

How to Spot a Fake Coach Handbag, And What You Can Do About It

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How to Spot a Fake Coach Handbag And What You Can Do If You Bought One

Coach Handbags are an Aspirational Luxury

Coach handbags are great gifts because there are so many styles that can be matched up to specific personalities. Coach handbags are classic, a timeless collection that will be treasured and adored for generations to come. Exactly the sort of item that counterfeiters target to make easy money, so you need to be sure yours is genuine.

Unlike many of the other designer handbag companies that started in Italy, Coach began more than a half-century ago in a family run workshop in a Manhattan loft.

The Coach handbags are released in collections that feature new shapes, styles, materials and classic designs. Coach handbags are extremely popular and it can frequently be difficult to spot a fake coach handbag from an authentic coach handbag.

But, without a doubt, the high quality and workmanship embodied in genuine Coach Products is never duplicated in counterfeit products; counterfeit quality is typically poor.

Coach **DOES NOT** offer its merchandise for sale through individuals, street vendors, unauthorized retail locations, internet auctions, or at house parties. The **ONLY** places where Coach offers its merchandise for sale is via:

- 1) Coach Stores;
- 2) Coach Factory Stores;
- 3) Direct Coach Catalogue Sales;

- 4) Authorized Department Stores;
- 5) Authorized specialty stores;
- 6) Limited duty free locations;
- 7) Corporate accounts; and
- 8) Their website at www.coach.com.

If you purchase a Coach item from an unauthorized source, such as an internet auction like eBay, Coach is not able to help you or give a definitive statement regarding the item's authenticity. You will also find that Coach will not give you specific tips on how to determine if an item is counterfeit, because it would be easy for counterfeiters to use this information to their advantage and to the detriment of Coach.

Make sure that the authenticity number matches up with the style of the bag that you are interested in purchasing. If you are about to purchase from an unauthorized dealer, call Coach, their representatives will be more than willing to verify if the authenticity number matches the style. There also needs to be a serial number. The interior serial number should start with "No", the abbreviation for number, and have 4 numbers after the dash, not 3.

The writing should be neat on the authenticity tag, not crookedly stamped on. Also the paragraph above the serial number should be in all caps, and in English.

The only way to guarantee the authenticity of a Coach item is to purchase it at the approved Coach outlets mentioned. Of course there may be genuine owners selling their own Coach handbag, but these will understand your concerns about authenticity and help you with original receipts etc.



You Want an Original Coach Handbag – Not a Fake

Remember this, if you are interested in buying an original brand name designer handbag, make sure that wherever you go you are able to get a certificate of authenticity. That way you can be absolutely sure that it is the genuine article. You don't want to end up paying designer brand name prices for a replica and not getting what you paid for. If the store does not offer a certificate of authenticity then you should probably go somewhere else. To be sure you are buying an original, you can always go into the actual designer's store then you won't have to be concerned about whether it's an original or not.

The consistency of the product quality is the most important aspect to the Coach Company. The leather, texture, colour, and stitching is uniform in design and superiority, both inside and out. This stability helps the buyer quickly spot a fake after a simple inspection. When holding a Coach handbag, you can easily identify the stability in quality throughout every piece and stitch of the bag.

So, How Do You Spot A Fake Coach Handbag?

Replica Coach Handbags are basically an incredibly easy thing to describe; they are replicas of the real designer made Coach handbags, but the counterfeiters cannot reproduce the quality of the real thing. Your first clue will probably be the price – if it seems like such a fantastic bargain, it's probably a fake.

For one, with replica Coach handbags you will be paying a lot less than you would for the real thing, and so people will not notice the difference, unless you tell them of course, and so this can be a really great thing for you so long as you know what you've bought.

There are many sellers that openly advertise that they carry replica designer handbags but there are just as many unscrupulous dealers out there that will try to pass off a counterfeit Coach handbag as the real thing.

People caught selling or passing off replica Coach Handbags as the real thing will usually find themselves facing criminal charges.



Spotting a fake Coach Handbag could be difficult but I hope this report will give you enough information to help you to make an educated choice when choosing your Coach Handbag.

If you have any doubts, it's best to pass up the chance than get caught out by fraudsters.

