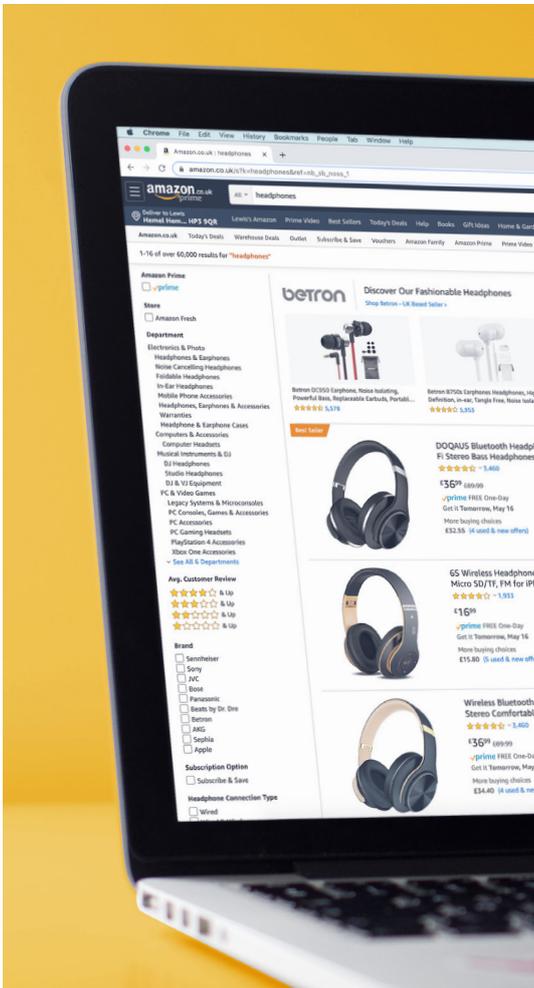




The Global Language of Business

Amazon Seller Central guide 2020

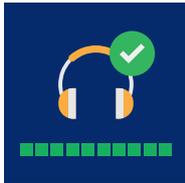
Checklist for optimising listings



The first steps to selling on Amazon

So, you have a great product, and you're ready to list it on Amazon. But are you using best practice to optimise your listings and give your products the best chance of being seen by shoppers?

At GS1 UK, our marketplaces team have compiled a checklist to help you get the basics right when listing your products for the first time.



Step 1: Assigning ASINs

Each product listed on Amazon is assigned a unique code, known as the Amazon Standard Identification Number (ASIN). An ASIN is a 10-character alphanumeric identifier used by Amazon and its partners to log and track products within the organisation's ecosystem.

Amazon generates a new ASIN for every new product listing, and nothing can be sold across the platform without one.



Step 2: Complete product attributes

Once you have been assigned an ASIN, the first port of call in the listing process is to categorise your product. If your product isn't categorised correctly, it will be removed from any customer-facing pages, so take care when doing this.

Depending on the category you're listing in, some of the information will be mandatory - such as product name, brand, colour, size and department. You can also list further details, which include additional product attributes, such as the manufacturer's model name, weight and dimensions.

The most important attribute you'll need to enter under "vital information" is the product identifier - your GS1 Global Trade Item Number (GTIN). Sometimes this will be referred to as an EAN or a UPC, but GTIN is the globally recognised term for product identifiers. Although Amazon terminology is slightly different:

UPC = 12 digits | EAN = 13 digits | GTIN = 14 digits

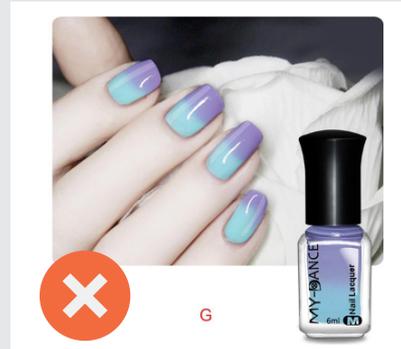
You need to select EAN unless you are loading cases of items with a GTIN-14. In this case, you would select "GTIN" instead.

The screenshot shows a portion of the Amazon listing form. Fields include Package Quantity (1), Size (Extra Small), Size Map (X-Small), Color (Black), Color Map (Black), and Department (womens). The Product ID field is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow. A dropdown menu is open for the Product ID field, showing options: Select, ASIN, EAN, GCID, GTIN, and UPC. A note below the field states: "Product ID: To list your products you require a unique identifier for your product such as UPC, EAN, or GTIN. You can request exemptions to list products that do not have standard product IDs for certain categories." Buttons for "Cancel", "Save and finish", and "Advanced View" are visible at the bottom.



