

Go Swap Auctions Buyer's Guide

This document explains how bidding and buying items on Go Swap Auctions works. After reading through this tutorial, you should be familiar with searching for items and placing bids on auctions. You will also learn what happens once an auction ends and what the next steps will be.

What is an Auction?

An auction is an item that is sold to the highest bidder within a fixed amount of time. A bid placed on an auction site is a commitment to purchase an item for the bid amount entered. Users may place multiple bids on a single auction item and they may place a number of different bids on any number of different auctions.

Each auction on the site runs for a fixed length of time. After the auction ends, the highest bidder is said to have “won the auction” and that person is obligated to buy the item for the ending price shown on the auction. Both the buyer and the seller are notified at the close of the auction and given instructions on how to complete the transaction.

Completing the transaction usually involves the buyer sending payment to the seller first. Once the seller receives payment, they would ship the item to the winning bidder. After receiving the item, the transaction is complete.

Searching for Items

There are two ways to locate items on the Go Swap Auctions site. You may either browse the auction categories shown on the home page, or you may enter search terms in the search box shown on the upper-right part of the web page. You will notice that the search box appears on every page on the website. The list of categories for browsing is shown on the home page, which you may access by clicking on **Categories** in the menu bar or by clicking on the **Go Swap Auctions** logo.

Searching by Categories

Searching by category allows you to view all items posted for a specific auction category. From the home page, you can see an overview of all available categories along with a count of the number of auctions currently running in that category. Clicking on a category will display all auctions found under the category.

You will notice that there are two different levels of categories. The top-level categories represent the most general category while the lower-level categories represent the most specific. Clicking on one of these categories, will bring up a listing of all auctions posted under the category.

When you click on a top-level category, the listing displayed shows all auction items that are in all of the lower-level categories underneath it. This is a very useful tool. However, you need to realize that when you browse listings this way, the auction items will all be mixed together (and not separated by

category).

The screenshot shows the Go Swap Auctions website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Categories, Search, Faq, Sell, Blog, and Account. On the right side of this bar are links for Login and Register. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for Home Page, About Us, FAQs, Recent Listings, Latest News, and Surveys. A search box with the placeholder text "[Enter Keywords]" and a "Find Auctions" button is located on the right side of this bar. The main heading is "Go Swap Auctions" in large, colorful letters (Go in green, Swap in blue, Auctions in red). Below the heading is the tagline "Buy and Sell at Auction With No Fees". The page displays a grid of category listings, each with an icon, a category name in bold, and a count in parentheses. The categories and their counts are: Books, Music and Movies (16); Housewares (322); Toys and Games (0); Clothing (325); Tools (121); Watches & Jewelry (12); Sporting Goods (75); Computers (2); and Collectables (133). Each category listing includes a list of sub-categories with their respective counts.

Category	Count
Books, Music and Movies	(16)
Compact Discs	(0)
DVDs	(1)
Hardcover Books	(1)
Musical Instruments	(4)
Paperback Books	(10)
Video Tapes	(0)
Housewares	(322)
Appliances	(0)
Cookware	(109)
Clocks	(14)
Dishes and Utensils	(57)
Other	(55)
Luggage	(87)
Toys and Games	(0)
Board Games	(0)
Older Children	(0)
Young Children	(0)
Clothing	(325)
Accessories	(224)
Children's Clothing	(0)
Men's Clothing	(42)
Women's Clothing	(59)
Tools	(121)
Hand Tools	(121)
Power Tools	(0)
Watches & Jewelry	(12)
Earrings	(0)
Ladies Watches	(1)
Mens Watches	(1)
Necklaces	(4)
Rings	(1)
Other	(5)
Sporting Goods	(75)
Apparel	(5)
Bicycles	(0)
Exercise Equipment	(3)
Computers	(2)
Macintosh Components	(0)
Macintosh Systems	(0)
PC Components	(1)
PC Systems	(0)
Software & Media	(1)
Collectables	(133)
Coins and Money	(1)
Sports Cards	(1)
Stamps and Postcards	(0)
Trading Cards (Non-Sports)	(0)

Illustration 1: List of categories shown on the Go Swap Auctions home page

As you can in illustration #1 above, all of the available categories are displayed. The top-level categories are shown in bold with the more specific categories underneath. The number after the category indicates the total number of auctions running in that category. So for the **Tools** category (located in the center of the screen), there are 121 auctions currently running.

Searching by Keyword

To perform a simple search by keywords, simply enter the keywords in the text box shown on the upper-right part of the screen and click the **Find Auctions** button. The search results shown will be in a similar format as seen when browsing by category. See the section *Auction Listing Format* for more information.

