

BLANK TO LISTING — PACKET N° 2

Found, Not Ghosted

The listing title kit: name every item in the words buyers actually search, so good listings stop being invisible.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- The system: how buyers search, and how titles answer
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Limits checked October 2026 against each marketplace's own help pages. Platforms change their rules — re-check before you rely on a number.

Why titles decide who finds you

A listing nobody finds is a listing nobody buys, and the finding happens through words. A buyer does not browse a marketplace the way they wander a shop. They type what they want into a search box — a mug, a size, a material, an occasion — and the platform shows whatever matches those words. Your photographs can be lovely and your price fair, but if your title does not contain the words the buyer typed, your listing is simply not in the results. It is not punished or hidden. It was never invited. That is why a weak title feels like being invisible: the work is real, the product is real, and the room stays empty. The good news is that titles are the cheapest part of a listing to fix. No new photos, no new stock, no lower price — just clearer words, chosen the way a buyer would choose them. This guide walks through how to build those words, platform by platform, and how to keep old listings from going quiet. Start with the title you are most embarrassed by. Rewrite it as you read. Small, plain changes here do more than any amount of hoping the algorithm notices you.

The anatomy of a findable title

A findable title is built in layers, in this order. First, the item itself: mug, dress, skillet, train set. Name the thing plainly, the way it would be labelled on a shelf. Second, the material or the key specification: stoneware, cast iron, cotton, a 12-ounce size. Third, the detail a buyer would actually type: microwave safe, drainage hole, single stitch, fits a six-year-old. Fourth, the occasion or use, if it helps: Halloween, wedding gift, dorm desk. Read that order again, because it is the whole method. Item, material, typed detail, occasion. Most beginner titles reverse it — they open with feelings and leave the facts for later, or skip the facts entirely. A title like “Beautiful gift for someone special” could describe ten thousand listings and matches none of them well. A title like “Stoneware coffee mug 12 oz speckled blue” describes one thing clearly and meets the buyer who searched for exactly that. You are not writing poetry and you are not writing an advertisement. You are writing a label that a search box can read and a tired person can trust at a glance.

Front-load: the first words carry the listing

Every marketplace cuts titles off somewhere — in search results, on a phone screen, in a crowded grid of near-identical products. What survives the cut is the beginning. So put the words that matter at the front and let the expendable ones fall off the end. The item comes first, always. If your title begins with “beautiful,” “cute,” “nice,” or “amazing,” those are the words a buyer sees — and they say nothing, because every seller believes their own item is beautiful. Adjectives like these are not wicked; they are just expensive. Each one spends a character that a fact could have used. A size is a fact. A material is a fact. A colour is a fact. Facts get searched; feelings do not. This does not mean your title must read like a parts catalogue. It means the warm words, if you keep any, go last, where being cut off costs nothing. Try this test on your own listings: cover everything after the first five words with your thumb. What remains should still tell a stranger exactly what is for sale. If it cannot, the order is wrong — not the item, not the price, just the order.

One title per marketplace

Marketplaces are not interchangeable, and a title that fits one can flop on another. Each platform gives you a different amount of room and attracts slightly different habits, so write the title for the shelf it will sit on. The limits in this packet are the ones to respect: eBay allows 80 characters, Mercari just 40, Poshmark 80, Etsy up to 140 with tags doing much of the searching, and Depop favours short titles with a handful of hashtags. A 40-character Mercari title is an exercise in honesty — item, one spec, done. The same listing on eBay can afford the colour and the occasion as well. Copying one title everywhere wastes the room where you have it and overflows where you do not. Keep a simple habit: save each listing's title per platform in a note, and adjust when you cross-post. Five minutes of tailoring beats one-size-fits-all. The limits table in this kit is your cheat sheet; the platform sections that follow show how the same pumpkin, mug, or dress gets titled four different ways without changing a single fact about the item itself.

Etsy: short titles, hard-working tags

Etsy rewards a different discipline. Your title can run up to 140 characters, but the clearest titles stay short — about fifteen words or fewer — because a person, not just a search box, has to read it and trust it. Rambling keyword strings read as desperate and are hard to scan. On Etsy, the quiet machinery is the tag set: you get 13 tags of up to 20 characters each, and those tags do much of the searching for you. So divide the labour. Let the title say, plainly and once, what the thing is: item, material, the one detail that matters. Then let the tags carry the variations a buyer might type — the occasion, the recipient, the style words, the synonyms you left out of the title. Do not repeat the same phrase in the title and again in three tags; that spends your thirteen chances on one idea. Spread them. If you sell handmade or vintage, remember the Etsy buyer is often gifting, so occasion and recipient phrases earn their tag slots. Review your tags whenever you renew a listing; search habits shift with seasons, and a tag written for spring may sit idle all winter.

