

BE INFORMED ABOUT ...

Making a Complaint

It's Your Right to Complain



Log on to www.ConsumerInformation.ca
and take a tour of the site.

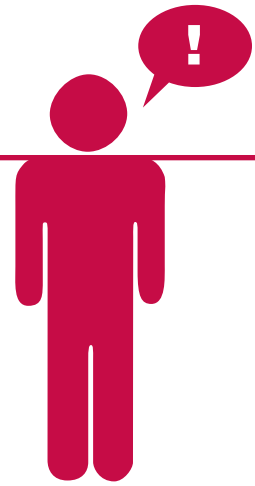
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Complain and be heard!

It can happen to anyone. We spend money on a product or service only to find out we haven't got what we paid for. When this happens, the only thing to do is complain. Knowing how to complain will improve your chances of getting satisfaction.

If you've just bought something that you're not happy with, contact the business right away. You may only need to make a simple request to get the company to fix the problem. Use these tips to help improve your chances of getting the results you want:

- **Don't be afraid to complain.** Good businesses will be pleased to fix any mistake they've made or replace a faulty product. They know that happy customers are good for business.
- **Act quickly.** If you are unhappy with the item you bought, return it as quickly as possible. Do not lose the chance to get your money back.
- **Talk to the right people, in the right order.** Give each person time to deal with your complaint. Start with the sales clerk and then move on to the customer service office or the manager. If this still does not work, contact the head office.
- **Be reasonable.** If the store won't give you your money back, maybe you can exchange the item.
- **Be polite.** You will get better results if you explain the problem and ask for help politely. Never get angry or make threats.
- **Be clear.** Know your facts so that it's clear what you are asking.
- **Keep good records.** Keep a file of important information. Include sales receipts, repair orders, warranties, contracts and any letters you have written.



If your first contact with the business did not get you any results, go to the Complaint Courier at www.ConsumerInformation.ca. The Complaint Courier is an online tool that gives you the resources you need to complain and be heard. It takes you through the complaint process from start to finish. Here's how it works:

Step 1: Questions and Assessment

This step helps the Complaint Courier recognize the kind of complaint you are making. Answer the questions it will ask you about the problem. Once you've answered these questions, the Complaint Courier can help you with the next steps.

Step 2: Your Rights and Responsibilities

The next step is to know your rights and responsibilities. Remember, you have certain rights as a consumer. But you also have responsibilities. You have the right to expect quality products and services at fair prices. You also have the right to complain.

You also have the responsibility to find out a store's policies on things such as refunds and exchanges before you buy. Did you know that stores don't have to accept returns by law? But, most of them realize that having a fair refund and exchange policy helps keep customers happy.

Step 3: Contact the Business

The third step in the complaint process is to contact the business. The Complaint Courier will not be able to help you file a complaint until you have contacted the business. You may have already contacted the business once, but you may need to contact it again to talk with someone higher up. Remember to keep notes on who you talked to, when, and what they told you.

The Complaint Courier provides you with tips and a Dialogue Coach. The Dialogue Coach can help you talk with the business by giving you questions to ask and advice to follow.

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Step 4: Write a Letter


If you are still not happy after you visit the business or call about your complaint, the next step is to write a letter to someone higher up. You can use the Letter Wizard to write the letter for you. Just enter some basic information, and the Letter Wizard will create a letter. You can then print the letter and mail it.

Step 5: File a Complaint

If all else fails, use the Complaint Courier to send a complaint form to the right agency (for example, the Better Business Bureau).

Step 6: Legal Options

If you are still unable to fix the problem using the Complaint Courier, you may want to consider your legal options. Step 6 has information on legal options. However, the Complaint Courier does not give legal advice.

 Hopefully, you'll never have to use Complaint Courier. But if you have a consumer complaint and don't know where to turn, it's available at www.ConsumerInformation.ca.

If you do not have access to the Internet, contact your provincial or territorial consumer affairs office for help when making a complaint.

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