NMT B2 Task 2 practice (1)

Read the text. For questions (1-6), choose the correct answer (A, B, C, or D)

Using a safety net

It wasn't so long ago that the majority of consumers did their shopping in local shops, despite parking and weather problems, long queues and wobbly shopping trolleys. Even when online shopping became available, people felt uncomfortable shopping from the comfort of their own home because they hesitated to use their credit cards and give their personal details to e-shops. Those concerns are quite rightly a thing of the past, but some guidelines should still be followed to ensure you don't get more than you bargained for while filling your basket.

Initially, a virtual protection wall should be built for any computer which is used for online purchases. This includes installing anti-virus software that will guard against identity theft. It is also imperative that you have a unique password for each website used. The same password should never be used for more than one site because, if someone cracks the password for one site, then they will have access to a number of your favourite sites. Choose a password that is not common and then make it stronger by spelling it backwards, making some of the letters capitals, adding some numbers and then some special symbols such as £, ! or *. By all means, make a note of the different passwords, but make sure they are well hidden away.

Online shoppers should stick to trusted sites in order to browse or find a particular product. The use of search engines should be avoided at all costs because the results which are presented could lead you to a disreputable site whose main aim is to trick you out of your money or to sell you inferior quality products which are a rip-off. The spelling of the website should also be checked carefully to make sure that it is indeed the site which you intended to visit.

Before proceeding with any purchase, make sure you look for the lock. If the site is properly secured, an icon of a locked padlock will appear, typically in the status bar at the bottom of the web browser or right next to the address bar. The security of the site can also be proven by checking that the URL starts with HTTPS:// as opposed to HTTP://.

When you actually get down to making your first online purchase, don't throw money down the drain. Keep a record of all transactions you make with your credit or debit card. This can be done by printing out each transaction and then checking it against your monthly credit card or bank statement. That said, it's a good idea to check your statements online regularly so that any inaccuracies can be caught as soon as possible. The majority of credit cards provide insurance against theft or unauthorised use, so remember to contact the credit card company if you notice anything suspicious.

Last but not least, after you've finished your shopping spree, don't forget to sign out of your account and turn the computer off. The longer the computer is left on, the greater the possibility that someone will hack into it and steal your personal and banking details. The fact of the matter is that while hackers may be incredibly skilled at obtaining information from computers, human error is the most probable reason you will get hacked.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1 Why wasn't online shopping so popular in the past?

A. Consumers didn't feel comfortable using computers.

B. There was a lack of trust on the part of the consumers.

C. There were no guidelines for potential consumers to follow.

D. Consumers could find more bargains if they visited the shops.

2 What advice is given about passwords?

A. Only capital letters should be used.

B. Some software should be used to make a strong password.

C. Special symbols should be used instead of letters.

D. Different passwords should be used for different sites.

3 According to the third paragraph,

A. you shouldn't use the same site more than once.

B. even websites you know may sell low-quality products.

C. search engines might link you to sites which are dishonest.

D. shoppers should browse the Net before making a choice.

4 Which sites are safe to shop from?

A. sites which have a locked padlock symbol

B. sites which appear on a search engine

C. sites which do not have spelling mistakes

D. sites which start with either HTTPS:// or HTTP://

5 When consumers shop online, they should

A. only use debit cards.

B. inform their banks of their activities.

C. compare their purchases and their financial statements.

D. use their credit card as insurance.

6 Information is most likely to be stolen by a hacker if

A. the same computer is used regularly.

B. the hacker is highly skilled.

C. certain measures are not taken by the consumer.

D. a shopping session is too short.

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