

# Why You Should Watch Your Watchers

## How To Profitably Use eBay's Watched Items Features As A Buyer And A Seller.

By  
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**eBay Sellers - Are common eBay selling mistakes costing you money?  
Check your eBay knowledge now. This short quiz will help you earn  
more money in your eBay auctions.**

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## **Why You Should Watch Your Watchers**

For some years now eBay has allowed you to watch items. This is done by clicking a link below the item number on the upper right hand corner of every auction.

Watching items is a great way to keep track of items you might want to bid on, or are researching.

Read that again. There are two reasons why someone might watch an auction. Because they are INTERESTED or CURIOUS. I'll explain why this distinction is important in a little while.

While many people use eBay to watch items, very few eBay sellers pay attention to the number of people who watch their items. Even fewer pay attention to the items that are most watched within each eBay category.

Let's talk about eBay categories first.

EBay allows you to see the most watched items in each category within the pulse.

Here's a link to the pulse. Open it in a new window so you can refer to the page while reading the rest of this report.

[eBay Pulse - Dinnerware](#)

The most watched items in the China and Dinnerware category are shown on the bottom of the page.

A lot of people get caught up in making the pulse. This is done by getting lots of people to watch your auction.

## **How To Get High Numbers Of Watchers**

There are three common ways to increase the number of people watching your listing:

1. Tell people to watch your item, and include a link within the description.

2. Send traffic to your listing through the watch item link - this can be done in a newsletter, with posts on discussion boards, or even with cheap Pay-Per Click ads.
3. Promise to add a bonus or other incentive if the numbers of watchers goes beyond a certain point. This is common in mystery type auctions, and is usually used in conjunction with the first two methods.

Because the first two methods involve the watch item link I'll explain it.

You can get the link by right clicking on the watch this item link in an auction and selecting copy link location.

The link looks like this:

**`http://cgi1.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?MakeTrack&item=12345678901  
&ssPageName=VIP:watchlink:top:us`**

You would use the above link in a newsletter or on a discussion board. For online uses - including within your auction itself, it's the same link, but with a bit of html around it.

Here's the web version of the link:

**`<a href="http://cgi1.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?MakeTrack&item=12345678901  
&ssPageName=VIP:watchlink:top:us">Click Here To Watch This Auction</a>`**

If you want to add a link within an auction, you'll need to launch the auction, then edit your auction description before there are any bids. You cannot change your description after there are bids, you can only add to it.

When you revise your auction, make sure you paste the html code for the link into the HTML view tab. If you paste it into the design view it won't work correctly.

If you are selling information products in the Everything Else: Information Products category, getting a high ranking on the pulse may help you sell more copies of your report. For the majority of us selling antiques and collectibles on eBay, being on the pulse won't increase bid amounts because few people shop with the pulse.

To make the pulse within most categories you need at least 35-40 watchers. For the Everything Else: Information Products category you need at least 400 watchers, and sometimes you'll more than 700.

From my experience, getting into the pulse is not worth the time or effort unless you are selling information products, but there are some other uses for eBay's watched items lists and the pulse.

## **Other Uses For The Pulse Lists**

If you look at the dinnerware page of the pulse again, there are two lists in the middle Largest Stores which means nothing, and Popular Searches.

Lets look at the popular searches.

Here's the list on the page as I'm writing this. What you see might be different, but should contain similar words.

1. vintage
2. dinnerware
3. noritake
4. fiesta
5. homer laughlin
6. limoges
7. set
8. royal albert
9. wedgewood
10. blue willow

I'll assume you know nothing about old dishes, and explain what the words mean.

Words number 1 VINTAGE, 2 DINNERWARE, and 7 SET are generic terms. The other words in the list are manufacturers or patterns.

Note the word wedgewood is spelled wrong. The correct spelling is Wedgwood. This shows us that people search more often for the wrong spelling than the correct one because the correct spelling didn't make the list.

This list helps us build our titles.

For example, I have a bunch of Fiestaware I will be selling in the near future. Based on the above list I want to use the words VINTAGE FIESTA DINNERWARE, and possibly the words HOMER LAUGHLIN. (Laughlin is the maker of Fiestaware.)

There is another way to check these words. We can do a search for Fiesta on eBay. Here's a link:

[Fiesta Ware on eBay](#)

On the search page we can see a list of Related Searches under the search box on the left.

