



BUYER BEWARE: Tips for Buying Live Event Tickets

Florida Alliance for Consumer Protection Warns Consumers of Ticket-Buying Pitfalls

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As the summer concert season begins to take shape, venues throughout Florida will begin announcing concert dates and offering tickets to these live events for sale online.

However, fans should be aware of a number of potential pitfalls when buying tickets from both primary ticket sellers such as Ticketmaster, resale marketplaces and ticket brokers. If fans are not careful, they may end up unknowingly buying non-transferable tickets that cannot be resold or even given away, buying fraudulent tickets or buying tickets from disreputable sellers.

Below, please review some of the biggest 'little details' to be aware of while purchasing concert tickets for yourself, friends and family.

In order to protect yourself from these anti-consumer practices, we advise all concert goers to:

- 1. Read the Fine Print:** Concerts and sports teams are increasingly selling restricted tickets, also known as paperless or Credit Card Entry tickets, which require the buyer to show up at the stadium and present the purchasing credit card and photo ID. The fine print indicates these tickets are nontransferable and can't be given away as gifts. Some venues also limit the number of tickets you can buy and may cancel your order if you exceed the max.
- 2. Look into Presales:** Popular artists, venues and ticket vendors tend to allocate large blocks of tickets to fan club members, VIPs, premium credit card holders and personal acquaintances, leaving only a small portion of tickets to the general public. For example, a 2011 Justin Bieber concert in Nashville only made **1,001 out of 14,000** seats available during the public on-sale.
- 3. Beware of Hidden Price Floors:** When purchasing resale tickets on secondary sites, check multiple sources to make sure you get the best price. Some artists, teams and ticket vendors dictate a price floor for ticket resale and therefore, may not have tickets available for the true market value. For example, the NFL's official TicketExchange through Ticketmaster will not allow tickets to be sold below a designated value.
- 4. Use Reliable Sellers:** If you're unsure whether a company is legitimate, check its ratings with the Better Business Bureau. Also be sure to double check if you are buying tickets from the box office, official ticket agent or a reseller. Some ticket resellers hide the fact that they are a reseller or even pose to look like the official ticket agent. If purchasing from a ticket broker, check to see if it is a member of the National Association of Ticket Brokers, who's Code of Ethics requires members to adhere to basic consumer protections.
- 5. Check your ticket vendor's guarantee policy:** For example, websites like StubHub, TicketExchange, Ace Tickets and members of the National Association of Ticket Brokers guarantee every ticket sold on their sites and will replace them or provide refunds to consumers if they receive the wrong tickets, their tickets are invalid or an event is cancelled.
- 6. Buy with a Credit Card:** Regardless of where you buy tickets, be sure to use a credit card so you can dispute any unfair or unauthorized

charges. Before entering your credit card information online, double check the company's URL to ensure you don't get duped by an imposter and be sure the site has "https://" at the beginning of its address.

7. Check if the Price Includes Additional Fees: Unlike airline tickets, which are now required by law to disclose all taxes and additional fees upfront, the ticket price listed at the start of the purchasing process will likely not be your final price. If you are shopping between multiple websites to compare price, make sure you know if you are comparing ticket prices that include fees.

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CONTACT: Alice Vickers
EMAIL: alicevickers@flacp.org