Go Swap Auctions

Searching for: **cat**

Search Results 1 - 5 of 5 Shown

Title	Bids	Current	Buy Now	Time Left
11oz Mug with Picture of Cat or Dog	0	\$4.00	\$25.95	6 hours
MCAD MCSD - Developing Web Applications	0	\$0.10	\$30.00	2 days
Farberware® Oval Divided Cat Bowl	0	\$4.77	\$27.95	3 days
Farberware® Small Cat Bowl	0	\$2.20	\$19.95	6 days
Farberware® Cat Place Mat	0	\$1.80	\$18.95	6 days

Illustration 2: An example of the search results using the simple keyword search

After performing a search, you will see auction listings containing your search results. If your search results in many items found, you may need to use the page navigation to sort through the pages of results. Below is shown an example of what the simple keyword search results look like on Go Swap Auctions.

Search Using Advanced Search

An advanced search allows you to have more control over how you search for auction items on the site. The advanced search form is accessed by clicking on **Search** in the main menu at the top of the screen. This brings up the advanced search form shown in illustration #3. From this form the user may define specific criteria which are used to locate auction items on the site.

The search results will look almost identical to all other auction listings on the site. These listing may contain navigation to allow you to jump from page-to-page of the search results. Clicking on an auction item will bring up the details and allow you to place a bid.

Search Ads

Enter the advanced search criteria below and then click *Search Ads* to perform your search.

Search Keywords

Search in Both Title and Description?

Exclude Keywords

Exclude in Both Title and Description?

Categories
-- Choose One --

Featured Items Only?
 Completed Items Only?

Minimum Price **Maximum Price**

Seller Name

Illustration 3: The Search form which performs an advanced search for auction items

As you can see from the search form, you can enter **Search Keywords** just as you would with the simple search. You can specify whether or not you want to search only the title, or both the title and the description. The **Exclude Keywords** field allows you to specify keywords should not be contained in either the title or the description.

The **Categories** selection allows you to choose one or more categories to search through. Select a category you want to include from the drop-list and click on the **Add** button to add a category to your list. You may add as many categories as you like. If you would like to search every category on the site, you should just leave this blank and not add any categories.

The **Featured Items Only** checkbox allows you to indicate that you only want to search through featured items. Likewise, the **Completed Items Only** checkbox means you only want to search auctions that have already closed.

The **Minimum Price** and **Maximum Price** allow you to set limits on the current or starting bid for search results. You may enter just one value, or you may enter both to specify a range of prices for your search. Additionally, the **Seller Name** allows you to search for auctions from a particular seller.

Auction Listings

Auction listings are displayed when browsing categories, performing a simple keyword search, or when using the advanced auction search functionality. This section will explain the layout of the auction listings and help you to navigate multiple pages of listings.

Shown below is the category listing for Cookware. This is the second page out of four pages of auction listings in this category.

Categories / Search / Faq / Sell / Blog / Account Login / Register

Home Page About Us FAQs Recent Listings Latest News Surveys [Enter Keywords] Find Auctions

Go Swap Auctions

Housewares (322) → Cookware (110)

Items 31 - 60 of 110 Shown

<< Previous Page: 2 of 4 Next >>

Title	Bids	Current	Buy Now	Time Left
8pc Surgical Stainless Steel Cookware Set	0	\$35.00	\$157.95	2 days
Precise Heat™ 3.5qt Oil Core Skillet with Hi	0	\$109.90	\$729.99	2 days
Chef's Secret® 8pc Steak Knife Set	0	\$2.42	\$19.95	2 days
6pc Surgical Stainless Steel Cookware Set	0	\$25.00	\$112.95	2 days
Slitzer™ 16pc Barbeque Tool Set with Long La	0	\$7.50	\$36.95	2 days
Colours™ by Maxam® Rectangle Bakeware	0	\$5.06	\$29.95	2 days
28pc 12-Element Stainless Steel Cookware Set	0	\$86.50	\$1,100.00	2 days
Slitzer™ 2pc Knife Set	0	\$5.29	\$28.95	2 days
Precise Heat™ Surgical Stainless Steel 12-El	0	\$44.90	\$299.95	2 days
Maxam® 10pc Cutlery Set	0	\$5.79	\$30.95	2 days
Chef Secret® 2.4qt Stainless Steel Tea Kettle	0	\$6.90	\$33.95	2 days
Precise Heat™ 12-Element Low Pressure, Press	0	\$82.59	\$499.00	2 days
Maxam® Knife Set with Cutting Board	0	\$5.50	\$29.95	2 days
Slitzer™ 16pc Cutlery Set in Wood Block	0	\$26.63	\$96.95	2 days

Illustration 4: Auction listings from the Cookware category of Go Swap Auctions

The auction listings are displayed in a table format. The first column contains the auction **Title** and the second column contains the number of **Bids** received on the auction. The **Current** column contains the current bid on the auction. If no bids have been received on an auction, this amount represents the *starting bid* for the auction. When at least one bid has been received, this amount represents the *current bid* for the auction. See the *How Bidding Works* section for more information.