Step 3: Add images to your listing

Amazon allows you to add up to nine images for each product, which should feature against white backgrounds. In some categories – like shoes, handbags and clothing – Amazon has style guides that need to be followed.



Step 4: Register your brand

The Amazon Brand Registry is a way for you to confirm that you are the registered brand owner for a particular product – protecting your intellectual property and reassuring potential customers of authenticity. You can find out more about the programme and register here: brand-services.amazon.co.uk



Step 5: Make sure you include keywords

A Harvard Business Review survey showed that 56 per cent of respondents believed relevant language to be more important than price! So, getting your keywords right is very important.

Keywords can be taken from the product title, details and parts of your product description – it's essential to put yourselves in the shoes of the customer and think about all the information you might need when conducting a search. Be sure to use words that customers might use to describe your brand rather than words you want them to use! Have a look at reviews to see what words they are using.

For beginners, you can download a search-term report that acts as great starting point to understand which terms your customers are searching for.



Elevating your listing

Once you have got your basic product listings right, you should start to think about increasing their visibility further, by tapping into Prime and preferred delivery options.

Take a look at some of the tips below that you can apply to your product listings to help improve their visibility and chances of conversion.



Step 1: Become a Prime seller

Amazon Prime is a membership scheme that gives subscribers unlimited and free one-day delivery, along with a host of other benefits. It's seen a membership growth of more than 50 per cent over the past 12 months.

Prime members spend up to four-times more than non-prime members (£1,125 per annum), and convert 74 per cent of the time compared to 13 per cent for regular Amazon customers.

To become a Prime seller, you must sign up for Fulfilled by Amazon (FBA).

What are the logistics options involved?

1. Fulfilled by Amazon (FBA) is a full-spectrum solution that sees your products managed from one of Amazon's 21 UK-based fulfilment centres. There, Amazon staff will pick, pack, and deliver items on your behalf, as well as provide customer service and aftercare, such as dealing with returns.



2. Seller Fulfilled Prime (SFP) allows you to store your inventory in your own warehouse, so there is no need to split stock. To qualify for SFP, you need to have an Amazon Professional seller account.

SFP makes all your products prime eligible, and you can use any of Amazon's three approved postal carriers – Royal Mail, DPD and Amazon Shipping – to deliver your products to UK customers with a one-day turnaround.

The only caveat with this service is that you must ensure your product is picked, packed and ready for collection on time.



Step 2: Promote your products using the tools available on Seller Central

The “Today’s Deals” page is the most viewed page on Amazon. You can get in on the action by offering two types of promotional activity:

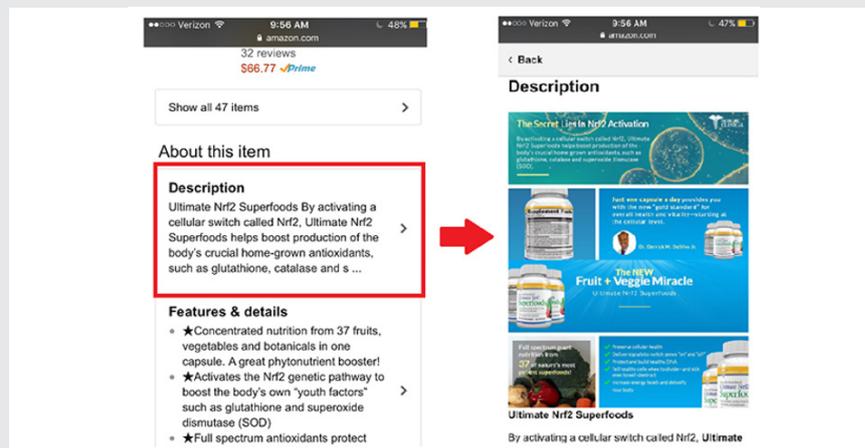


1. **Vouchers/coupons** – There is no minimum requirement for starred reviews to use this discount. It can be applied as a percentage-of, or money-off, discount, and can be targeted, e.g. for Amazon students, in Seller Central. The offer will appear at the bottom of a page (unlike the deal of the day).
2. **Lightning deals** – Lightning deals are flash sales where a product is featured for several hours on the Amazon Deals page. To access lightning deals, you must have an overall rating of at least three stars and offer a minimum of a 15 per cent discount. As with vouchers, you can set up these deals via Seller Central, where you will need to pay a £25 fee. Amazon will recommend the best products to use for these deals, and will show them throughout the catalogue page.



