Amazon Product Reviews

What They Are, How To Get Them, and How To Stay Out of Trouble

You know how important product reviews are to your Amazon business. However, a lot of sellers get into trouble with Amazon for violating Terms of Service when asking for reviews from their buyers.

Here is an overview of Amazon's Terms of Service regarding product reviews and a handy checklist to make sure you are compliant with their rules.

Remember, violating Terms of Service can result in permanent bans from Buyer-Seller Messaging or even account suspension.

Amazon Terms of Service Customer Reviews

Amazon's customer product reviews policies are in Seller Central, but they're not the only place you should look to ensure you're 100% TOS compliant.

That page, however, is a great place to start.

Here's what you should know

- You cannot post a review of your own product or a competitor's product. They could report you.
- You cannot offer any type of compensation for a review. This includes free product, a discount, a coupon, etc.
- You cannot provide a refund or reimbursement after a buyer writes a review Like a rebate.
- You cannot use social media influencers or third-party services that help you offer free or discounted products for leaving a review.
- You cannot have family members, employees, or coworkers write reviews of your products or competing products. Amazon will catch that!

- You cannot ask a reviewer to change or remove a review, nor can you offer an incentive for a reviewer to change or remove a review.
- You cannot ask buyers to contact you prior to leaving a negative review, while encouraging positive reviewers to leave one on Amazon.
- You cannot create a variation relationship between products in order to manipulate reviews.
- You cannot ask for a positive review on product packaging or offer incentives in exchange for a positive review in said packaging.
- You cannot use your own buyer account to leave or change a review on your own or a competitor's product.

Amazon's Selling Policies and Seller Code of Conduct page reiterates some of these rules. Specifically, it's not acceptable to pay or offer an incentive in exchange for providing or removing feedback or reviews. You cannot only ask for reviews from satisfied customers. You, your family, and your employees are prohibited from reviewing your own or a competitor's products.

Asking for Reviews

There are two ways to ask for customer reviews.

Through Amazon Buyer-Seller Messaging

Review requests sent through Buyer-Seller Messaging must be 100% TOS compliant, and that means not only following the rules, but interpreting the rules appropriately so that no violations can be found in your messaging. Here are some tips beyond the black and white Terms of Service on what to avoid:

- Avoid using if/then statements in Buyer-Seller Messaging "If you had a good experience, please leave a review. If not, please contact us and we'll make it right."
- Don't use manipulative language. Telling a buyer that your business depends on a positive review is against the spirit of neutral communication. You cannot ask for a positive review on product packaging nor offer incentives in exchange for a positive review in said packaging.

If you use Buyer-Seller Messaging to request reviews, you need to make sure you follow the rules. Refer to the checklist below.

With the Amazon Request a Review button

Amazon rolled out the Request a Review button at the end of 2019. It appears on your orders pages. Clicking the button triggers a request from Amazon to buyers to ask them for a product review and seller feedback on your behalf. Because the message is created by Amazon and cannot be edited, this is a 100% TOS-compliant method to request reviews. The message is automatically translated into the receiver's preferred language. This is a foolproof way to request reviews, and is our recommendation. Our partners at eComEngine, have developed automation technology for this type of messaging within their FeedbackFive tool.

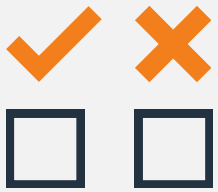
Amazon Product Review Request Compliance Checklist (download below)

Product reviews can make or break your Amazon listing. (And it's important to remember that reviews are **different from feedback!**) Although Amazon may send a product review request on your behalf, it is unpredictable and many sellers find that they get better results by sending out their own personalized product review requests.

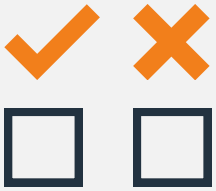
Amazon allows sellers to request product reviews from buyers, but there are several rules that you should know about. This at-a-glance checklist breaks down the rules into a simple guide that you can use to ensure that your product review request is compliant with current Amazon policy. (April 2019)

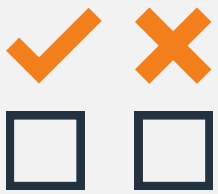
Evaluate Your Product Review Request

- Does your message offer compensation, discounts, refund or reimbursement in exchange for a product review?

