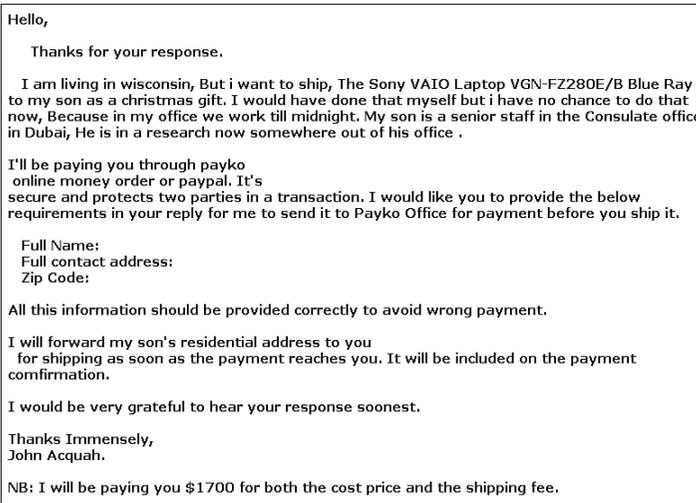


Figure 3.3
Overpaying, risky payment methods, and complex shipping terms are red flags for scams.

Most scammers are patient people because they understand the importance of gaining your trust: It's the only way to convince you to ship the merchandise. Almost all the scammer's messages will be friendly and upbeat, happy to address any concern you might have—that is, until the scammer claims to have sent payment. You may receive an obviously fake-looking notice of payment, as shown in Figure 3.4. This one was sent from a webmail account completely unrelated to PayPal (www.paypal.com). It's filled with typos and grammatical errors. As with most criminal schemes, though, over time these email messages may become more difficult to distinguish from the real thing. Two important points to remember are that legitimate services such as PayPal do not hold your money pending proof of shipment and that PayPal never mails out money orders.

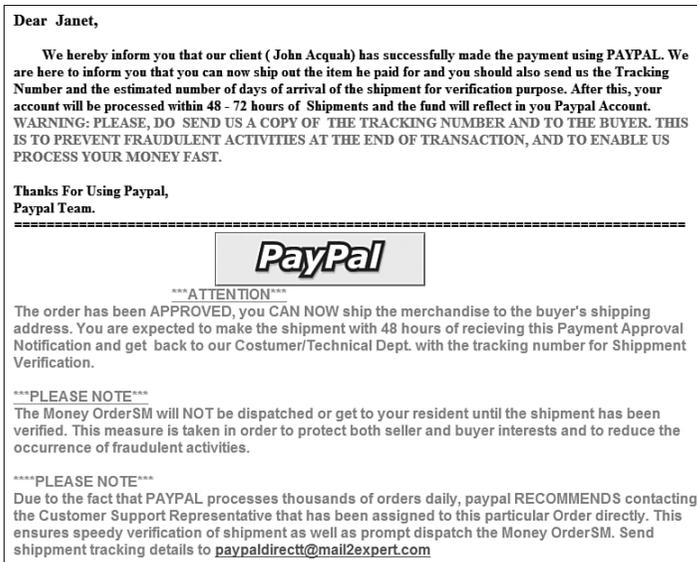


Figure 3.4

A bad attempt at tricking a seller into believing that a payment is waiting.

When I received a notification of payment email and didn't promptly supply the "buyer" with shipping information, I began receiving email from the buyer such as the one shown in Figure 3.5. Finished

with the friendly words, the buyer now “demands” that I send him the shipping info. When I failed to respond promptly, I continued to receive duplicates of this email for several days.

Dear Janet,
I have done the payment through paypal, Below is my son's shipping information.
NAME : JOHN ACQUAH J
ADDRESS : DEIRA PARK HOTEL
CITY: DEIRA,
STATE: DUBAI,
ZIP CODE: 9714
COUNTRY: UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
I demand for the shipping information immediately.
Thank you,
John Acquah

Figure 3.5

Next, the buyer will begin to pressure you to ship the merchandise.

