



Secondhand Marketplace Safety and Accountability

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I. Introduction

People today have many choices for where and how they shop for consumer products. One fast-growing option is to shop on digital marketplaces—shopping hubs run by major companies like Amazon and Meta.¹ A Consumer Reports (CR) nationally representative survey of 2,191 U.S. adults in October 2025 found that 95% of consumers used a digital platform to make a purchase in the previous 12 months.² Consumers are not only shopping online for new products from businesses but also going online to connect with other consumers to sell and buy products. Consumer-to-consumer (C2C) marketplaces are quickly gaining popularity and the market as a whole is projected to grow from \$584.62 billion in 2025 to \$1.41 trillion by 2035.³

In the U.S., product safety and liability policies have been slow to update and keep pace with the evolving ecosystem and e-commerce business models.⁴ When laws and policies are not clear on when a platform should be responsible for product safety or liability, consumers are at risk of purchasing unsafe products online with minimal recourse.⁵ This includes platforms that host C2C transactions; these platforms are often less involved and control fewer aspects of transactions than business-to-consumer (B2C) marketplaces, like Amazon and Target.⁶ As such, in the absence of up-to-date product safety and liability laws, C2C marketplaces should focus on making the parts of the transaction and experience they can control safer for consumers.⁷ This includes requiring clear, adequate, and accurate information about the products being sold, preventing and swiftly removing listings for recalled or banned products, and informing consumers about recalled or banned products in a timely fashion.⁸ For more on what policymakers can do to address the current gaps in the law and regulations, see CR's November 2024 report "[Marketplace Accountability in a Digital World](#)."⁹

While purchasing used products from fellow consumers is not a new concept—traditional, in-person options include yard, garage, and estate sales—digital platforms have enabled consumers to connect with one another through their websites and phone apps to buy and sell both used and new products. When using these C2C marketplaces, consumers should feel confident that the used products they buy or sell online do not pose unreasonable health and safety risks. These marketplaces should play a greater role in making this vision a reality. This includes giving consumers access to accurate and accessible safety information and, to the greatest extent possible, ensuring the safety of the products sold on their marketplaces. These platforms should also ensure that consumers selling products have proper safeguards and access to policies that help to prevent the accidental sale of banned or restricted products.

Following the publication of our evaluation of B2C platforms that host third-party sellers in February 2026, we conducted a focused evaluation of four major platforms that primarily facilitate C2C transactions. For this evaluation, we focused on a platform's ability to educate consumers, as both buyers and sellers, about unsafe products; prevent the sale of or proactively remove banned or restricted products; and provide clear mechanisms for users to report violative products or safety concerns. With this in mind, CR evaluated four of the largest C2C platforms in the U.S.—Craigslist, eBay, Facebook Marketplace, and Mercari.¹⁰

Our evaluation and findings show the current state of C2C marketplaces and outline steps that digital platforms can take to make online shopping safer and support more informed consumer decision-making. CR's recommendations are feasible for digital platforms to deploy and meaningfully improve consumer safety. We encourage digital platforms to review our findings and implement the practices recommended in this report. For additional information on CR's recommendations and expectations for digital platforms, platforms should refer to our [Digital Marketplace Safety Playbook](#) and [Digital Marketplace Safety Framework](#).

II. Methodology

In line with our Digital Marketplace Accountability Framework,¹¹ CR's C2C marketplace evaluation focused on whether consumers have easy access to the listings and information on each platform. It also assesses whether and how marketplaces monitor and control the information consumers can post online when acting as sellers. We also reviewed online listings between May and June 2026 for certain unsafe products: drop-side cribs, infant inclined sleep products, infant in-bed sleepers, and padded crib bumper pads. In our evaluations, CR sought to mimic a consumer's purchasing and selling experiences on the platforms' mobile apps for Android and iOS.

Numeric scores were assigned to each result, combined by topic area, and each topic area was assigned one of five color-coded ratings. Once scoring was finalized, CR shared the data with the evaluated platforms and asked each to work with CR to improve policies, practices, and consumer experiences. Platforms were also given the opportunity to share feedback and solutions to address CR's concerns and implement changes that adopted CR's recommendations, which could lead to a rise in scores. CR's scores were adjusted only when such efforts and changes were determined to be platform-wide. Smaller changes, such as removing a specific listing, typically did not affect our scoring. EBay, Facebook Marketplace, and Mercari all engaged with results in writing, through a meeting, or both. Craigslist did not respond.

For this evaluation, CR evaluated platforms on the following.

