Amazon

<u>What is Amazon?</u>

For most people Amazon is one of two things. A large rainforest in South America or a large river in South America. Not in the world of digital! Amazon is an electronic commerce business set up in Seattle in 1994. Originally starting as an auction site similar to eBay before becoming an online bookstore, Amazon soon diversified in to selling DVD's, CD's, video games, electronics, furniture, food, toys and jewellery. They offer services such as Audible – an audiobook service and Love Film (now Prime TV), an online streaming platform similar to Netflix and recently Amazon have even begun developing their own devices. Alongside a series of Kindle e-readers, they've released Kindle Fire tablets, Fire smart phones and Fire TV, making Amazon the world's largest one-stop digital shop. You may have heard of the rush generated by 'Black Friday', 'Cyber Monday' and 'Prime Day' last year, Amazon help create that rush!
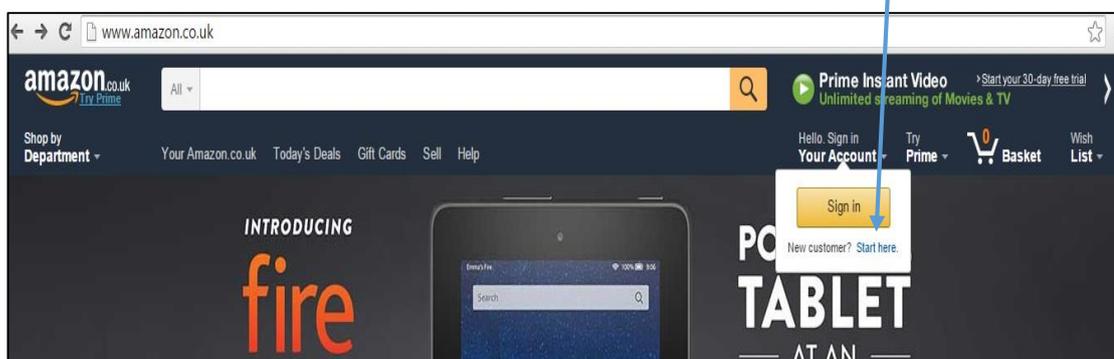

<u>Services</u>

To use Amazon you must create an Amazon account. There are 2 options when becoming an Amazon member. You can sign-up to be a free, everyday member or you can join Amazon Prime. Amazon Prime is a subscription-fee service that allows you exclusive discounts and 1 or 2 day delivery on select goods. We are going to be signing up to a free, normal Amazon account. To sign-up, we must go to www.amazon.co.uk.
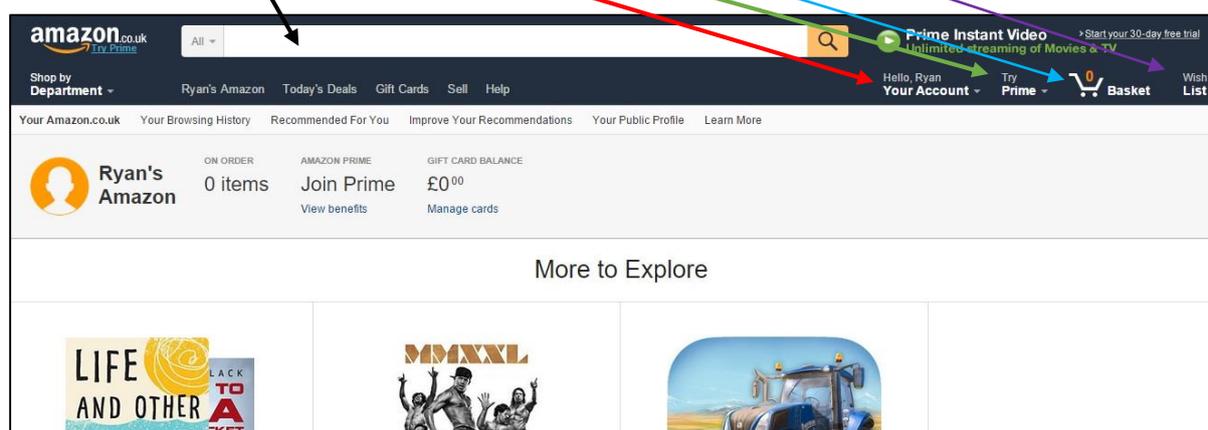
<u>Setting up an Amazon account</u>

1. Firstly, using an internet browser such as Internet Explorer, Google Chrome or Safari; type www.amazon.com into the address bar.
2. Once you're on the Amazon homepage, we need to create an account. Underneath the section for signing in is the option for signing up as a new customer.

