

STORE RETURN POLICIES

Finding the perfect gift is sometimes difficult, so be prepared for a trip back to the store to make any returns or exchanges.

There are no state laws regulating return policies. Each store may set its own policy. Take the time to check out the policies before you buy. Misunderstandings about refund policies are common, and many problems could be prevented if consumers have a clear understanding of a store's policy before making a purchase.

Refund policies may include either a cash refund, a credit, an exchange, or no refund at all. Some stores may also require a sales slip when an item is returned. Refunds for close-out or clearance merchandise might be different than for regular priced merchandise. Some stores may require that returns be made within a specific time period, such as 30 days from the date of purchase.

Look for a refund policy posted near the cash register or customer service area. If the store policy is not posted, ask before buying anything. Here are some questions to ask:

- Do you need to keep receipts, tags, or packaging for the item?
- Do you have to use credit slips within a specified time?
- Is there a time limit for returns?
- Will the store accept returns of sale merchandise?

Many retailers won't allow any adjustments or returns on special or custom orders. Others will accept a return, but the customer is required to pay a percentage of the cost as restocking charge. So be extra careful when ordering custom-made items.