1. **Information about banned and restricted products:** Focusing on the platform's publicly available information about what items are prohibited or restricted from being for sale by law or platform policy.
2. **Recalled/banned products available for sale:** Checking listings to see whether the platform allows consumers to list banned products for sale, including drop-side cribs, padded crib bumpers, infant in-bed sleepers, and infant inclined sleepers.
3. **Features that allow consumers to report banned or recalled products:** Including whether consumers can easily report products to the platform and whether they could flag a product as banned or recalled.

4. **Seller education materials on banned and restricted products:** Including whether consumers seeking to sell have access to robust and easy-to-understand information about banned and restricted products.
5. **Product listing reviews and checks:** Including checks, warnings, or conditional fields that populate as information is added about a product to the potential sale listing.

III. Findings

	eBay	Craigslist	Facebook Marketplace	Mercari
OVERALL SCORE				
Consumer Policy Information: Banned & Restricted Products				
Banned/Recalled Products Listed				
Reporting Mechanisms				
Seller Education: Banned & Restricted Products				
Seller Listing Check and Removal				

Our evaluation revealed that each of the four platforms has opportunities to strengthen its policies and processes.

Finding 1: Information on restricted/banned product categories was available on all but one platform. Where it was available, it was not easily accessible.

	eBay	Craigslist	Facebook Marketplace	Mercari
Consumer Policy Information: Banned & Restricted Products				

CR evaluated platforms for clear, easy-to-find policies on which products are restricted or banned from sale. Clear, easy-to-find policies can help consumers stay well-informed and avoid potentially dangerous products when shopping online. Banned products are either unlawful to sell under federal law or voluntarily banned by the platform due to serious safety concerns. Platforms may also restrict the sale of certain products due to a safety hazard associated with a specific use case, such as water bead products marketed to children as toys. CR evaluated each platform's policies for mention of federally banned infant inclined sleepers, padded crib bumpers, and drop-side cribs, as well as restricted water beads marketed to children and unsafe weighted infant sleep wearables.

CR's initial evaluations found that none of the four platforms maintained an updated and comprehensive list of banned or restricted products. Our evaluators could find a partial list only

on eBay, Craigslist, and Facebook Marketplace by navigating to the site, not through the marketplace's search bar. EBay's policies went furthest by prohibiting infant inclined sleepers, padded crib bumpers, and weighted sleep sacks, and by restricting the sale of used cribs, effectively preventing the sale of drop-side cribs. However, eBay did not specifically prohibit the sale of water beads marketed to children, despite previously telling CR that it had a global policy established "for the past several years."¹² After receiving CR's findings, eBay and Facebook Marketplace updated their policies to include the five categories CR looked for in such policies for this evaluation. Mercari did not have a list of banned children's products available.

Recommendation: Platforms should publish and maintain comprehensive lists of prohibited and restricted infant and children's products as new product hazards are identified. At a minimum, platforms should clearly prohibit infant inclined sleepers, padded crib bumpers, and drop-side cribs, restrict water beads marketed to children as toys that do not meet mandatory standards, and identify weighted infant sleep wearables as restricted products. These policies should also be easily accessible through platform navigation and product search.

Finding 2: Banned products were available for sale on all four platforms.

	eBay	Craigslist	Facebook Marketplace	Mercari
Banned/Recalled Products Listed				

CR also conducted searches across all four platforms for four specific types of products that have either been banned by law or effectively banned by Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) regulation: drop-side cribs, padded crib bumpers, infant inclined sleep products, and infant in-bed sleepers.¹³ Using predetermined search terms, CR's two evaluators reviewed the results and each counted the number of banned or prohibited products in the first 200 listings, stopping early if they found 25 such products listed for sale.

	eBay	Craigslist	Facebook Marketplace	Mercari
Drop-side cribs	3/400	0	2/400	0
Padded crib bumpers	6/400	0	9/400	4/400
Infant inclined sleep products	0	0	11/400	0
In-bed sleep products	7/400	2/49*	50/65**	12/400

*Search for these products only brought back 49 results.

**CR's evaluators stopped search after finding 25 concerning listings.

CR found banned children's products listed for sale on each platform at varying frequencies, with the fewest on Craigslist and the most on Facebook Marketplace. In particular, infant in-bed sleep products were the most widely available across marketplaces and were especially prevalent on Facebook Marketplace. The continued availability of such banned products shows

that platforms need stronger safeguards and mechanisms to prevent them from reaching consumers.

