

DARK PATTERNS

...are tactics some businesses use to try to **nudge, manipulate** or **trick** you into spending more money than you planned or providing personal data that's not needed.

These tactics can be used in many situations, but the place you will see them most often is on digital channels such as online platforms, shopping websites, apps, email and sms.



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Examples of dark patterns:

- **hidden costs**—extra costs you only find out about towards the end of your purchase, or which are made less obvious.
- **scarcity cues**—designed to create a fear of missing out, pushing you to make rushed decisions.
- **forced continuity**—subscriptions that are easy to sign up to, but hard to get out of.
- **confirm shaming**—using words which try to make you feel silly or worried if you don't agree to buy a product or provide your data.
- **disguised advertisements or clickbait**—ads that look like a news headline or video content.

What can I do?

Shopping online can be cheaper and more convenient for you. However, make sure you understand your rights before you click 'pay now'.

Follow these tips:

- don't be rushed to buy
- shop around
- do your research to be sure the website is reputable and safe to use
- understand the trader's refund policy
- read the fine print, including terms and conditions
- know when you're entitled to a refund, repair or replacement
- keep your proof of purchase in case something goes wrong.

Remember, while it may be tempting to sign up to a newsletter to get a discount, make sure you're not sharing more personal information than you want to.

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