Here's the list:

**fiestaware, homer laughlin, fiestawear, vintage, fiesta**

Note - the list is in order by popularity with the most searched terms on the left.

This new list shows the words we already know and lets us know people also search for Fiestaware more commonly than Fiesta. They even search more often for the misspelled "Fiestawear" than for the single word Fiesta.

This means I should use Fiestaware rather than fiesta in my titles. I'm going to run a lot of auctions, so I'll rotate the three versions -**fiestaware, fiestawear, fiesta** in my titles and sprinkle the words vintage, dinnerware, set and homer Laughlin into my titles. Then I'll put links to my other auctions inside my descriptions so I can get higher visibility.

I'll also take two or three of the more desirable pieces and run them as featured plus auctions so I get even more visitors.

Featured Plus is a 20 dollar option that puts your auctions at the top of the search results page. One of the best uses for the Featured Plus option is to drive traffic from interesting or desirable items into more common items.

By knowing the most common searches I can get more people to look at my auctions, and, hopefully, higher bids.

## **Other Uses For The Number Of Watchers**

Now lets look at ways to use the number of watchers to help us get higher amounts in our auctions.

An easy test if we have multiple items is to run one auction in different categories and see which results in more watchers. That way we can select the best

categories. We also want to pay attention to the prices realized because we are after dollars not watchers.

One note about this, you can run up to 10 auctions for the same item at a time. This means if you find categories that work, you might want to run your auction in more than one category.

**Side note:** if you have many of the same item a way to get great results is to run an auction for one item, and then send second chance offers to other bidders who bid more than your minimum selling price.

Using second chance offers lowers your eBay fees and usually results in higher prices because the items seem scarcer.

Now back to ways to use watchers to do better on eBay.

Another way I use the number of watchers is to decide whether to let an auction end, or cancel it before it ends. You can cancel an auction and all bids in one click up to 12 hours before it ends. In the last 12 hours you cannot cancel bids if you end your auction.

For example I had an auction running when I wrote this with 21 watchers. It's currently at \$103, and I expect it to end tomorrow at \$225-275. With that number of watchers I can be confident the auction will move up. (The item sold for \$345!)

I have another auction ending tomorrow with no watchers and no bids. I expected that auction to end in the \$20-25 range. Based on the number of watchers I can be confident it won't reach my expected selling price. So I'll cancel the auction rather than risking only one bidder buying it for 99 cents.

In the second auction, I can relist the item later, or I can just sell the item at a local show.

I rarely do reserve price auctions. By tracking the number of people watching my auctions, I can save money on listing fees and insure I get a reasonable amount for my items.

When I cancel items I also take into account the price. I want my items to reach at least 40% of the expected selling price with 24 hours left. If they aren't at 40% or don't have at least 25 people watching them, I end the auction.

That's a few ways knowing the number of auction watchers can help your selling.

## **A Simple Way To Use The Pulse As A Buyer**

Remember the list of most watched items in a category? That list shows us the items people are either CURIOUS about or INTERESTED in.

If others are interested, you might also be interested.

Looking at the watched items in different categories can help you spot items you want. These most watched items rarely sell cheap, but if you're a collector, you can find items for your collection.

Sometimes the stuff people watch makes no sense. That's why I separate them into curious and interested groups.

I've seen absolute garbage end up on the most watched items lists. This doesn't mean people want to buy it, just that they are curious if anyone else will buy it.

Here's a page with a bunch of different categories taken from the pulse.

### **[Most Watched Toys In Different Categories](#)**

I have pages set up like the one above so I can just scroll down the page and quickly see the most watched items in my favorite categories. It's a great way to spot items that have been listed in the wrong category.

I put together a page that will help you quickly make most watched lists like the toys example I linked to above.

### **[Make Your Own eBay Most Watched Page](#)**

Terry

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## **About Terry Gibbs**

Terry Gibbs has been buying and selling collectible trains and toys since he was in grade school. Terry put together IWantCollectibles.com so he can share the collectible finding strategies developed over the past 30 years with others.

Since 1998, Terry Gibbs has been teaching people how to buy and sell antiques and collectibles. He has taught over 30,000 people how to sell on eBay, and personally run over 17,000 eBay auctions.

Terry's weekly newsletter covers Antiques, Collectibles and eBay related topics. You can sign up for the newsletter from any page on the IWantCollectibles site.

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