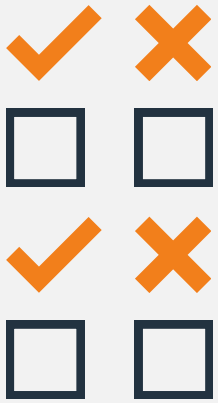


- Are you only asking for reviews from buyers who have had a positive experience? Are you attempting to divert buyers who did not have a positive experience away from leaving a review?





- Did you specifically request a positive review or imply in any way that you only want positive reviews?
- Are you sending more than one request for reviews?

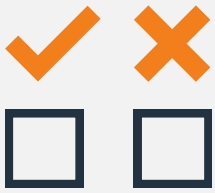


Evaluate Your Product Review Process

- Have you tried to review your own product or a competitor's product?
- Are you using a third-party service that offers free or discounted products in exchange for a review? (This includes "private" Facebook groups.)
- Have you asked your family members or employees to review your product or a competitor's product?
- Did you create a variation relationship between unrelated products in an attempt to boost your product's star rating?
- Have you inserted a request for a positive Amazon review or any incentive in exchange for a review into your product's packaging?



- Have you attempted to contact a buyer with a request to change or remove a negative review?



If you answered “no” to all of the questions on this page, congratulations! You are complying with Amazon’s product review policies.

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, it’s time to revisit Amazon’s guidelines and your workflow.

NEED SOME HELP LEARNING MORE ABOUT PRODUCT REVIEWS? WE’VE INCLUDED THE LINKS TO RELEVANT AMAZON POLICIES BELOW.

References:

- Customer product reviews
- Customer product reviews policies
- Answers to Questions about Product Reviews

How to report your competitors for review abuse

What's the best way to report competitors leaving bad reviews on your listings?

If you have Brand Registry, you can report inaccurate reviews through the Brand Services portal.
You need to report to BR how the review is not useful, incorrect, or you have to have proof that it is a competitor that's leaving these reviews

You can't just report all negative reviews- you need to have a reason why it should be removed

If it's competitor sabotage, you need solid proof before you can report.
E.g. I think the interesting one I heard the other day was people were using keywords like "this gun jammed" or "gun wouldn't fire". It had nothing to do with the product- it wasn't a gun, there was nothing to jam.

Bad actors are just packing keyword into certain reviews to try to trigger a listing suspension or a review by policy teams. So keep an eye on your reviews!
community-help@amazon.com is the known queue to report abuse or through Seller Central.
We recommend the suspect-abuse@Amazon.com queue. We've seen a little bit more traction with that because not as many people know about it.
Make sure your report makes sense, is concise (no more than a page), with actionable information.

Reporting a competitor for getting fake reviews on their own listing- how do you go about getting the proof that they're using black or grey hat tactics?

1. Conduct a test buy
2. Check the product for non-compliant behavior soliciting a positive review.
3. Check seller messaging for non-compliant positive review solicitation or incentives.
4. Report non-compliant behavior to Amazon and include pictures/ screenshots.

Other place to look:

- Look at their competitor's own websites. They could be using promotions on their own site to incentivize Amazon reviews. Consider conducting a test buy through their website.
- Scan Facebook groups for Amazon sellers incentivizing Amazon reviews- you can use screenshot to report this to Amazon.
- Consider signing up as a reviewer on some of the third-party review services. This is an easy way to get info on who is using these services.

Make sure that you're getting clear evidence that your competitors are doing this before you report specific sellers or making accusations you can't back up. Don't report it just because they look like they acquire lots of reviews a little too fast. Get real proof!

Don't start spamming the queues if they don't answer you right away. If reporting someone else's listing, they may not reply, but still take action.