

Marketplace Superheroes:

Module #2 – 4S Product Gauntlet - Search

Jay Boyer

© Copyright 2015 J.J. Fast Publishing. All Rights Reserved. This guide may not be reproduced or transmitted in any form without the written permission of the publisher. Every effort has been made to make this guide as complete and accurate as possible. Although the author and publisher have prepared this guide with the greatest of care, and have made every effort to ensure the accuracy, we assume no responsibility or liability for errors, inaccuracies or omissions. Before you begin, check with the appropriate authorities to insure compliance with all laws and regulations.

Every effort has been made to make this report as complete and accurate as possible. However, there may be mistakes in typography or content. Also, this report contains information on online marketing and technology only up to the publishing date. Therefore, this report should be used as a guide – not as the ultimate source of Internet marketing information.

The purpose of this report is to educate. The author and publisher does not warrant that the information contained in this report is fully complete and shall not be responsible for any errors or omissions. The author and publisher shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by this report, nor do we make any claims or promises of your ability to generate income by using any of this information.

Table of Contents

The First Step to Finding Profitable Products	4
Exploring the Amazon Interface	6
Top Level Categories to Avoid & Recommended Categories	10
Product Specifics to Avoid (1 to 4)	13
Product Specifics to Avoid (5 to 8)	15
Product Specifics to Avoid (9 to 12)	17
Product Specifics to Avoid (13 to 15)	19
Finding the Best Selling Products	21
Expanding Past the Best Sellers.....	24

The First Step to Finding Profitable Products



Now it's time to start researching products. This is where people tend to feel stuck when they start selling products online. They wonder "Where do I go?", "How do I do this?", "How do I know if something is worth selling or not?" These are the types of things that will be covered in complete detail over the next few modules.

This is a product-based business, so you will need a great product. The majority of people do come at this with a preconceived idea, thinking that they are going to sell X, Y, or Z. Robert admits that he looked at things this way too when he was first starting out. That's incorrect, however. Stephen and Robert ask that you removed those preconceived ideas and follow the training. If you have no clue of what to sell, or even where to start looking for stuff, don't worry. It will all be lined out for you in the training.

It's actually a good thing to come at this with a clean slate because you are going to use the 4S Gauntlet, which is going to take you step-by-step through the process of finding your products. The objective is to create a big search list. Then, this will be followed by Shortlist Phase, a Select Phase, and a Sourcing Phase. Creating this list is the first phase. So, you're going to make as big of a list as you can. You'll need somewhere between 25 and 100 products in this

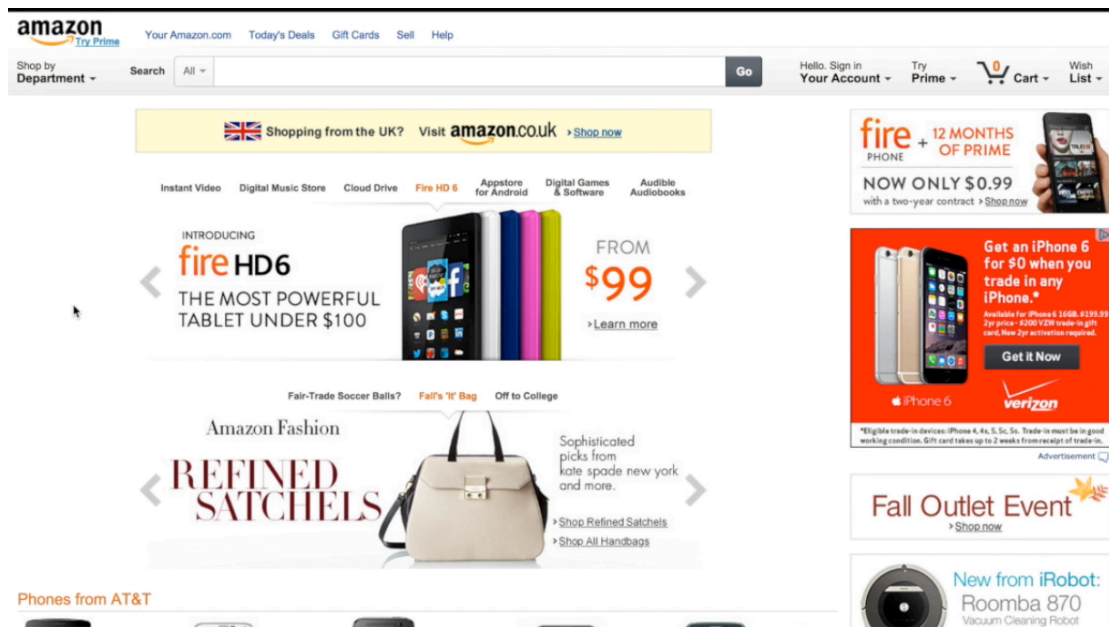
list, at least, to get you started. After that, you're going to start checking them off, and as you go through the next few modules, the products that you have chosen will start dropping off pretty dramatically.