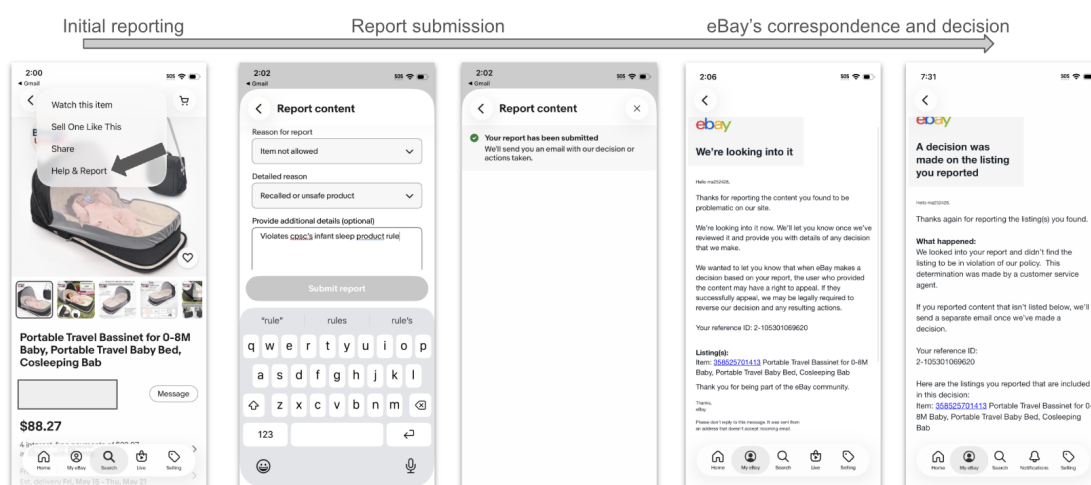
Recommendation: Platforms should use all necessary means, including large language models, image classifiers, and human review, to strengthen prelisting screening and to monitor active listings to identify and remove prohibited products. Platforms should take the steps required to ensure their systems keep pace with federal safety requirements and prevent prohibited products from being publicly available for sale.

Finding 3: Reporting mechanisms to flag concerning listings were often difficult to find and did not include a “banned/recalled” option.

WORSE ————— BETTER	eBay	Craigslist	Facebook Marketplace	Mercari
Reporting Mechanisms				

Consumers can play an important role in alerting platforms to potentially unsafe or prohibited products that they have found for sale. Platforms should ensure that their reporting mechanisms are easy to find and use. CR evaluated each platform’s reporting tools by reporting known banned products we found in our searches, including the prominence of the reporting icon or option and whether a consumer could select or explain the reason for reporting the product as “unsafe,” “banned,” “illegal,” or something similar.

CR found significant differences in these tools and processes for reporting potentially unsafe or banned products. eBay offered the strongest reporting process, allowing users to be specific in their reasoning and providing confirmation and updates upon report submission.



Of the platforms with a reporting process, eBay’s was the strongest and clearest.

Other platforms offered less comprehensive reporting options, including no option to mark a product “banned,” “recalled,” or similar, or to provide additional information. This may result in the platform receiving insufficient information to decide whether to remove the posting. Other

platforms did not provide consumers with regular updates or follow-up correspondence, leaving consumers in the dark about the status of their reports.

Even more concerning, reporting a product that CR identified as noncompliant with mandatory standards or banned did not consistently result in its removal. Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, and Mercari did not remove the products CR reported. EBay responded more effectively, removing a padded crib bumper within 30 minutes of CR's report, but did not remove the reported infant in-bed sleeper.

Recommendation: Platforms should provide a dedicated option for consumers to flag recalled or banned products when reporting a concerning listing. This can help platforms identify and investigate potentially dangerous and unlawful listings more quickly.

Recommendation: Platforms should ensure that systems and staff responsible for reviewing reports from consumers are trained to recognize children's products prohibited under federal safety requirements and to act quickly when such products are identified. When a reported product is confirmed to be banned, the listing should be removed from the entire marketplace—not simply hidden from the consumer who reported it—within 24 hours.

Finding 4: When seeking to sell a product, consumers received inadequate information about the platform's banned/recalled product policies.

 WORSE BETTER	eBay	Craigslist	Facebook Marketplace	Mercari
Seller Education: Banned & Restricted Products				

For this evaluation, CR not only looked at consumers' buying experience on each platform, but also reviewed the systems that facilitated and supported consumers seeking to sell products on these marketplaces, with additional education and checks. Most likely, consumers will not have deep knowledge of product safety rules and regulations. As such, we examined whether marketplaces helped consumers by providing clear, easily accessible product-safety-related policy information at critical points in the selling journey.

