

**Première partie de l'épreuve****Black Friday on Amazon: How to spot fake reviews online**

Let's be honest, those crowds we used to see on Black Friday, with people cramming into shops at opening time and fighting over the latest bargain – they're not the most Covid-secure event, are they?

Although the signs suggest Brits got over the Black Friday hype a few years ago, many shops  
5 are still expected to offer deals online for the pre-Christmas sales event on 27 November.

It's been a difficult year for lots of retailers, who will be hoping Black Friday - and its bigger cousin Cyber Monday - will give them a much-needed boost. But this all comes with a health warning if you're buying online.

Amazon is struggling to prevent fake reviews which can mislead shoppers this Black Friday,  
10 according to "Which?". The consumer group looked at some of the most popular purchases, including tablets and phones, and found some review ratings were being manipulated.

Amazon responded to the claims saying it has clear policies that reviewers and sellers must stick to. It says it will suspend, ban, and take legal action against those who break the rules.

As well as false comments, some sellers have also manipulated the star-rating system to  
15 persuade people into a purchase.

In the UK, Amazon is the dominant force with Black Friday shoppers. Which? research found 34% of consumers planned to buy something there this Black Friday, compared to 16% at John Lewis<sup>i</sup> and 7% at Curry's PC World<sup>1</sup>.

There appears to have been a rise in the proportion of suspicious reviews on Amazon in the  
20 UK since March's coronavirus lockdown, according to analysis site ReviewMeta. Their data suggests a 30% rise in the proportion of unnatural reviews on Amazon between March and August following the first coronavirus lockdown.

So how do we spot a fake review this Black Friday?

Which? has some simple tips for checking up on fake reviews.

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<sup>1</sup> Curry's PC World: a well-known retailer for electronic and electrical goods

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- **Be sceptical.** This is probably your best weapon, especially if there are an unusually high number of reviews compared to others in that category.
  - **Read and read again.** Look for the same language used in multiple reviews.
  - **Brands you don't know.** If you don't recognise the brand, check to see if it has its own legitimate-looking website, with clear contact details.
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- **Be wary of products with lots of pictures or videos.** Sellers can incentivise fake reviewers to encourage people to add photos and videos.
  - **Report suspicious reviews to Amazon.** Let them investigate before you buy online.

www.bbc.com, Rick Kelsey, Newsbeat Report, 9 November 2020

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<sup>i</sup> John Lewis: a major chain of department stores equivalent to the Galeries Lafayette/Printemps in the UK