Every so often, you'll want to keep adding more products to your search list because you're going to learn how to refine the products in this list to find the most logical products to sell. This process takes time, and this is not something that you can do overnight. However, the effort that you put in now will save your time and energy down the line. In fact, you'll find that this pays off hugely as you build your business. You don't want your business to last just a few months; you want it to last for years.

To explain the 4S Product Gauntlet a little further, let's use a house as an example. As previously mentioned, the Search Phase is the first part of this 4-phase system. This is like the foundation of a house. The second phase is the Shortlist Phase. This would be the walls of the house. Third is the Select Phase, and this represents the wiring in the house. Then, there's the fourth phase is to 'Source', which would be the roof of the house. "This would complete your house, and thus, your product", states Robert upon completing his explanation and the picture shown above.

Exploring the Amazon Interface



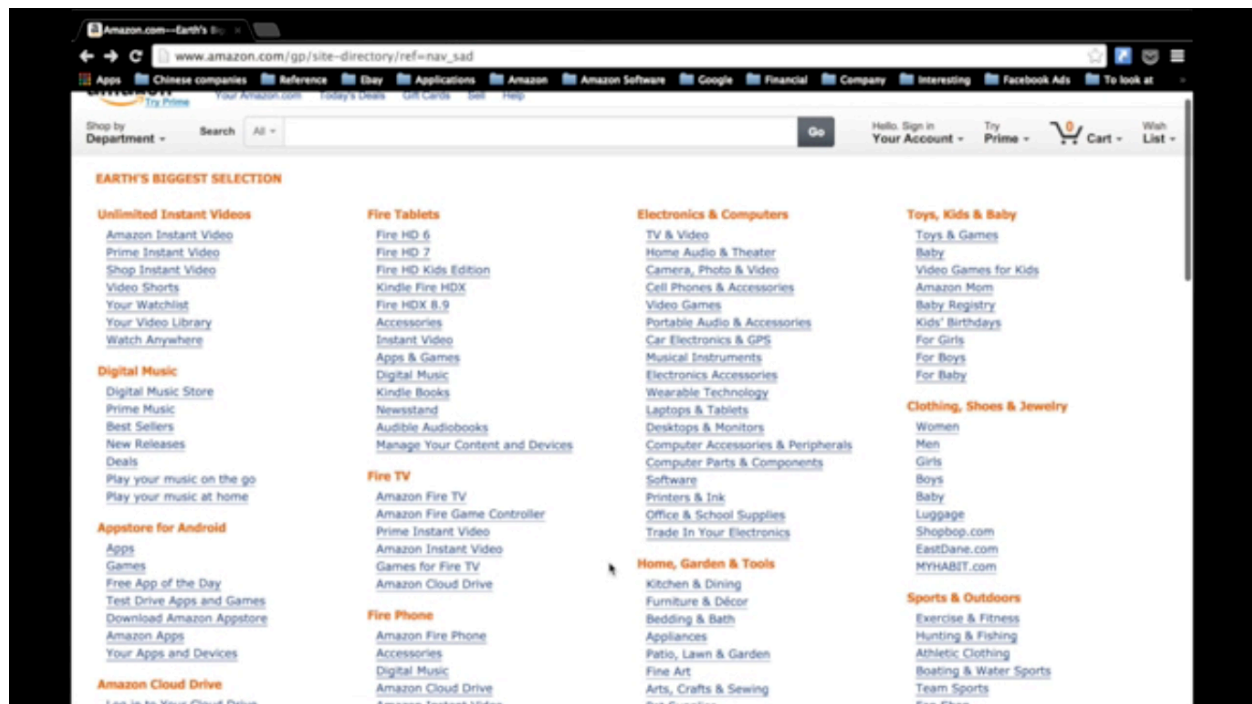
Now that you know what the 4S Product Gauntlet looks like, it's time to dive into the first phase of the search process. Before you start to log your results in the Xcellerator software, you need to understand how Amazon is structured and a little about what you'll be looking for when you start to research your products. With that said, let's join Robert in a live example where he's going to explain the entire Amazon interface step-by-step.