CR found that platforms did not consistently educate consumers about banned children's products when creating a seller's account or posting an item for sale. Facebook Marketplace and eBay did not provide a list of banned products during seller account creation. EBay's policies were only found after numerous clicks within its user agreement. Craigslist and Mercari provided prohibited-product information, but they did not specifically identify the children's products CR evaluated, including infant inclined sleepers, padded crib bumpers, and drop-side cribs. Platform guidance was also inadequate for consumers looking to list products for sale. EBay and Mercari did not provide sellers with a list of banned products during the listing process. Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace provided information that did not include all of the banned children's products CR evaluated. Craigslist provided a general warning about

illegal sales of recalled items and included drop-side cribs as an example. This warning was only provided when a CR evaluator drafted a product listing for used car seats, not when the seller account was established.¹⁴

Recommendation: Platforms should clearly provide information at critical points for consumers seeking to sell on the platform. This includes providing information when creating a seller account and posting a product listing for sale. Providing this information at multiple points increases the chances that consumers will engage with the material; doing so also helps prevent prohibited products from being listed in the first place.

Finding 5: When seeking to sell a product, platform systems and processes did not adequately provide safeguards and guidance to flag concerns or prevent the sale of a potentially recalled product.

	eBay	Craigslist	Facebook Marketplace	Mercari
Seller Listing Check and Removal				

In evaluating the seller side of the marketplace, CR examined the checks and safeguards in place for when a consumer created and submitted a product listing. We reviewed whether the marketplace’s system updates any fields based on the type of product being listed, including whether it would require specific information before allowing consumers to list a product for sale. We also reviewed whether and how marketplaces reviewed listings before and after they went live to help prevent posting potentially concerning products. CR filled out but did not submit a product listing form for a used car seat and a portable generator, both of which are products for which consumers should take extra precautions before purchasing secondhand due to potential safety hazards. Specifically for used car seats, digital platforms should exercise extra caution and restrict their sale because secondhand car seats may have unseen issues that affect their safety.

CR found that, overall, platforms had limited checks and safeguards when completing the product listing form to help identify products that may be unsafe or subject to a recall. When evaluators drafted a listing for a used car seat, the listing forms on Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, and Mercari did not change or provide additional product or safety prompts.¹⁵ EBay provided one additional safeguard, allowing the evaluator to select only “New” as the car seat’s condition after an image was uploaded. However, the seller could still state in the text description that the car seat was used, revealing a possible oversight in the system’s ability to check the information added elsewhere in the listing. CR identified similar shortcomings when completing a listing for a generator that resembled other models associated with a recall. None of the platforms prevented the listing from going live, and all were posted within an hour, including on platforms that indicated listings may undergo review. None required the generator’s model number, which could have been critical to determining whether a particular unit was subject to the recall.

Recommendation: Platforms should implement automated checks, where necessary, to identify potential safety concerns, request additional information from consumers, and prevent recalled, banned, or otherwise unsafe products from becoming available to other consumers. Platforms should also ensure that restrictions applied to a listing draft cannot be circumvented through creative evasion.

IV. Corporate Commitments

CR shared the findings from our evaluation, along with recommendations, with each company privately in July 2026 to encourage platforms to make necessary changes. eBay, Facebook Marketplace, and Mercari participated in productive discussions about the evaluation and made changes to make their platforms safer for consumers.

CR verified some of those changes prior to publication, and some resulted in an improved score for the platform. These include:

eBay

- Added water beads marketed to kids to its publicly available list of prohibited items.

Facebook Marketplace

- Added drop-side cribs, water beads marketed to kids, and weighted infant sleep wearables to the banned and restricted products list.
- Updated the seller and buyer flows to more conspicuously link to the newly updated prohibited-products policy.

eBay, Facebook Marketplace, and Mercari also committed to making the following changes, which did not go live in time for publication. CR will check and verify these in the future.

eBay

- Committed to making the prohibited-items policy more easily accessible for both sellers and buyers. This update will occur at a future review cycle, likely in early 2027.

Facebook Marketplace

- Reviewed its use of categories where automated warnings apply, including car seats and generators that were included in our test. CR could not trigger this warning during a retest. The buyer warning alone is not sufficient to meet our recommendation to remove recalled products and shifts the burden to buyers to determine whether a potential purchase is safe.
 - If implemented successfully, however, the seller warning would be one of the best examples observed on C2C marketplaces. Warning sellers before they create a potentially hazardous listing is an example of just-in-time safety information that can be incredibly useful.

Mercari

- Plans to update its product listing reporting process to allow users to report products that have been “recalled or banned.”