The **Buy Now** column displays the price that a seller is willing to stop the auction and sell the item right now. This is a way for a buyer to purchase an item immediately without waiting for the auction to end. The **Time Left** column lets the buyer know how much time is left until the fixed auction period ends.

You should note the total number of auction items in the listing is displayed at the top as **Items 31 – 60**

of 100 Shown. Immediately below this is the page navigation. There are four pages of listings in this category as you can tell by the note which reads **Page 2 of 4**. The number 2 in this heading is actually a drop-down list which allows you to choose a page to navigate to directly. You may also navigate the pages one page at a time by clicking on the **Next** and **Previous** buttons.

Since auctions on the site are constantly changing (new auctions starting while other auctions are ending), you may notice the total number of auctions in the listings change as you navigate. This is perfectly normal.

The auction listings for browsing categories, performing a simple keyword search, or running an advanced search look exactly like the screenshot shown in illustration #4. When you click on a line in the table, you will see the details for the auction. On the auction details page is a button which will allow you to return to the listings so you can continue browsing.

Auction Details

When you click on a line from the auction listings, you will see the details for the auction item that will look similar to the screenshot shown below.

The screenshot shows the Go Swap Auctions website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Categories, Search, Faq, Sell, Blog, Account, Login, and Register. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for Home Page, About Us, FAQs, Recent Listings, Latest News, and Surveys, along with a search input field and a 'Find Auctions' button. The main heading is 'Go Swap Auctions' in large, colorful letters. Below the heading, the breadcrumb trail reads 'Housewares (645) → Luggage (87)'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'AUCTION SUMMARY' and contains the following information: Seller: kencyber (0), Shipping: \$11.80, End Date: Jan 19, 2010, End Time: 4:21pm PST, Time Left: 19 hrs. 50 min., Total Bids: 0 (History), Reserve: NONE, High Bidder: NONE, Opening Bid: \$11.90, Buy it Now: \$53.95 (with a 'Buy' button), and Your Bid: (with an input field and a 'Bid' button). The right column is titled 'Embassy™ 20" Brown Faux Leather Trolley' and contains a description: 'Features roomy interior compartment with zippered closure, multiple exterior pockets, padded handles, and a removable, adjustable shoulder strap. Measures 20" x 11-1/2" x 9-1/2".' Below the description is a section titled 'Payment & Shipping Information' which is split into two columns: 'Payment Methods Accepted' (listing American Express, Discover, Master Card, Personal Check, and Visa) and 'Shipment Options Available' (listing USPS Priority). At the bottom of the right column is a button labeled '<-- Back to Search Results'.

Illustration 5: Auction details shown when clicking an item from the search results

What you should notice about the auction listings first is that the most important properties for the auction are shown in the **Auction Summary** box on the left. Here is a quick rundown of the properties and what they mean:

- **Seller** – The member who put the item up for auction
- **Shipping** – A fixed rate shipping cost
- **End Date** – Date when the auction ends (winning bidder decided)
- **End Time** – Time when the auction ends
- **Time Left** – Amount of time remaining until the auction ends
- **Total Bids** – The total number of bids placed on the auction. Clicking on the **History** link will display a summary of all bidding action on the item.
- **Reserve** – Indicates whether the reserve price for the auction has been met or not met. See the section *How Bidding Works* for more information.
- **High Bidder** – The username of the member who currently holds the high bid (or NONE if no bids have been made yet).
- **Opening Bid** – The amount of the starting bid (chosen by the seller when the auction starts)
- **Buy it Now** – A fixed price amount at which the seller is willing to end the auction and sell the item outright.
- **Your Bid** – This is where you enter a bid you would like to place on the auction.

How Bidding Works

This section explains how bidding works on the site. In a nutshell, the way that it works is that the person who bids the highest during the fixed auction period wins the item at the auction close. The one exception to this rule is when someone chooses to buy an item outright by using the **Buy it Now** feature.

The Opening Bid

When a seller posts an auction item for sale on Go Swap Auctions, they specify an opening bid. This is the minimum bid amount that is necessary to start bidding on the item. Once a bidder places a bid that matches or exceeds this amount, the current bid for the auction will be set to this opening bid amount. As long as there is no **Reserve Price** set on the auction, the auction item will sale regardless of what happens during the life of the auction.