Of all the scams that I encountered, the most upsetting was from an individual who claimed to be a United States resident currently hospitalized in the United Kingdom. She wanted to purchase a wedding ring set for her son that I had listed. After we exchanged a number of messages over several days, wherein she repeatedly asked me to send her my credit card information so she could pay me, I finally told her I was afraid of being scammed. She responded by emailing me a scanned copy of her driver's license. It appeared to be an authentic California driver's license. I forwarded the information to the local authorities, but I know that tracking down these types of criminals is nearly impossible.

The most outrageous attempt I encountered was from a woman who claimed that her health would not let her leave the house to come pick up her purchase. She wanted to pay me by “echeck,” but before she could pay me, she first instructed me to go buy business check paper for only \$25 at my local office supply store.

This scam can be played out in other ways too. A housing wanted ad I had placed led to my being contacted by a man who wanted me to

lease his nearby home while he did missionary work in Africa. He sent pictures, provided a bogus address, and added that his brother in another state would gladly ship the keys to me overnight as soon as I sent him the first month's rent and deposit.

Overpayment Scam

In the overpayment scam, the buyer wants to pay you with a cashier's check or money order written for an amount well above your selling price, usually offering a less-than-plausible explanation. The scammer asks that you wire the overpayment amount back to him or her or forward it to a third party who is frantically waiting for the funds. The scammer generously offers to let you keep a bonus amount for the inconvenience.

The problem is that the check or money order is fake, and eventually will be returned to your bank. This process can take days or even weeks. You're out the full amount that you wired—plus any fees charged by your bank—and the scammer is long gone.

Nigerian 4-1-9 Scam

The Nigerian 4-1-9 scam, also called the Nigerian Advance Fee Scam, has been around for many years but still claims victims. It's named after the section in the Nigerian penal code that covers it. It isn't directly related to Craigslist, but can be attempted on businesses and individuals whose email addresses are harvested off Craigslist. This scam is no longer limited to Nigeria, but originates from many other countries.

The scam starts when you receive a somewhat official-looking email message from a person who claims to be in a foreign government or bank (there are various versions). The email explains that because of certain events, such as the death of a high-ranking government official, the sender is in search of someone trustworthy to help transfer tens of millions of dollars out of the sender's country. In return, the sender offers to share a large percentage of the money.

Often, this scam is played out over many months, at first building the victim's confidence and then requesting advance fees when problems arise along the way. The scammer continues to request money

from the victim, sometimes attempting to convince him or her to travel to Nigeria to meet with (fake) government officials to complete the transaction.

Although it may seem hard to believe that anyone would fall prey to this scam, it still succeeds on a regular basis. This scam can cost the victim much more than money: One man was killed after traveling to Nigeria, and other victims have gone missing.

If you receive one of these email messages, *do not respond*. Forward the email to the Federal Trade Commission at spam@uce.gov. If you have fallen victim to a scam like this, contact your local branch of the Secret Service. A list of branches is available at www.secretservice.gov/field_offices.shtml.

Safe and Pleasant Transactions

Because craigslist is a local online classifieds site intended to result in face-to-face transactions between buyers and sellers, there are no safeguards in place, such as user feedback ratings, required registration, or transaction guarantees. Whereas many people will tell you “Buyer beware,” my best advice is “Buyer be smart.” You can avoid most problems by following a few simple rules:

- Deal locally only. It’s much more difficult to be scammed in person.
- Never give out financial information.
- Supply only as much personal information as necessary, and only after you’re confident that the person is legitimate.
- Meet in a public place whenever possible.
- Never have someone come to your house when you’re alone. Have a friend or two with you.
- Expect no-shows. You’ll be less frustrated if you realize that it’s a small part of doing business.
- Inspect the merchandise.
- Test the item. It may have worked last time the seller tried it, but make certain that it’s still working now.

- Review maintenance records when possible.
- Complete a third-party inspection. For vehicles and so on, pay for an expert to look over the item.
- Never assume. If you and the other party have not discussed a specific term of the sale, don't assume that you'll agree on it. Discuss terms early on and keep open lines of communication with the other party.
- Ask for cash.
- For a higher-priced item, consider accepting a cashier's check drawn on a local bank, or a U.S. Post Office money order.
- Get your transaction in writing. Ask for a receipt for high-ticket items. If guarantees are made, get them in writing, too.
- For service providers, ask for proof of any required licensing and for references.