You'll be using Amazon for the vast majority of your product research. So, the best thing to do at this point is get familiar with its interface and learn to use it to find the key data that you're looking for. A screenshot of Amazon.com is shown above. You can, of course, look at the other platforms within Amazon, such as Amazon.uk and Amazon.ca. You need to familiarize yourself with these as well, even though they look and operate in 99% the same way as the main platform.

The first thing that you will need to take note of is the 'Search' bar because this is what pretty much all of Amazon's customers use to find a product they are looking to buy. A customer may type in something like 'BBQ tools and accessories'. When you type something into the search bar, some search suggestions will appear. This is something to pay attention to, as it indicates what terms customers generally use when searching for a related item.

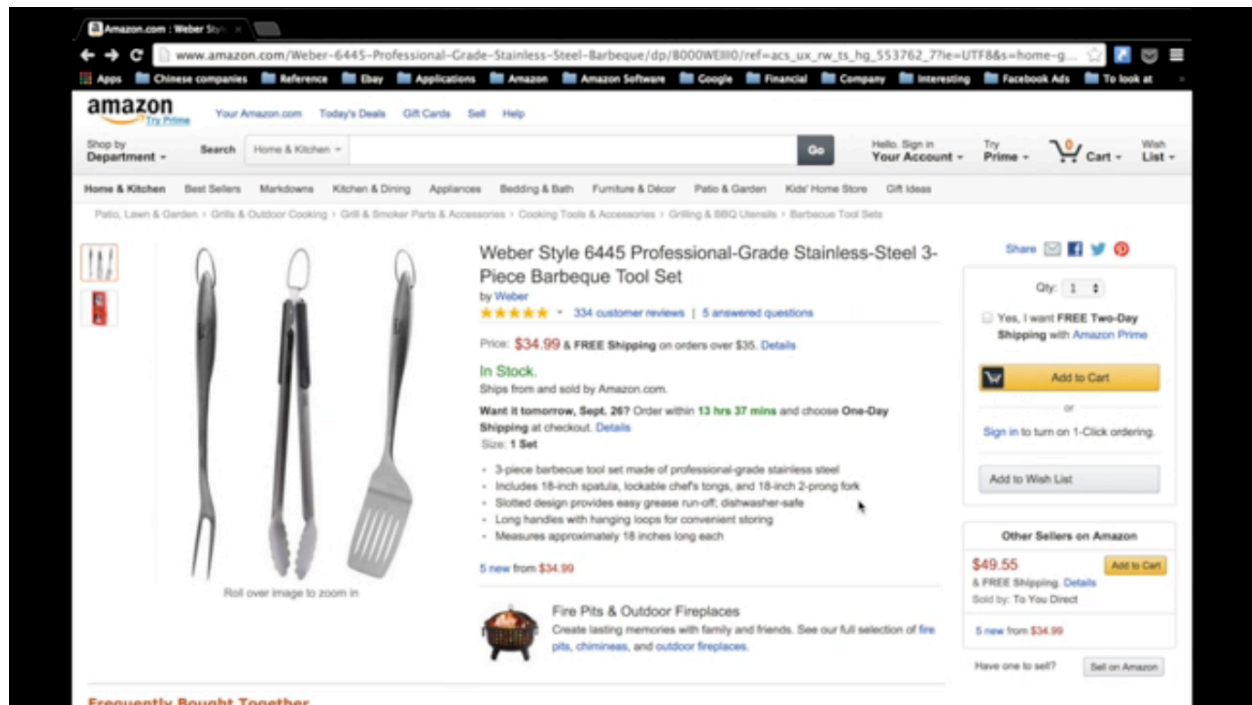
Next to the search bar, you'll find a 'Shop by Department' button. This is another option people have for finding what they are looking for. People generally don't go about searching for products this way, but this is helpful to you when it comes to dialing into the right product to

sell. When you click on 'Shop by Department', the page shown below will appear. This page contains all of the main categories on Amazon, and as you can see, the list is very extensive. The ones in orange are what's referred to as the 'top-level categories', and the ones in blue are called 'parent categories'.

