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## 10 tips to be a better consumer

*When you purchase a product or service, you have to ensure you are making a safe and wise choice. A lot goes into being a better consumer. Described below are 10 ways you can be one.*

- 1. Do research:** Whether you are shopping online or purchasing a product from a local store, see that you buy from a reputable seller. Seek recommendations from friends and check reviews online. The same goes for hiring services, whether you are looking for a good doctor or a good school.
- 2. Never allow yourself to be pressurised:** Don't succumb to telemarketing tactics or rush into a purchase decision online because you are told there is only one product left in stock.
- 3. Read the fine print:** It is important to get into the details of contracts, warranties and return policies. Read the operating instructions before using a new product.
- 4. Be eco-friendly:** Buy local and don't buy unnecessary items, even if they are on sale. Buy eco-friendly products and carry your own shopping bag to avoid using paper bags. Say no to plastic. Repair, reuse, sell or donate products to keep them out of landfills.
- 5. Preserve all documents:** Keep a copy (even a digital one will do) of all important documents such bills of purchase and insurance policies.
- 6. Be safety conscious:** Keep yourself updated about product recalls and safety information. When you are using a new product, read up the safety instructions.
- 7. Protect your Information:** Safeguard your personal and financial details. Do not reveal them on the phone or on unknown websites.
- 8. Check your bank statements regularly:** This is essential to ensure no unauthorised transaction has taken place.
- 9. Seek redressal:** Reporting and complaining about a defective product or deficient service is not just your right – it's your responsibility. Safety issues, unfair policies and scams will come to light only if consumers report them.
- 10. Know your rights:** Indian consumers have the right to information, right to safety, and right to seek redressal, among other rights.

Sources: [www.everythingzoomer.com](http://www.everythingzoomer.com),  
[www.thedigeratlife.com](http://www.thedigeratlife.com), [livelearn.ca](http://livelearn.ca)