The rewrite method: say it like a buyer at midnight

Here is the method this whole kit is built on. Picture your buyer at midnight, half asleep, phone in hand, typing with one thumb. They do not type “gorgeous artisanal beverage vessel.” They type “big mug for dad” or “stoneware mug 12 oz.” Your rewrite begins by becoming that person. Step one: write down the three phrases you would type to find your own item. Step two: check them against the thing in front of you — every phrase must be true of it, no stretching. Step three: build the title in the anatomy order: item, material or key spec, the typed detail, occasion if it fits. Step four: read it aloud. If it sounds like something a person would search, keep it; if it sounds like a slogan, cut the slogan parts. The swipe file in this kit shows thirty rewrites done exactly this way — vague, cute, or shouty titles turned into plain searchable ones, with a note on what changed. Work through your own listings with the same four steps. You will find most titles need surgery on the first five words and nothing more. Plain beats clever, every time, because plain is what gets typed.

The 10-minute title audit

Old listings rarely die; they just go quiet, often because their titles were written before you knew any of this. Once a month, give your shop ten honest minutes. Open your listings sorted by age, oldest first, and take the five that have been sitting longest. For each one, run the ghost checklist from this kit: does the title start with the item? Does it hold a word a buyer would type? Is anything up front a wasted adjective? Does it fit the platform limit with the facts still in front? Rewrite on the spot — five titles, two minutes each, no perfectionism. Then note the date in your calendar and move on; this is maintenance, not a relaunch. Pay attention to seasons while you audit: the word “Halloween” earns its place in September and October and goes quiet after, and “gift” phrases wake up in November. Rotating one occasion word in and out across the year keeps settled listings aligned with what buyers are typing right now. Small, regular, boring — that is the whole secret. Listings do not need rescuing. They need their labels read once in a while by someone who knows how buyers search.

THE REAL LIMITS

One title does not fit all

Write the title for the shelf it sits on. These are the limits that shape the formulas in this guide — checked October 2026.

EBAY

Title: 80 characters

Eighty characters is enough for item, material, size, and one typed detail — spend them in that order.

ETSY

Title: up to 140 characters (keep it short and clear, about 15 words or fewer). Tags: 13 tags of 20 characters each

Say it once, plainly, in the title; let the 13 tags carry occasions, recipients, and synonyms.

MERCARI

Title: 40 characters. Description: 1,000 characters. Hashtags: 3

Forty characters means item plus one spec in the title; move the rest into the description.

POSHMARK

Title: 80 characters. Description: 1,500 characters

Put brand-free facts up front in the title — item, size, style — and use the roomy description for measurements.

DEPOP

Title: short title. Hashtags: up to 5

Keep the title to the item and one striking detail; choose five hashtags a buyer would genuinely browse.

THE REWRITES

Thirty titles, found

The same thirty rewrites live in the swipe file (Tool 1) for copy-paste. They are printed here too, so the guide reads whole on its own.

REWRITE 01 — HOME & MUGS

BEFORE

Beautiful Cute Mug For Coffee Lovers!!

AFTER

Stoneware Coffee Mug 12 oz Speckled Blue Microwave Safe

The item, material, and size now lead instead of adjectives nobody searches.

REWRITE 02 — HOME & MUGS

BEFORE

Grandma's Pretty Kitchen Thing

AFTER

Cast Iron Skillet 10 Inch Pre-Seasoned Stovetop Pan

A mystery item became a named skillet with its size and material up front.

REWRITE 03 — HOME & MUGS

BEFORE

Lovely Vintage Bowl Set Must See

AFTER

Glass Mixing Bowls Set of 3 Nesting Kitchen Bowls

The count and the nesting detail a buyer types replaced the vague praise.

REWRITE 04 — HOME & MUGS

BEFORE

Amazing Handmade Candle Smells So Great

AFTER

Soy Wax Candle 8 oz Cedar Vanilla Hand Poured Jar

The scent and size a buyer searches for now appear instead of a promise.

REWRITE 05 — HOME & MUGS

BEFORE

Cute Plant Pot For Your Home

AFTER

Terracotta Plant Pot 6 Inch With Drainage Hole and Saucer

Material, size, and the drainage detail plant buyers type are now in the title.

REWRITE 06 — HOME & MUGS

BEFORE

Nice Wooden Cutting Board

AFTER

Acacia Wood Cutting Board 12 x 8 Inch Kitchen Prep Board

“Nice” became the wood type and exact measurements a buyer can check.

REWRITE 07 — HOME & MUGS

BEFORE

Pretty Blue Vase Decor

AFTER

Ceramic Bud Vase 7 Inch Matte Blue Shelf Decor

The vase type and height now lead, so it can match a search for a bud vase.

REWRITE 08 — HOME & MUGS

BEFORE

Awesome Coffee Maker Machine Thing

AFTER

Pour Over Coffee Dripper Ceramic Single Cup Brewer

The actual brewing style replaced a wrong, generic machine label.

REWRITE 09 — CLOTHING

BEFORE

Cute Dress Worn Once!!

AFTER

Women's Midi Dress Size M Floral Wrap Style Short Sleeve

Size, length, and style — the three things dress buyers filter by — now lead.

