



Craigslist - DRAFT

What is Craigslist?

Craigslist is a website that helps people buy and sell local products and services. It has many categories, and helps connect buyers and sellers. It is a more informal eBay, an easy to use online garage sale which doesn't require an account or very much setup. Still, Craigslist is a powerful online buying and selling tool.



craigslist

Craigslist Sections

Other than eBay, Craigslist is one of the premier websites for buying goods from individuals or smaller vendors online. This is good since it means that there are a lot of listings for you to look at. But this can be bad if there are too many listings to sort through.

Luckily, Craigslist is very well organized! First, Craigslist splits its listings up into **local sites**. For example <http://chicago.craigslist.org/> filters out listings from other places. Next, Craigslist has **categories** of listings. Categories that are often used include **housing**, **jobs**, **for sale**, and **services**. People can also post resumes in a **resume** section. But today we're going to focus on **buying** and **selling**.

Buying on Craigslist

1. Go to <http://chicago.craigslist.org/>
2. Single left click "For Sale" in the middle of the page (or you can click any of the sub-categories below that)
3. If you clicked either the general "For Sale" link or a link to a sub-category, the page that loads should have a text entry box where you can "search for:" what you're looking for. Type what you're looking for in there.
4. In the same menu toward the top, you can limit your search to specific categories by single left clicking the downward pointing triangle and then selecting an option from the menu that should drop down. After making your selection, click "search".
5. Results should appear. They may not all be exactly what you're looking for, so

read the titles carefully. You may need to do a second search with different keywords if what you're looking for doesn't at first appear in the results. Click the blue links of a title you're interested in to look into it more.

6. Once you've clicked a title link, the item's page should load. This is the full description of what the seller is offering.
7. Better sellers include at least one picture of the item on this page. Pictures let you know the condition of the item so that you know what you're buying.
8. Most sellers use Craigslist's "email relay" feature. On the item's page, toward the top left, there is usually a button that says "Reply." Next to it there should be an email address. Copy that email address and write an email to the seller to ask more about the item.
9. Things posted to Craigslist are often sold quickly. Don't be surprised if you get no response. A good seller will message you back with details to arrange the final sale of an item in-person if it is still for sale.

Selling on Craigslist

0. (have pictures ready if you're going to post them)
1. Go to <http://chicago.craigslist.org/>
2. Single left click "post to classifieds" near the top on the left
3. This should load a prompt that helps you through the rest of the process of posting.
 - a. Select what type of post
 - b. What category – take your time and choose accurately, this will help you sell the item more quickly
 - c. Choose your general location to let people know you're really local
4. After choosing your location, the page to create your post should load automatically
 - a. Give your post a title. This should be a brief summary of the item.
 - b. Type in the price
 - c. Enter your city (but not your address!) in "specific location"
 - d. Type a full description of your item. Make it very clear exactly what's for sale. Include any brands or model years. Note its condition. Let potential buyers know if there are any special circumstances or conditions that have to be met for you to sell the item.
 - e. Enter your email address in the "reply to" field and make sure "use craigslist mail relay" is selected. This allows potential buyers to contact you easily without exposing your personal email address. They email a

- Craigslist email address, and then Craigslist forwards you their message.
- f. **Don't check the box next to "show on maps" or type in your address.**
It's safer to only tell potential buyers your location rather than giving it to anyone browsing Craigslist search results.
 - g. Click "continue" at the bottom right
 - h. If you want to add an image or images to your post, you can click "choose files" on the page that loads after clicking continue. Then you'll need to locate the pictures on your computer and upload them. When you're ready, click "done with images"
 - i. A preview page of what your post will look like should load. You can make changes here by clicking "edit text" or "edit images"
 - j. Once you've checked through everything, click "publish"
 - k. Craigslist will then send an email to the email address you included for the mail relay. Go to that email and click the link to confirm that your email address was correct and that you're ready for the item to be listed
 - l. Be ready to get emails to that address, pick a buyer, and work out a time to meet in person to complete the sale.

Craigslist Safety

Maybe you've heard of the "Craigslist Killer," or other seedy Craigslist stories. Since anyone can list anything on Craigslist, you can encounter some weirder things. Being skeptical and cautious will help you. Anything that seems suspicious probably is. But Craigslist also tries to keep some of the weirder content together in sections such as **personals** and **discussion forums**. If you're just looking to buy or sell something on Craigslist, you can avoid these sections without worrying about.

Buying Safely

- Trust your gut
- Know what you're trying to buy
- Know what you're willing to pay (free/\$)
- Don't buy without seeing a picture—some people don't initially post pictures, but you can ask so that you know the quality of the good before you agree
- Pay in cash—never use checks!
- Meeting in person to complete the transaction lowers the risk of being scammed dramatically, you can back out and leave if something seems fishy
- Bring a friend/family member to the location of the sale

- Craigslist's resources on scams: <http://www.craigslist.org/about/scams>

Selling Safely

- Trust your gut
- Don't post your phone number in your initial post
 - Only give this out to help arrange a meeting to complete the sale
- Don't post your address either
 - Only give this out to help arrange a meeting to complete the sale
- If you take and post pictures, they shouldn't reveal your location
- Be very clear on the terms of your sale, your price
- Require the buyer to pay in cash (this lets the buyer know you're not a scammer)
- Complete the sale in person
- Craigslist's resources on scams: <http://www.craigslist.org/about/scams>

If you have questions about using Craigslist, call the library at the number below and ask for the Adult Reference Desk to schedule a one-on-one appointment.



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