Step 3: Use the A+ tool

With the A+ tool, you can modify product-description fields and add in customised visual elements. You can describe your product features by including a unique brand story, enhanced imagery and text placements.



To activate A+, you need to be an Amazon Professional seller and an approved-brand owner with the Amazon Brand Registry process.

Benefits of the A+ route include:

- Improved organic traffic
- A 5 per cent uptick in sales
- Reduced rates of returns and poor reviews



Step 4: Start advertising your products



1. Start to use manual keyword campaigns and test, monitor and adjust your campaigns regularly to use a mix of exact keywords, broader phrases and negative keywords.
2. Take out a Sponsored Brand ad, which is run on a pay-per-click model. Sponsored Brands will be shown at the very top of the page, above the main search results. You can feature your brand's logo, a custom headline and up to three of your products.



Step 5: Benefit from the Early Reviewer Programme



The Early Reviewer Programme encourages customers who have already purchased a product to share their authentic experience about that product, regardless of whether it is a one-star or five-star review. Amazon shoppers depend on reviews to learn more about products, and this programme helps to acquire early reviews on products that have few or no reviews, helping shoppers to make smarter buying decisions.

Customers who have purchased a product and participate in the Early Reviewer Programme, may be asked to write a review, and those customers who submit a review within the offer period will receive small reward (such as a £1-£5 Amazon.co.uk Gift Card) for helping future shoppers.

Advanced promotional techniques to maximise your sales

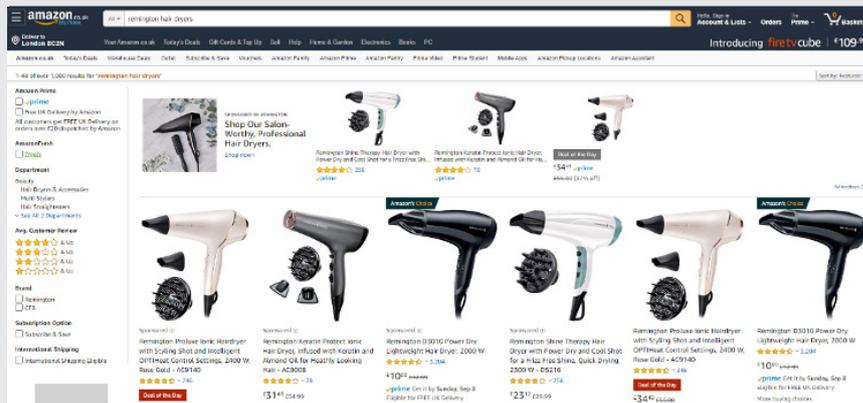
Now you're fully up and running, it is time to start promoting your products to a wider audience. Amazon has a range of tools that will boost awareness of your products, both nationally and internationally. You should also start thinking about utilising event-specific promotions and make sure you have enough stock available for when your store traffic naturally increases.



Step 1: Tap into Deal of the Day

The Deal of the Day is a one-day-only promotion that offers a minimum discount of 20 per cent and is only open to products with an overall rating of at least four stars.

Always placed at the top of the page, Deal of the Day offers only apply to items sold by Amazon or participating third-party sellers on the website. It is exclusive to chosen sellers or brands.



Step 2: Create your own Amazon store

An Amazon Store is like a mini website for your brand within the Amazon platform. You must be an Amazon Professional seller and Amazon Brand registered to activate this option, which Amazon advertises as the ability to create an “immersive virtual shopping experience.”

When you set up your Amazon Store, you can:

- Determine the number of pages you use
- Embed text, videos, images, dynamic content and social media
- Design a look and feel that reinforces your brand and messaging
- Track metrics on sales and conversions through an Amazon-provided tag added to the storefront's URL





Step 3: Use brand display and sponsored product ads



While creating a store is a great branding tool, it can be fairly hard to navigate directly to your storefront. This is where Brand Display ads and Sponsored Product ads come in. They are the best way to drive traffic to your store.

1. **Create a campaign:** To create a Sponsored Products campaign, pick the products you want to advertise, set a budget of your choice, and choose your campaign duration. We recommend a daily budget of £10 and running your campaign without an end date – that way, shoppers can discover your products any time they shop on Amazon.

Then, choose between automatic or manual targeting to be able to bid on keywords and products. The automatic option is the easiest way to get started.