3. Once you've clicked on Start here, you'll be redirected to a page asking you to create your own Amazon account. You need to enter the e-mail address you'll be using and create a password for your Amazon account. Remember to look for https!
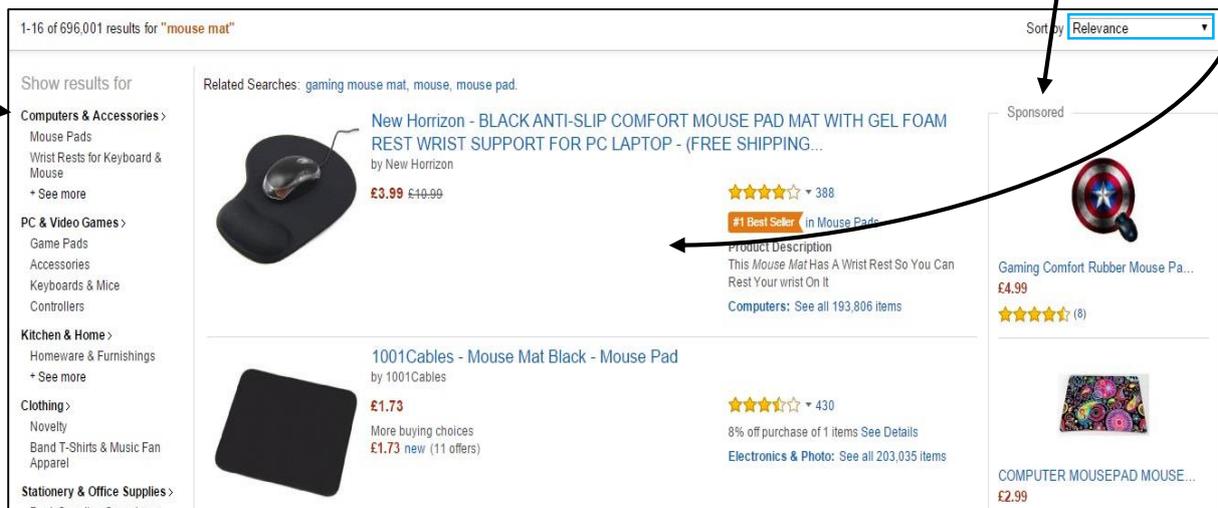

4. Once you've clicked 'Create account', you'll be returned to the Amazon homepage but now you're logged in. We're going to look at 5 different parts of the Amazon website – the search function, your account, Prime, Basket and Wish List.

5. Firstly, we are going to look at the search function. The search function is where you will do most of shopping when using Amazon. By typing in what you are hoping to purchase you'll be greeted with a list of items matching your search. We are going to begin by searching for a 'mouse mat'. Once you've typed it in the search bar, left-click on the magnifying glass to begin the search as shown in the image below.
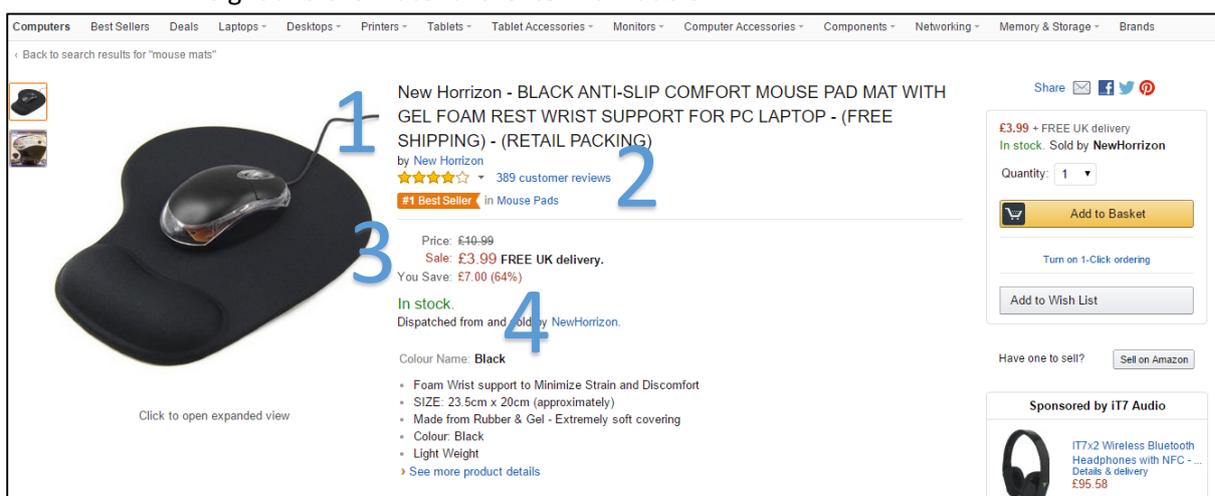
6. Below is a list of mouse mats that are returned after searching for them. To the left of the page is a list of the different sections in which you might find mouse mats such as Computers & Accessories and PC & Video Games, the main part of the website is where you can find the list of mouse mats. They are sorted by relevance in the picture below but can be organised by Price low – high, Price high – low, best sellers and new arrivals. Down the right hand side of the webpage are different sponsored links. These links are still legitimate links to products however the seller of the goods has paid to promote them to the top of the list rather than them being there as they are popular with other users of Amazon.