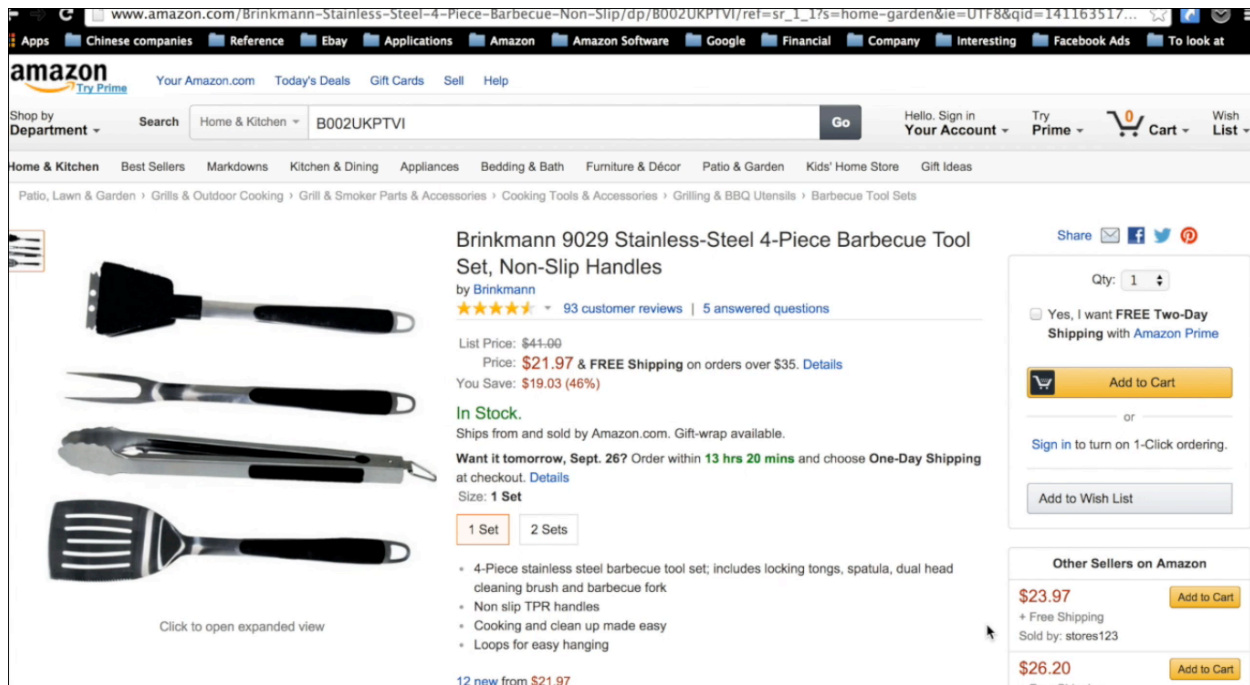


You can click on any one of these categories to look further into it. In this case study example, Robert clicked into 'Patio, Lawn & Garden'. This brought him to the main page for the 'Patio, Lawn & Garden' category. On the left-hand side of the page, the subcategories for this parent category are listed, as they would be no matter what parent category is chosen. A number of different subcategories are also listed in the main portion of the page, and this is where Robert found the 'Barbeque Tools' that he was looking for. When he clicked on this, he was redirected to the Barbeque Utensils page.

There are a great deal of different items presented within this particular subsection of the site. By default, the items will be listed by 'Most Popular'. From there, Robert moved into a product listing, which is where you would find the majority of the data that you would require. All you have to do is click on an item to be brought into its listing. Robert clicked on a barbeque tool set that he was interested in during his presentation. The listing for this product is shown below.



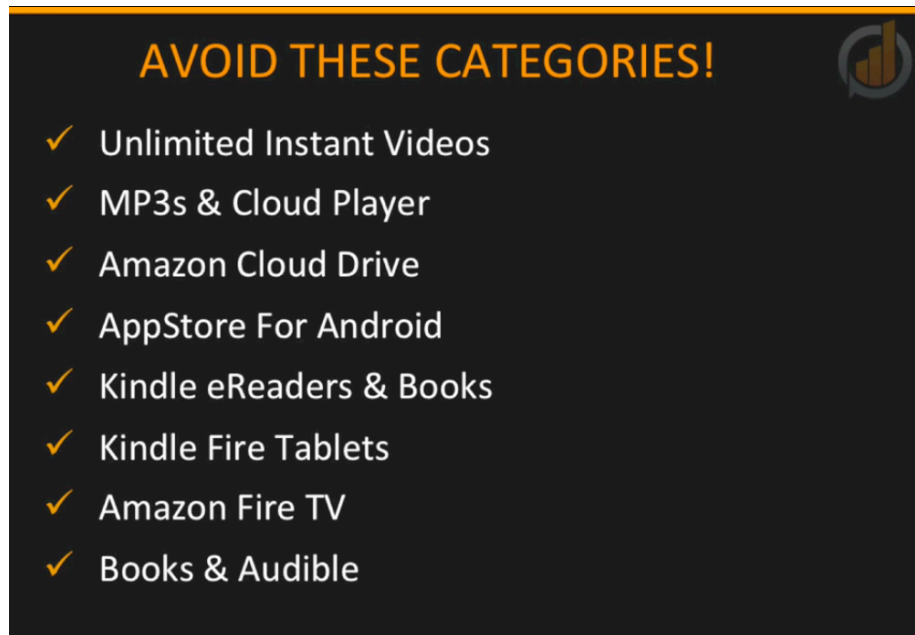
There are several areas in a product's listing that will be of interest to you. First, you have the image area. Most of the product listings on Amazon have images that you can zoom into and take a closer look at the product, and in many cases, there will be multiple images up at the top left for you to click into and view more. To the right, you'll find the title, with a brand name underneath. Within this middle section, you'll also find data pertaining to the reviews the item has gotten, the price, and bullet points that point out the features and/or benefits of the product. This section also reveals who is selling the product and where the product is being shipped from.



