

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a credit card over a payment terminal. The terminal has a keypad with numbers 1-9, 0, *, and #, along with a green 'OK' button and a red 'CANCEL' button. The credit card is partially inserted into the terminal. The background is a wooden surface.

CONSUMER RIGHTS

“Customers don’t expect you to be perfect but they expect you to fix things when they go wrong”

Don Porter (1912 – 1997), American actor

1. Consumer Rights Discussion

1. What are consumer rights? Why do we need them?
2. What rights do you think you should have as a consumer?
3. Do you always read the terms and conditions when making a purchase online?
4. What consumer rights do you have in your country? What rights do you have when you buy a product?
5. What consumer protection do you get from mobile phone providers, airlines and travel agents?
6. Have you ever cancelled a service? Was it easy to do?
7. Which products have you seen that come with warning signs? Would you add warning signs to any other products? Are there any warning signs on products that you think are unnecessary?
8. Are there any products that are banned in your country? Why are they banned? Do you agree with this? What products or materials do you think should be banned to protect consumers?

2. Consumer Rights Vocabulary

- **to take (something) back** (verb) – *to return something to its origin.*
- **to overcharge** (verb) – *to charge too much money for something.*
- **(to) refund** (verb, noun) – *to give the money for a product back to the customer if they are not satisfied.*
- **to recall (a product)** (verb), **product recall** (noun) – *to remove a product from sale if there are concerns over its safety; to request customers return a product due to safety concerns.*
- **proof of purchase** (noun) – *some kind of evidence that confirms a purchase was made.*
- **guarantee / warranty** (noun) – *a promise from a retailer or manufacturer regarding the quality of its product, or a promise to refund, repair or replace the product if faulty.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. I had to _____ my TV _____ to the shop as we couldn't hear any sound.
2. If you lose your receipt, don't worry; you can just show your bank statement with the transaction as _____.
3. Le Creuset are so confident in the durability of their cast-iron pots and other cookware that they offer a lifetime _____.
4. Tasty Bites had to _____ all their cereal after a customer found pieces of glass in one of the boxes.
5. The shop will not give a _____ for any underwear bought whether it has been worn or not.
6. When your flight lands you will find the taxis waiting outside the airport, but make sure they don't _____ you; it's only supposed to cost \$10 to the city centre.

Consumer Rights vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Have you ever taken a product back to the shop? Why was that?
2. Have you ever been overcharged for anything? Is this common in your country?
3. Has your company ever had to refund any customers? If so, why was this?
4. Can you think of any products that had to be recalled? Why were they recalled? Has your company ever had to recall any products?
5. What can you use as proof of purchase?
6. Which products typically come with a guarantee or warranty? Have you ever had to use a guarantee on a product you have bought?

3. Video: What Are Your Consumer Rights?

You are going to watch a video by The Guardian called "A guide to your consumer rights" about consumer rights in the UK.

Watch the video here: <https://youenglishpal.com/blog/business-english-conversation-lesson-plan-consumer-rights/>

Watch the video and after, discuss the following questions:

1. Do you always check the retailer's refund policy before buying something?
2. Do you keep all your receipts in case you need them as proof of purchase?
3. How long do you have to take something back for a refund?
4. What rights do you have when you shop online? Is it different to buying in the shop?
5. What legal action could you take against a retailer you thought had violated your consumer rights?
6. Which government department or agency is responsible for regulating consumer rights? Do you think they do a good job?

4. Consumer Rights Conversation Questions

1. What consumer protection does your company offer? Does your company offer any kind of guarantee for its products or services?
2. What consumer protection laws does your company have to abide by?
3. What kind of business practices do consumers need to be protected from?
4. How do some businesses take advantage of consumers?
5. In what ways do businesses mislead consumers?
6. How could consumer protection laws have a negative impact on businesses?
7. What are the benefits for businesses of consumer protection laws?
8. Do consumer rights violate the principal of economic freedom? Why or why not?

5. Consumer Rights Writing Task

Write a guide for the customers of your company informing them of their consumer rights. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, include the following topics:

- What guarantees your company offers for its products.
- What customers can do if they are unhappy with their product.
- What proof of purchase the customer will need.

6. Consumer Rights Answers

2. Vocabulary

1. take, back
2. proof of purchase
3. guarantee / warranty
4. recall
5. refund
6. overcharge