7. We are going to look at the first mouse mat in the list and look at some of the features you can see when purchasing an item. To do this you need to left-click on the link in blue. Once you've left-clicked your page should change to look like the one below. Here you can see more information about the mouse mat such as:

   1. The seller of the product - New Horizon
   2. Reviews of the product and the products rating - 389 customer reviews and a 4 star rating
   3. You can see details regarding the cost of the product and any delivery charge – in this case the mouse mat has been reduced to £3.99 from £10.99, a saving of 64% and that the delivery of the product is free within the U.K.
   4. You can see if the item is in stock – which it is in the case of this mouse mat and what colour it is – black.
   5. It will even give you more information on the mouse mat itself such as its size, its weight and the material the item is made of.
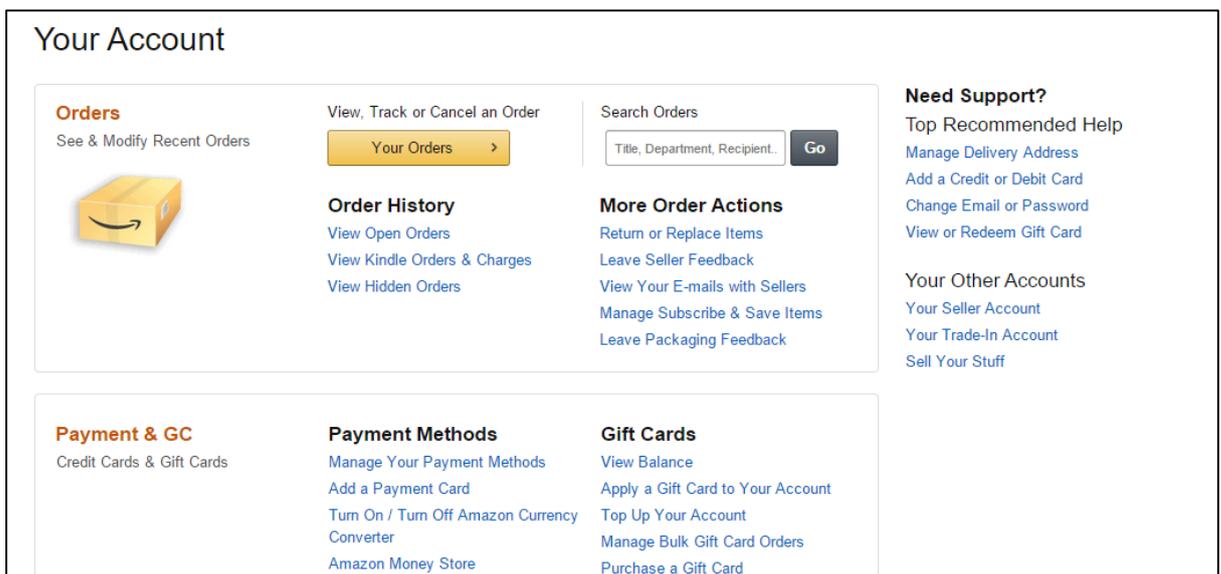
8. To purchase the mouse mat you need to add it to your basket. This is done on the right hand side of the page. Ensuring you are ordering the right number by changing the quantity, you can click 'Add to Basket'. Your basket is a virtual place that stores the goods you are wishing to purchase before actually buying them allowing you to change your mind or find alternatives before buying. You'll notice it asks you to 'Turn on 1-Click ordering'. This is a more instantaneous service that places items through the checkout in one click resulting in a quicker service and doesn't place them in the basket. Finally at the bottom of the box you will see an option to 'Add to Wish List'. Adding things to a Wish List is a common occurrence prior to a wedding as it allows the bride and groom to specify items they would like to be bought for their wedding. You have to be quick though as often the cheaper items get bought quickly!