If you're shopping at the auction sites like EBay, Yahoo auctions or MSN, first, take a look at the feedback for the seller. EBay has a great system to allow users to leave feedback about their seller or purchase so you should immediately check out the comments left by previous buyers to get a feel for whether they were happy or not.

Some of these sellers may be just starting out and may not know if they have a fake handbag or not – some of them may believe that they actually have an original for sale.

Next, to the handbag itself; take a look at the pattern on the outside fabric. The majority of the Coach brand letter 'C' as a logo. The 'C' brand logo should start at the centre of the bag and go out. The middle seam should go straight through the middle of the 'C'. Take a look at the side seams. The 'C' pattern will often be cut off on fake handbags. On authentic bags the tip of the 'C'

should be touching the tip of an opposite 'C'. If the logo is anything but 'C' it is a fake!

Now pay close attention to the fabric, does the quality seem right? Also, take a look at the stitching of the bag. Coach does not deliver authentic coach bags with poor stitching that is out of line or overlapping.

Have you seen this style of bag that you are thinking of buying before? Distributors of counterfeit items often try to release brand new styles that have never been released by Coach, so take a stroll around the authorised stores and find out what Coach is releasing and compare your findings to what sellers are offering you. Check for the latest designs on the Coach website.

Take a look at the inner lining. Does the inner lining have the signature logo of Coach? Now look for a serial number inside the bag. The serial number is stamped on the inside on a square patch of leather sewn into the lining. Smaller purses (the clutch, swingback, or mini) do not have a serial number as these bags don't come with one.

Take a good look at the zipper. Coach only uses the highest quality manufacturer of zippers 'YKK'. So you should find their mark on all of their zippers. If you don't see the "YKK" you know you have a fake Coach handbag.

How about the 'made by' tag? Up until 2002 about 75% of coach handbags were manufactured in the US. Now, most are assembled in China, but Coach does NOT have handbags made in Korea. If you get a bag that says made in Korea take it back or return it immediately. This is **not** an authentic Coach Handbag.



Here are a few things to watch out for when buying on eBay:

- **Sellers only offering a 1 day auction** - because they know they are selling fakes and want to get it sold before anybody notices.
- **Poor construction** - you can see it in the photos if they actually have a photo that is theirs; Coach Quality is legendary - that is why people keep coming back for more!
- **Just one photo in the listing** – is it one taken off the Coach website and what bag are you actually going to receive? Will it be a real one from Coach or a counterfeit bag that is so obviously a fake they did not dare to include a genuine photo?
- **Listings that do not actually state the items are authentic** - although sometimes these sellers will say they are real when they are not. Sellers who leave out whether the item is authentic think they can get around the clause "not as described" - don't let them - counterfeits are just plain illegal!
- **Listings that state the Coach item is a factory second** and may be faded or have slight stitching problems - are FAKES! Coach's Factory Stores do not sell seconds either.
- **Coach does NOT put signature lining in signature bags!** So if you see a Coach Signature Collection bag with Signature lining. It is a fake.
- **The seller does not take PayPal.** How can you get your money back if you get a fake when the seller has not used PayPal?

- **The seller is keeping the bidder's ID private.** Is it because they do not want anybody else to tell you that you are bidding on a fake?
- **Beware the 'powersellers' who have no feedback** from selling items (to be one you must sell \$1000 a month for three months).
- **Read the sellers feedback** which will tell you if the feedback is from selling Coach items similar to what you are bidding on. If not it may be best not to place your bid.
- **If the majority of the comments are negative** then this is also a good indication that you don't want to deal with that seller.
- **Even if the feedback is positive** you should still be wary. Is it possible for an individual seller to have access to so many original Coach items?

Imitation May Be the Sincerest Form of Flattery – but It's Still Fake

Imitation is the greatest form of flattery goes the old expression, but the counterfeiting of designer bags from Coach is out of control. The black market for imitation or fake Coach Handbags and purses is enormous and hurts the sale of the manufacturer. EBay has been cracked down on the by legal teams for allowing the sale of replica Coach bags, but it still doesn't slow down the people who produce these things in overseas markets like Korea. The status symbol associated with having a Coach handbag over your shoulder is so powerful that women will buy replica Coach Handbags just so they can have something they can pretend is one.