Bid Increments

All bids placed through Go Swap Auctions must conform to our bid increment system. This means, that when a person is outbid on an auction, the new high bidder must bid at least one bid increment above the current bid.

Without bid increments, you could see an auction increase by one cent at a time. This creates a very inefficient bidding system and frustrates buyers who would only be outbid by one cent.

The table below shows how the bid increment changes based on the current bid on an auction:

<i>Current Bid (Minimum)</i>	<i>Current Bid (Maximum)</i>	<i>Bid Increment</i>
\$0.00	\$0.99	\$0.01
\$1.00	\$9.99	\$0.10
\$10.00	\$99.99	\$0.25
\$100.00	\$999.99	\$1.00
\$1,000.00	\$9,999.99	\$10.00
\$10,000.00	MAXIMUM	\$100.00

So to give an example: If the current bid is \$5.73, any person who wishes to do so must bid an amount that is at least equal to the current bid plus the bid increment for \$5.73 according to the table shown above:

Current Bid: \$5.73
Bid Increment: \$0.10
Minimum Valid Bid = \$5.73 + \$0.10 = \$5.83

So if the current bid is \$5.73, then the next bidder must bid a minimum of \$5.83 on the auction. Any bid less than this will be rejected by the auction system. Let's look at another example:

Current Bid: \$163.56
Bid Increment: \$1.00
Minimum Valid Bid = \$163.56 + \$1.00 = \$164.56

The system will calculate the minimum required amount that a bidder must bid in order for a bid to be valid on an auction. Even though a bid is valid, it doesn't mean that the bid will succeed in capturing the highest bid, this is because of our bidding by proxy system, otherwise known as:

Maximum Bids

All bids on the website use bidding by proxy. This means that a bidder tells the computer the maximum amount they are willing to bid on a particular auction in order to win. An automated bidding system will place bids on your behalf up to (but not exceeding) the maximum bid you specify. This ensures that the bidder wins the auction for the minimum amount required.

This system is easiest to understand by showing an example:

Current Bid: \$29.36
Bid Increment: \$0.25
Next Bid Placed: \$36.57
New Current Bid: \$36.83 (Bid Unsuccessful)

This is a scenario that occurs quite frequently. The first bidder has a maximum bid that was higher than the new bid submitted. This maximum bid is not visible to anyone and is only known by the original bidder. It could be any amount greater or equal to \$36.83. For purposes of this demonstration, let's just

say that it was \$43.13. So maybe our fearless bidder makes one more bid:

```
Current Bid: $36.83
Bid Increment: $0.25
Next Bid Placed: $43.13
New Current Bid: $43.13 (Bid Unsuccessful)
```

In this scenario, the next bidder put in a bid that exactly matched the current bidder's maximum bid. Because the first bidder put in their bid first, they still remain the winning bidder. The current bid will never exceed the maximum bid amount entered (by either the current bidder or the new bidder).

Reserve Price

A reserve price is a fixed amount that a seller defines which represents the minimum acceptable bid the seller is willing to accept in order for an item to sell at auction. In other words, the seller wants to allow lower bids to see how much interest there is in their auction without being obligated to sell the auction should the high bid not meet the reserve price. This is best illustrated by an example.

```
Opening Bid : $0.10
Reserve Price: $10.00
Bidder A: Places Bid of $3.67
Current Bid: $0.10 (Reserve Not Met)
Bidder B: Places Bid of $1.48
Current Bid: $1.58 (Reserve Not Met)
Bidder C: Places Bid of $11.50
Current Bid: $10.00 (Reserve Met)
```

Again we see how the maximum bid works. Bidder B tried to capture the high bid, but was outbid by the automated (proxy) bidding system which raised the current bid to \$1.58. However, once Bidder C came along, something different happened, the current bid jumped well above the previous bidder's maximum bid. It jumped up to the reserve price set by the seller of \$10.00.

This is done automatically by the auction system to make sure that an auction will be sold whenever possible. As a bidder, it is your responsibility to understand how reserve auctions work and understand that every bid comes with an obligation to purchase an auction item up to the the entire amount of your maximum bid.

Summary

This wraps up the tutorial for buyers. We have presented a lot of information about using the auctions that are listed on this site. Some of the aspects of bidding can be a little complicated, but by studying this tutorial, you should be able to get a better grasp of the concepts involved. As with anything, the more experience you gain by using Go Swap Auctions, the better you will understand the auction process.

We are interested in your comments, feedback, and suggestions. We offer the contact us form on the website which allows you to send your feedback to us. Thank you for taking the time to read our buyer's tutorial and happy bidding!