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

CR's evaluation of C2C marketplaces identified numerous shortcomings that are likely to contribute to the ongoing circulation of seriously concerning products, many of which have been banned for years. Our findings also highlight that platforms can increase their investments in making their marketplaces safe places for consumers to buy and sell products. At a minimum, platforms should provide consumers with adequate guidance and system checks to ensure they are not unwittingly selling or purchasing unsafe products.

Based on these findings, Consumer Reports recommends the following:

Immediate Actions to Protect Consumers

Platforms have already demonstrated that these recommendations are feasible, and they should implement them without delay.

1. **Keep marketplace policy pages for consumers up to date with critical safety information and make them easy to find.** Review and ensure that the platform's publicly available policy pages are updated and easily findable, with the most recent and accurate information.
2. **Strengthen reporting mechanisms.** Add a "recalled/banned/unsafe" (or similar) reporting option and allow consumers to add more context as needed. Also provide updates on the marketplace's review of a report from a consumer.
3. **Proactively detect and remove banned or restricted children's products.** Platforms should use all available technology and tools to help identify and remove products posted for sale that are prohibited by law or regulation, or restricted by corporate policy.
4. **Support consumer sellers to the greatest extent possible.** Give consumer sellers easy-to-access information about recalled/banned products, and promptly inform consumer sellers about potential concerns with a product listing.

Long-Term Efforts to Strengthen Platform Accountability and Safety

These recommendations address systemic issues that contribute to recurring safety concerns and may require sustained investment or governance changes.

1. **Implement automated validation and periodic audits of safety information.** Platforms should utilize available technology and implement automated tools that regularly audit required safety disclosures, guidance, and imagery.
2. **Develop stronger seller-level systems that best support and educate consumers selling products.** Stronger seller-level systems can help consumers understand their responsibilities and make safer decisions by providing timely, product-specific guidance on recalled, banned, or otherwise restricted products when they list them for sale.

¹ Jennifer Dublino, “Online vs In-Store Shopping: What’s Changed in 2026,” *Business.com*, January 6, 2026, <http://business.com/articles/retail-or-e-tail-buying-online-vs-buying-in-person>. For the purposes of this report, we use the terms “digital platform” and “digital marketplace” instead of “online platform” and “online marketplace” in order to align with CR’s broader work in the digital space; Consumer Reports nationally representative American Experiences Survey of 2,191 U.S. adults (October 2025), https://article.images.consumerreports.org/image/upload/v1762527064/prod/content/dam/surveys/Consumer_Reports_AES_October_2025.pdf. (Only 5 percent of U.S. consumers said that they had not shopped on any digital platform in the previous 12 months.)

² Consumer Reports *supra* note 1. (Only 5 percent of U.S. consumers said that they had not shopped on any digital platform in the 12 months leading up to the survey.)

³ Ankit Gupta and Aarti Dhapte, “Consumer to Consumer e-Commerce Market,” *Market Research Future*, August 24, 2026, <https://www.marketresearchfuture.com/reports/consumer-to-consumer-e-commerce-market-28372>.

⁴ Oriene Shin and Laurel Lehman, “Marketplace Accountability in a Digital World,” *Consumer Reports*, November 7, 2024, <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/research/marketplace-accountability-in-a-digital-world-consumer-reports-white-paper-on-digital-marketplace-accountability-for-product-safety> at 6.

⁵ *Ibid.* at 7.

⁶ *Ibid.* at 11.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ CR spoke to Mercari, Inc. (U.S.), the U.S. subsidiary of Mercari, Inc., which is based in Japan.

¹¹ “Digital Marketplace Safety Playbook,” *Consumer Reports*, February 19, 2026, <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Digital-Marketplace-Platform-Safety-Playbook.pdf>; “Digital Marketplace Accountability Framework,” *Consumer Reports*, February 19, 2026, <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Digital-Marketplace-Platform-Safety-Framework.pdf>.

¹² Lauren Kirchner, “Amazon, Target, and Walmart Announce They Will Stop Selling Water Beads Marketed for Children,” *Consumer Reports*, December 12, 2023, updated January 8, 2024, www.consumerreports.org/babies-kids/toys/amazon-to-stop-selling-water-bead-toys-a2333261526/.

¹³ Drop-side cribs were effectively banned in 2011 when a new mandatory CPSC safety standard for cribs took effect; padded crib bumpers and infant inclined sleep products were banned in 2022 by the Safe Sleep for Babies Act of 2021; and infant in-bed sleep products were effectively banned in 2022 when a new mandatory CPSC safety standard for infant sleep products took effect.

¹⁴ CR never posted the listing but wanted to see how the platform’s system would react when filling out the listing form.

¹⁵ For the recalled product listing, CR’s protocols required that evaluators only complete the product listing form and not submit it.