

# 8 Return Shipping Best Practices Your Return Policy Needs

Did you know that online retail sales in Canada grow by 10% each year?<sup>1</sup> E-commerce is a booming industry. In 2020, e-commerce took all retailers by surprise due to COVID-19. But, there is a flip side to the flood of e-commerce orders – the tidal wave of returns.

Here are some sure-fire ways your online business can provide a returns service that's convenient to your shoppers, and to your sales.

## What are the perks of a good e-commerce return policy?

**Avoid missed sales!**

**80%**

of shoppers won't purchase if you have a confusing return policy.<sup>2</sup>



**Improve customer loyalty!**

**96%**

of shoppers would repeat purchase based on an easy returns process.<sup>3</sup>



**More purchasing opportunities!**

**43%**

would happily return a product to a store, instead of mailing.<sup>4</sup>



## How to create many happy returns:

### Avoid confusing T&Cs.

Clearly calling out what can/can't be returned, refund type (full refund, store credit) and any other important information in your terms and conditions, such as a return deadline.



### Make your returns policy easy to find.

Place links in:



- Your website footer
- In your FAQs
- At checkout
- On each product page
- In their cart
- On your website chat window, if applicable

### Offer free returns as an incentive to purchase.

Either as a general policy, or for a special offer.



### Stay in the competition!

**49%** of retailers offer free return shipping.<sup>5</sup>



### Supply a prepaid return shipping label.

Or the option to print a pre-paid return sticker (if you offer free returns).



### Collect feedback.

Such as an email, asking the reason for an item return. Respond personally to reasons such as issues/defects with quality, design or packaging. Use that feedback to reduce future returns – are there common reasons for returns? For example, were there many returns due to unclear descriptions? If so, create clear and comprehensive product descriptions (images, videos, detailed descriptions, etc.) that can prevent that issue from occurring in the future.



### Provide multiple return options.

Returning in-store or via mail are both convenient options.



### More demand for mailed returns.

**42%** of shoppers now mail their returns due to COVID-19.<sup>6</sup>



### Provide return shipping tips and instructions.

Improve your customer experience and reduce the risk of in-transit damage.



### E-commerce = more returns

**>30%** of all online orders are returned as compared to 9% of brick-and-mortar purchases.<sup>6</sup>



### Partner with a trusted delivery provider.



- No handoffs to third parties, providing for consistent and reliable delivery.
- Convenient warehouse locations, so products can be quickly resold (where possible).
- The option to return their delivery via courier and a large network of drop boxes.
- Large network of shipping locations meaning faster refunds for customers.
- Contactless pickups from the customer's homes.

Learn more about improving your returns process in our article.

[Read article](#)

#### Sources

<sup>1</sup>"Canada retail e-commerce sales 2017-2023." Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/289741/canada-retail-e-commerce-sales/>

<sup>2</sup>"UPS Pulse of the Online Shopper." Comscore. March 2015. <https://www.ups.com/media/en/gb/OnlineComScoreWhitepaper.pdf>

<sup>3</sup>"2018 State of Ecommerce Delivery: North America Insights." MetaPack. 2018.

<sup>4</sup>"The State of Returns: What Today's Shoppers Expect." Narvar. 2018. <https://see.narvar.com/rs/249-TEC-877/images/Consumer-Report>Returns-2018-4.3.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>"E-commerce Product Return Rate – Statistics and Trends." Invesp. April 2020. <https://www.invespro.com/blog/e-commerce-product-return-rate-statistics/>

<sup>6</sup>"Has COVID-19 exacerbated online return challenges?" Retail Wire. July 2020. <https://retailwire.com/discussion/has-covid-19-exacerbated-online-return-challenges/>