2. **Shoppers see your ads:** Sponsored Products ads are eligible to launch immediately, while Sponsored Brands ads must undergo moderation review.

Based on relevance and bid, ads are shown to customers in high-visibility spots like page one of search results and product detail pages. When shoppers click on your ad, they are taken to your product detail page. Your Sponsored Brands ads will take shoppers to a custom landing page.

3. **Measure Success:** Use reports to see for yourself the return you get for each pound spent. These insights will help you measure performance and optimise your ad spend.



Step 4: Exploit the peak selling periods



Be prepared for the busiest and most demanding days in the online shopping calendar.

Black Friday, Cyber Monday and Prime Day are the biggest shopping events in the Amazon calendar. Ensure all your product data is complete – especially item specifics. Customers will usually know the products they are looking for and will use on-site filters to narrow down what they want. But don't forget the less mainstream festivals and holidays too as there is a rising demand for products and gifts during these periods. Set up a promotional calendar that marks out all the dates to make sure you can prepare and get deals and stock in place in time.



Step 5: Use the Build International Listings (BIL) tool to sell cross border



The BIL tool helps you to manage offers in one source marketplace and multiply them out across other target marketplaces in the same region. This allows you to run an operation from the UK that can project into continental Europe.

There are several benefits to this approach, such as:

- Storing products in a UK-based FBA fulfilment centre to be shipped internationally
- Amazon offers a translation service to break down any barriers that miscommunication may cause - this does not account for SEO, though
- The tool will recalculate the prices of your offer in target marketplaces whenever you update a price rule



Step 6: Take on Pan-European FBA



Amazon promote this service as the best way to grow your sales in Europe, with fast and round-the-clock access to customers across the continent.

To qualify for this package, you must be listed across all of Amazon's primary EU sites - Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the UK.

You can select the inbound country, and Amazon will determine how your products are distributed. You'll be advised that you have to have enough stock for at least four weeks to cover this.

Please note: This may affect your VAT obligations though if you have stock held in other countries, so make sure to check if you are liable. Our friends at Simply VAT and Avalara can help you with this.

There are three different models Amazon use as part of their fulfilment infrastructure:

1. **Fulfilment by Amazon**, better know as FBA, is a solution that helps you reach more customers with benefits like fast Prime delivery and easier selling across Europe. All you have to do is send Amazon your products and they take care of storage, delivery to end customers, customer service and returns handling.
2. **Pan-European FBA** makes international growth easier. Send your products to an Amazon fulfilment centre in your home marketplace and let Pan-European FBA distribute it throughout Europe, based on anticipated demand. This solution gets your inventory closer to millions of EU customers, allowing for faster delivery. Sellers report up to a 30 per cent sales increase after joining Pan-European FBA (based on a 2017 survey of 10,175 sellers, of whom 300 joined Pan-European FBA).
3. **EFN** allows you to ship your products to Amazon fulfilment centres, simplifying inventory management and making you eligible for Prime fast delivery. You only pay local fulfilment fees on domestic orders. This also enables you to deliver to Amazon's other European marketplaces with cross-border fees.

And if B2B is your thing...

Today, traditional B2C e-commerce is worth \$3.2tn worldwide. B2B e-commerce is worth more than double that, at \$6.7tn. According to Amazon, four out of five B2B buyers start their product searches on Amazon or Google.

For that reason, Amazon launched a dedicated B2B marketplace in 2017, with benefits for both sellers and brands tailored specifically to businesses. As of 2019, it was their fastest growing division, with everyone from large corporations and banks, to schools and universities shopping for business supplies across the platform. So, what do you get access to as a B2B seller?

Automatic VAT invoicing



Amazon's new VAT calculation service automatically generates VAT invoices on your behalf for all Amazon orders, thus saving effort on manual invoice creation.

VAT-exclusive price display



The same free service gives you the ability to display EU-wide compliant VAT-exclusive prices to business customers. This can lead to increased sales opportunities.

Business pricing and quantity discounts



Offer exclusive pricing and quantity-based discounts to business customers.

Exclusive business offers



Choose to make products and prices available to business customers only.

Enhanced offer visibility



Offers from eligible sellers on Amazon Business will receive a special badge and benefit from higher sales conversion.

Pay by Invoice



Benefit from new sales opportunities through Pay by Invoice – a key payment option for professional buyers. Here, Amazon removes the buyer default risk involved in selling, by handling credit risk assessments as well as billing and collection activities.

The Amazon B2B platform is currently available in eight countries – France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Spain, the UK and USA.

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