

Know Your Rights: Consumer Protection in the Digital Age

Consumer Awareness · E-Commerce Rights

Why Online Shoppers Need Special Protection

The Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020, framed under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, address the unique risks of online transactions — misleading listings, hidden charges, and difficulty identifying who is actually liable when something goes wrong.

Key Rights of an Online Consumer

- **Right to accurate information** — e-commerce platforms must clearly display the total price, delivery timelines, and return/refund/exchange policy before an order is placed.
- **Right to know the seller's identity** — marketplaces must disclose the seller's name, address, and contact details for any listed product.
- **Grievance redressal** — every e-commerce entity must appoint a Grievance Officer and acknowledge complaints within 48 hours, resolving them within one month.
- **Prohibition of unfair trade practices** — includes flash sales structured to limit consumer choice unfairly and manipulation of search results to promote a platform's own related parties without disclosure.

What To Do If You Are a Victim of Unfair Trade Practice

- Raise a complaint with the platform's Grievance Officer first, keeping records of all communication.
- If unresolved, a complaint may be filed with the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, or online via the National Consumer Helpline / e-Daakhil portal.
- Product liability claims can be brought against the manufacturer, seller, or service provider for defective products or deficient services.