REWRITE 10 — CLOTHING

BEFORE

Nice Men's Jacket Great Condition

AFTER

Men's Denim Jacket Size L Dark Wash Trucker Style

The fabric, size, and wash replaced a condition claim buyers cannot search.

REWRITE 11 — CLOTHING

BEFORE

Adorable Baby Clothes Bundle

AFTER

Baby Girl Clothes Lot 6-9 Months 8 Piece Cotton Set

Age range and piece count, the details parents type first, are now up front.

REWRITE 12 — CLOTHING

BEFORE

Vintage Band Tee SUPER RARE LOOK!!

AFTER

Vintage Single Stitch Band T-Shirt Size XL Black Cotton

The construction detail collectors search for replaced all-caps hype.

REWRITE 13 — CLOTHING

BEFORE

Pretty Sweater For Fall

AFTER

Women's Cable Knit Sweater Size S Cream Crew Neck

Knit type, size, colour, and neckline give buyers something to match.

REWRITE 14 — CLOTHING

BEFORE

Cool Sneakers Barely Used

AFTER

Running Shoes Size 10 Gray Lightweight Knit Sneakers

Shoe size now appears in the title instead of only the description.

REWRITE 15 — CLOTHING

BEFORE

Fancy Purse Must See

AFTER

Leather Crossbody Bag Brown Adjustable Strap Small Purse

The bag style and material a buyer types replaced the word “fancy.”

REWRITE 16 — CLOTHING

BEFORE

Kids Shoes Cute Cute Cute

AFTER

Toddler Shoes Size 8 Velcro Sneakers Pink Canvas

Size and fastening type, the practical details parents search, now lead.

REWRITE 17 — TOYS & COLLECTIBLES

BEFORE

Old Toy Cars From My Childhood

AFTER

Diecast Toy Cars Lot of 10 Assorted Colors Metal Vehicles

The material and lot size collectors filter by replaced a personal memory.

REWRITE 18 — TOYS & COLLECTIBLES

BEFORE

Rare Old Coin!! Look!!

AFTER

Steel Wheat Penny 1943 US One Cent Coin Collectible

The coin's type and year, exactly what a collector types, now open the title.

REWRITE 19 — TOYS & COLLECTIBLES

BEFORE

Cute Plush Bear

AFTER

Plush Teddy Bear 16 Inch Brown Stuffed Animal Soft Toy

The bear's size, the detail gift buyers check first, is now in the title.

REWRITE 20 — TOYS & COLLECTIBLES

BEFORE

Board Game Complete Maybe

AFTER

Family Board Game Complete Set Strategy Game Ages 10+

“Maybe” became a clear statement of contents plus the age range buyers ask about.

REWRITE 21 — TOYS & COLLECTIBLES

BEFORE

Action Figure Guy With Sword

AFTER

Action Figure 6 Inch Knight With Sword and Shield Toy

The figure's height and character type replaced the word “guy.”

REWRITE 22 — TOYS & COLLECTIBLES

BEFORE

Trading Cards Lots Of Them

AFTER

Trading Card Lot 50 Cards Mixed Years Starter Collection

A real card count tells a buyer what the lot actually is.

REWRITE 23 — TOYS & COLLECTIBLES

BEFORE

Wooden Train Set Kids

AFTER

Wooden Train Set 32 Pieces Tracks and Cars Toddler Toy

The piece count, the detail parents compare between sets, now appears.

REWRITE 24 — SEASONAL

BEFORE

Big Round Gourd Thing

AFTER

Halloween Pumpkin Ready to Carve Jack-O'-Lantern Large

The pumpkin is now named in the words buyers search every October.

REWRITE 25 — SEASONAL

BEFORE

Christmas Stockings Cute!!

AFTER

Christmas Stockings Set of 4 Red Knit Holiday Mantel Decor

Quantity, colour, and where they hang replaced a bare exclamation.

REWRITE 26 — SEASONAL

BEFORE

Easter Basket Stuff

AFTER

Easter Basket Kit For Kids Egg Hunt Toys and Treats Set

The kit's purpose and contents are now stated instead of the word “stuff.”

REWRITE 27 — SEASONAL

BEFORE

Fall Wreath Pretty Leaves

AFTER

Fall Wreath 18 Inch Maple Leaf Autumn Front Door Decor

Diameter and leaf type, the facts wreath buyers compare, now lead.

REWRITE 28 — SEASONAL

BEFORE

Summer Pool Float Fun!!

AFTER

Inflatable Pool Float Adult Size Ring Summer Swim Float

The float's size class, the first thing swimmers check, is now in the title.

REWRITE 29 — SEASONAL

BEFORE

Valentine Gift For Her Trust Me

AFTER

Valentine's Day Gift Box Rose Candle and Bath Set For Her

The box's actual contents replaced a plea for trust.

REWRITE 30 — SEASONAL

BEFORE

Halloween Costume Kids Spooky

AFTER

Kids Halloween Costume Size 6 Witch Dress With Hat

Costume size and character, what parents search in October, now open the title.