Safe and Sound Online Dating

Many of the previous transaction rules I've mentioned apply to dating, too, but because there's so much more at stake, I felt it was important to cover this topic separately. This section discusses what has become traditional online dating. The **personals** section on craigslist also has categories other than dating, some of which are high-risk.

Warning 4U

For those who are not interested in taking it slow in regard to online dating, the best advice I can offer is to trust your instincts. Listen to that voice inside you and get away if you feel even the least bit vulnerable. Also, NEVER meet at anyone's home or a secluded place. Always have your first few meetings in a very public place. Even then, let someone know where you're going and when to expect you back. If you aren't comfortable sharing the information directly, write it on a piece of paper and leave the paper somewhere in your home where people would easily spot it.

Here are some ways to protect yourself—and your heart—when looking for love online.

Take it slow and enjoy the process. This is the best way to protect yourself. It's easier to connect with people online than in person. Anonymous communication frees many of us of our inhibitions. However, that instant attraction can wear off as we get to know each other better. Exchange email and instant messages, and before long you'll know whether the attraction is real or simply the thrill of possibilities.

If the interest is still there after you know more about the person, move on to phone calls. This is an important stage because it's your first chance to communicate directly. Use this time to learn more about each other and see whether you share goals and values. Then move on to meeting in person. By pacing the process, you'll have a stronger foundation and a greater chance of success.

Keep it private. Don't give out your personal information too soon. Knowing a person's first name and general location is fine to start. You can give out your cell phone number when you agree to move forward in the relationship. Because home phones can be traced to addresses, give your cell phone at first. No one needs to know where you live to reach you by email or phone. You don't have to volunteer your contact info to prove that you trust someone or because you don't want to appear paranoid. If the other person doesn't respect your boundaries, it's doubtful that he or she is right for you.

Make it public. If you decide to meet, do it in a public place. Meet for lunch at a restaurant or in the early evening for coffee. Never go to the other person's home, invite him or her to yours, or meet at a secluded place. Remember to use this time to talk and get to know one another better. Avoid going to the movies or anywhere your time will be spent focused away from each other.

Do your homework. When you have information about the other person, do some searching online. You can find out a lot about some people by Googling email address, phone number, name and city, or job info. Although you may feel as if you're spying, keep in mind that knowledge is power, and anything on the Internet is public record. Many employers routinely check out applicants this way, and a

potential date or mate is definitely more important than a job candidate.

Enlist a wingman (or woman). In the beginning, tell someone you trust about your date before you go. Provide the time and place information, as well as details about the other person. Keep your cell phone with you at all times, and call from the washroom to update your backup on any change of plans.

Make it equal. For the first few dates, drive separately and pay your own way. If you arrive on your own, you're free to leave whenever you want. By taking care of your share of the check, you ensure that you're both investing the same amount in the date. You won't owe each other anything, and you start on a level playing field.

Don't drink. Alcohol can cloud your judgment and lessen your inhibitions; being nervous can magnify the effects. Stay clear-headed and in control. Not only is it safer, but it's a better choice if you're hoping to have a lasting relationship.

Read the signs. Don't overlook or explain away red flags that tell you the two of you aren't a match. If the other person misrepresents himself or herself, tells lies, is vague, criticizes or is disrespectful to you or others, is closed-minded, doesn't share your values or goals, or abuses alcohol or drugs, those are big flashing billboards that read "Run away!" You'll almost certainly be disappointed if you expect the other person to change. Dragging out the relationship isn't going to improve your chances for happily ever after.

Walk away. If you realize that a date isn't going well for you, end it. Don't be rude or disrespectful, but suffering through it serves no purpose. If the connection isn't there for you, it most likely isn't there for the other person either. Walking away is essential if you feel frightened or threatened in any way.

Value yourself. Respect your heart and your body, and expect the other person to do the same. The value of anything is based on perception. If you don't see your worth, the other person probably won't, either.

Online dating is a wonderful thing. With busy lives, going out to meet quality people has become harder and harder. Use the preceding information to keep out of harm's way and enrich your dating experience.

From Here...

Protecting yourself in our increasingly connected yet segmented world is a real challenge. I hope that the information in this chapter enriches your craigslist experience and helps you to feel safer and more in control. Ready to get started? Chapter 4 gives you some of the vital details on how and where to post your listing.

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