9. We've now looked at the search function and we're going to move on to looking at your account. Returning to the top of the page, you'll see a sub-heading labelled 'Your Account'. By left-clicking on 'Your Account' your page should change to look like the one below.

In this section you can view, track or cancel an order, leave feedback on an item or seller, change the way in which you pay for an item or apply gift cards to your account, change your e-mail address, password or delivery address, alter your membership details, look through messages, view settings and look at a list of devices and digital content.

10. Next is Prime. Amazon Prime was set up in 2007 and is an annual membership service which offers unlimited one-day delivery on select Amazon orders in the U.K, unlimited video streaming of 15,000 TV shows and movies through Amazon Prime Instant Video, access to Amazon's music library, with unlimited download and streams, Prime Photos giving you photo storage on Amazon Cloud Drive of up to 5GB, access to 800,000 free e-books, the ability to borrow one of over 500,000 titles per month for free on any kindle device and access to lightning deals 30 minutes before normal Amazon users. It costs £79 per year and can't be paid in instalments and is available at £39 if you're a student. You can even trial it for 30 days but **YOU HAVE TO CANCEL YOUR SUBSCRIPTION BEFORE THE 30 DAYS EXPIRES** otherwise **YOU ARE CHARGED THE £79 SUBSCRIPTION FEE FOR THE YEAR**. Amazon Prime Now, a new service even allows you to purchase groceries such as bottled water, coffee, nappies, milk, cheese, frozen pizza and butter with delivery all within the hour providing you live in Birmingham or Central/East London.

11. When purchasing items, you would select 'Add to Basket'. Once you've added all the items and you wish to view the basket, left-click on the basket symbol. You'll now see a list of the items you've added to the basket. You'll see in the picture below that I have added the mouse mat from step 7 as well as a 7" Kindle Fire tablet. Basket will remember items even if you log out of Amazon.

If you are happy with the items you've placed in your basket and wish to continue, you must left-click on 'Proceed to Checkout'. If you are a new user of Amazon you will be asked for more details. At this point, Amazon needs to know the full name of the recipient of the items and a delivery address. Next up is how you would like it delivered. Depending on if you have a Prime account, where the company is based and how much you are prepared to spend on delivery, your delivery date can vary. For the items I added to the basket I was offered the following delivery dates as of the 12th October:-

- Mouse Mat – Standard Delivery – Oct 16-20 or Express Delivery – Oct 14-16
- Kindle Fire – FREE delivery – Nov 2-4, Standard Delivery – Oct 31 and Expedited – Oct 29-30.

12. The mouse mat can be delivered quite quickly whereas there is a wait for the tablet due to it being shipped from an Amazon depot in Europe. This is why there is no Express delivery option but an Expedited delivery option which costs more than standard delivery for a slightly quicker arrival time. When you've picked your delivery options, you can select continue to add your payment details. You can pay via both credit/debit card and Amazon offers to save your details as an option for future payments. This is a good option if you often need to buy things and might not have access to the card being used but then can also result in inexperienced online shoppers buying things off somebody else's card. When you've added your card details you can confirm your purchase and buy the items you added to your basket. Want to know how your order is doing? Step 9 contains the steps to view your account and check how any orders are doing. Remember throughout entering any personal details such as your e-mail address, password or bank details to look for the green padlock and https in the address bar.

13. Lastly, we are going to look at Wish List. Wish List is similar to Basket in the sense that it allows you to add items you wish to purchase into a saved area. However, Wish List allows you to share the list with others as a means of telling them what you would like. This might sound a little strange to some but having a Wish List allows you to get organised for a birthday or Christmas in advance and save ideas and products to a list for the future. Wish List's most common usage is for those attending weddings and house warmings as it allows the people in question to tell their friends and family what they need to prevent them from being bought multiple toasters. You have to be quick if a Wish List is issued as more often than not there is a rush for the cheaper items!

14. To create a Wish List you must left-click on the 'Create a Wish List' box shown in the picture above. This will then create you a blank Wish List ready for you to add items to.

We've had a look at how to search for items on the Amazon website, how to add them to your basket, how to pay for them, how to check your orders status and finally how to create shopping lists. If you need any further help, ask a volunteer and they'll do their best to answer your question.