



Holiday Toy Tips: Consider Safety and Avoid Scams

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 25, 2024

Contact: Caleb Kulich, Public Information Officer, (608) 621-1290
caleb.kulich@wisconsin.gov

MADISON, Wis. – Shopping for gifts this holiday season? There are many factors to consider when searching for the perfect present, especially when the recipient is a child. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) encourages shoppers to keep safety in mind while searching for the best holiday deals.

Safety Considerations

When buying for a young child either in-person or online, always check for potential hazards. Look on the packaging or for information posted online about product warnings and age grading. Taking a few moments to review labels might reveal:

- A suggested minimum age or age range for using the product
- Small parts, sharp edges, magnets, and other choking or suffocation hazards
- Flame resistance (especially important for toys with fabrics)
- Safety verification from ASTM International, including:
 - Art materials with ASTM D4236 labeling
 - Toys that meet ASTM F963 safety standards

Don't rely on labeling alone. Examine products before purchasing to identify any potential unlabeled hazards such as projectiles, small batteries, and the risk of breaking/splintering. Toys can sometimes present unexpected danger. Even if your gift will be given to an older child, ask yourself whether a younger child who also lives in the household might access it. Lastly, consider including safety gear with your gift, like a helmet with a bike or scooter.

“Out of Stock” Fake Website Scammers

Every year, many consumers face the common struggle of finding the year's most popular toys still in stock. If your search takes you online, be aware that scammers may take advantage of your gift-giving spirit. Be cautious of unfamiliar websites and sellers, and verify familiar websites are really the platform they appear to be – especially if they advertise popular products at uncommonly low prices. Fake and imposter websites use these tactics to trick you into “buying” an out-of-stock product, but chances are you won't receive anything and will just send money and your payment information to a scammer. If you do receive something, it will likely be of questionable quality compared to the original item you were seeking to purchase.

Never enter your payment information before confirming a website is legitimate and be skeptical of third-party sellers of otherwise out-of-stock items. For unfamiliar sites: Check third-party reviews and search the website name along with the words “scam” or “fraud.” For popular sites: Verify there are no spelling errors or unusual phrasing in the web address that could indicate a website is being impersonated. It is best to use your credit card to protect your purchase. If you are tricked, you can dispute the charges with your credit card company.

For more information and consumer protection resources or to file a complaint, visit DATCP's Consumer Protection webpage at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov or contact the Consumer Protection Hotline at (800) 422-7128 or DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.

###

Find more DATCP news in our [newsroom](#), on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#).