

## Conversation Starter:

Imagine you would like to sell a piece of furniture from your home. Rank the following methods in order of your most favourite to least favourite method

**EBay**                      **garden/yard sale**                      **advert in local press**  
**fly-tipping\***              **posters around town**                      **social media**  
(\*illegally dumping waste instead of using an authorised rubbish dump)

Look at the eBay product below, what word or phrase should be written in each box?

The screenshot shows an eBay product listing for a Western Digital My Passport ELITE 500 GB USB BRAND NEW! The listing includes a product image, a 'Make it yours' section with a timer and 'Buy It Now' button, shipping information, and seller details. There are several empty boxes for labeling: one in the 'Make it yours' section, one in the 'Shipping:' section, one in the 'Meet the seller' section, and one in the 'Share' section.



Have you ever bought / sold something on eBay, how was it?

What are the pros and cons of eBay?

Look at the following products, what wouldn't you buy from eBay?

Clothes, a new TV, dining room chairs, concert tickets, (your idea)

Read through the following letter from Mr. Omidyar (the founder of eBay). Choose the correct preposition to complete the phrasal verb. Can you think of a synonym for the phrasal verb in English?

Dear Mr Hughes

With reference to your email on 16 August, I am writing to give you more information about my company. I set up / off Ebay in 1995 in San Jose, California. The business specialises on / in selling products over the internet, and now it has become a global online sensation. I had worked in / on the idea for many years before that, but I got my breakthrough on September 3 1995. We made a deal with / to someone and sold a broken laser printer for \$14.83, the first item purchased on Ebay.

As Ebay grew larger, I entered into / onto the global market. I took off / over IBazar, the European equivalent of Ebay, and Paypal in 2002 and by 2008 we had revenues of over \$7 billion. Finally to complete my business empire, I ended up / on investing with / in Skype in 2009, and finally bought it for \$2.75 billion at the end of the year.

I hope this information helps with your report

Yours Sincerely

Mr. Omidyar  
Owner of Ebay

## Estimating the value

Look at the following objects below, based on the brief description, can you estimate the price? Give reasons for your decision.

### 1. HOUSE



Post code	BH16 7PH
Town	Bournemouth
County	Dorset
Total area	ca. 110 m <sup>2</sup>
Area with garden	398m <sup>2</sup>
Built	1963
Available:	immediately

### 2. CAR



- 2001 (X reg) - Hatchback - 102,000 miles - Manual - 1.6L - Petrol

**A rare opportunity to purchase this limited edition VW Lupo in Black, 3 Door Hatchback, Petrol, Manual, Service indicator, Steering wheel rake adjustment, Electric door mirrors, Front fog lights, Body coloured bumpers, Drivers airbag. Central locking, alarm, Air conditioning, Full service history, Taxed until June 2013 & MOT until mid Jan 2013. 2 previous owners prior to myself. Excellent condition.**

### 3. TELEVISION



Info:  
50 inches ( 127 cm Diagonal )  
Plasma TV  
Full-HD  
400 Herz  
Great Picture  
No guarantee (4 years old)

Think about the reasons you gave. What factors influences your decision for:

- 1) The house
- 2) The Car
- 3) The TV

# 8 strange things sold on eBay

- 1. The meaning of life** Someone must have figured it out because they are selling the Meaning of life on Ebay for a starting bid of \$10.50! Probably worth it.
- 2. Michael Jackson's underwear** A pair of Michael Jackson's boxer shorts were sold, with a reserve price of \$1million.
- 3. A Virgin Mary cheese sandwich** This is not any old grilled cheese sandwich this is the Virgin Mary Grilled Cheese Sandwich where the mother of our lord chose to manifest herself. And who can blame her, it looks like a good sandwich. It was sold for \$28,000 to an online casino!
- 4. A cornflake shaped like Illinois** Two sisters from Virginia were so shocked when they found a cornflake that was roughly the shape of Illinois that they put it up for sale. It attracted bids of over \$1,000.
- 5. A town in Texas** The small town of Albert in Texas was sold on eBay, along with the title of Mayor of Albert. The ad boasted that the town was 'known for its towering oaks, wildflowers, German heritage and laid-back attitude.' It also had a beer garden.
- 6. Hi-tech toilets** Hi-tech toilets, originally bought by the city of Seattle for \$5million, but subsequently scrapped after they became a haven for drug users, raised only \$12,549 when they were later sold on eBay.
- 7. A wedding dress** This probably sound too strange. However, the picture of the wedding dress was the husband wearing it! He put it on eBay, modelled by himself, and sold it for \$5,000. The reason? So he could buy tickets for a baseball game.
- 8. Imaginary friend** in 2008, a man put his imaginary friend up for sale on eBay. The seller said 'He is getting too old for me now. I am now 27 and I feel I am growing out of him. He is very friendly. Along with him, I will send you what he likes and dislikes his favourite things to do and his personal self-portrait.' He also got various emails asking him things like 'Does he mind smokers?'. He sold him for \$3082.15!

This article was adapted from [http://www.shinyshiny.tv/2010/07/top\\_ten\\_weirdest\\_things\\_sold\\_on\\_ebay.html?pic=9#gallery](http://www.shinyshiny.tv/2010/07/top_ten_weirdest_things_sold_on_ebay.html?pic=9#gallery)

## Answer key

Page 1: Behind the boxes (from top to bottom)

1. Time remaining / Time left
2. Quantity
3. Payment method / Payment options
4. Return policy
5. Report item

Page 2: Phrasal Verbs - eBay article

set up

specialise in

worked on

deal with

entered into

took over

ended up

investing in

Page 3: Estimating the value

House: £158,000 (GBP) advertised by HSBC bank in Bournemouth

Car: £3,000 (GBP) advertised in a local car magazine in Bournemouth

TV: £600 (GBP) advertised on eBay.

(This activity really generates discussion, especially when people have different ideas on the values. Be sure to ask the participants if they agree with the values after you have given them the answers).

Page 4: Strange things on eBay

A nice and entertaining warm down looking at some of the stranger things people buy and sell on eBay.