What to Do If You Think You Have Bought a Fake

First you should establish that your item is indeed a fake. The best approach is to email the seller with something like:

"I have received the item from you and I am surprised at the low quality. I did not realize that Coach items would be of such poor quality. I would like you to confirm for me the authenticity of this item? Where did you purchase it from?"

If the seller does not guarantee the authenticity of the item, or DOES tell you the item is authentic but you just don't believe them, email the seller again and ask for a refund in a pleasant non-confrontational tone.

Tell them you have verified that your item is a fake, and how you verified this, i.e. using the methods outlined in this report. Tell them why you know the item is a fake, so the seller knows that you know what you're talking about and then say you are returning the item for a refund. Ask the seller to respond so that you can resolve this in an expedient and professional manner.

The Seller Should Offer You a Refund

If the seller offers a refund, there are a few things you should to cover yourself before you return the item to them.

Your seller will most likely tell you to return the item before issuing a refund, which is OK but you just need to do a couple of things first:

- **Print out a copy of the auction page with the pictures still on it.**
- **Snap a couple of photos of the item.**
- **Take a close-up shot of the label or feature that proves it's a fake.**
- **Send your item back with confirmed delivery (So they sign for receipt).**

This is for your own protection so you can prove later (if you need to) that you did receive a fake item.

Be sure to make the seller sign for the return so that they can't later claim you never sent the handbag back. If you then get your refund, you can stop here!

What If You Are Not Given a Refund?

If the seller refuses to offer you a refund, or received your return but fails to send the refund, look to your method of payment. If you paid by PayPal, you must file a fraud claim within thirty days. You must file your claim as soon as possible then pursue other routes.

If you paid with a credit card using PayPal, Billpoint, or another online payment service, call your credit card company and discuss your options for a repayment with them, they are generally jointly responsible for the sale item when the value is above \$200.

Each credit card company and bank is different so I cannot give specific advice as to how to proceed with your company. Just get in touch with them!

Now make sure you visit eBay's own Security Centre at <http://pages.ebay.com/securitycenter/index.html> where you will have access to help through eBay's own methods.



Conclusion & Summing Up

Coach handbags are not only a place to hold your necessities, but are also a potential investment in image and functionality; with renowned Coach durability, their handbags may be used for a lifetime. Although costing up to \$800 a bag or more, many people consider it to be worth the cost.

Remember these points:

Make sure that wherever you go you are able to get a certificate of authenticity.

- That way you can be absolutely sure that it is the genuine article.
- Don't end up paying designer brand name prices for a replica and not getting what you paid for.
- If the store does not offer a certificate of authenticity then you should probably go somewhere else.
- To be sure you are buying an original, always go to an approved store then you won't have to be concerned about whether it's an original or not.

Counterfeit Coach Merchandise Is Getting Harder And Harder To Spot But Here Are A Few More Tell-Tale Signs:

- Make sure that there are 'C's and not any other letters on the design.
- Inside should be a COACH tag made of leather that has a serial number on it, with a few sentences describing the quality of the handbag.
- Your Coach purse should come with a "Care Instructions" booklet that lets you know how to keep it clean!
- Compare your purchase online at Coach.com to see if the details of your purse match the one online (coach doesn't sell anything that isn't

available online) small details are handle/strap colours, leather colours, textures, etc.

- If you do not buy your purse from a reliable vendor (department store, Coach official website, etc.) then you may want to check their credibility
- Your best bet is to just buy it from a dependable retailer like Macy's or even Coach's own store outlets.

Already Won A Counterfeit Coach Item?

If you believe you have purchased a fake designer item from an eBay seller, follow this guide step by step. Following this guide will assist you in getting your money back. Please be aware that there is no guarantee you will get a refund, which is why it's so important to do your research and bid carefully beforehand. However, if you follow these steps, you significantly increase your likelihood of getting your money back.

And remember, people caught selling or passing off replica Coach Handbags as the real thing will usually find themselves facing criminal charges.

With Best Wishes

Peter Fisher

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