To the far right, you'll find the infamous 'Amazon Buy Box' that allows the consumer to quickly add the product to his cart. If you move down the page, you'll find a section titled 'Product Details' which is also very important. It contains information such as the product's ASIN number. This number is a unique code that Amazon uses to identify every product on the site. Here you'll also find the product's 'Amazon Best Sellers Rank' or BSR. The various categories that the product is ranking in are also listed. Beneath this section, you'll find the 'Product Description'.

In the training to come, you'll learn what portions of this data are important to you and your business, and you will begin recording that data. Another example of one of these pages is shown above. In the screenshot, you can see the title, the brand, the number of reviews the product has gotten. You can see the image for it as well, and you can see that it is priced at \$21.97. You can also see who is selling it and how the product is going to be shipped. Then, down at the bottom, you'll find the bullet points. If you were to scroll down to the 'Product Details' section, you'll find the product's ASIN and its BSR as well as all of the categories it's ranking in. Then finally, you'll find its description.

Top Level Categories to Avoid & Recommended Categories



You now have an understanding of how the Amazon interface is put together. You need to know that there are certain categories that you're not going to use as part of your product research for various reasons. Let's take a look at the top level categories that you're going to avoid and the reasons why you need to avoid them. They are:

- Unlimited Instant Videos
- MP3s & Cloud Player
- Amazon Cloud Drive
- AppStore for Android
- Kindle eReaders & Books
- Kindle Fire Tablets
- Amazon Fire TV
- Books & Audible

The reason why you are not going to be using these categories as part of your research is because these categories are all pretty much Amazon-specific. In other words, they sell

products that only Amazon can sell. For example, Amazon can only sell Kindle devices. Also, some of these categories contain digital products that can only be sold by any third party, other than Amazon.

Now it is possible for you to sell in some of these categories, such as in the 'Books & Audible' category. However, these aren't the focus of this system. You'll also want to avoid the following restricted categories:

- Automotive & Powersports
- Beauty
- Clothing & Accessories
- Collectable Books
- Entertainment Collectibles
- Fine Art
- Gift Cards
- Grocery & Gourmet Foods
- Health & Personal Care
- Industrial & Scientific
- Jewelry
- Luggage & Travel Accessories
- Major Appliances
- Sexual Wellness
- Shoes, Handbags & Sunglasses
- Sports Collectibles
- Textbook Rentals
- Toys & Games
- Watches

- Wine

These categories are called ‘restricted categories’ because you need permission or approval to sell within them. Some sellers apply and get approval to sell within these categories. Robert and Stephen believe that you should avoid these categories altogether, however, simply because it’s harder to get started in a restricted category.



You want to remove as many barriers to making sales as possible when you’re getting started in this business. Avoiding restricted categories will certainly make life easier for you. You can find another copy of this list of all of these categories in the Utility Belt section of this training and in Amazon’s ‘Help’ section. It’s recommended that you print the a copy of this list off or have it on a second monitor on your computer so that you have it on-hand at all times while you are doing your research. This will help to ensure that you don’t spend a ton of time searching categories that are unsuitable.

Now that you know what categories you should perform research within, let’s take a look at some of the best categories for performing research within. There are three recommended top-level categories that are currently not restricted. They are ‘Electronics & Computers’, ‘Sports & Outdoors’, and Home, Garden & Tools’. These categories and their subcategories are shown in the screenshot above. Don’t worry that there are only three top-level ones because each contains hundreds of thousands of products.

Product Specifics to Avoid (1 to 4)



There are certain product elements that may influence the possibility of selling a product. In this section and the sections to follow, you are going to learn about the exact specifics that you need to avoid. Also, the reasons why these specifics must be avoided will be covered in this training. The first specifics that you will want to avoid are as follows:

1. Electrical/Battery
2. Hazardous/Chemical
3. Prohibited
4. Multi Boxed

Any product that is powered, or requires an outside energy source to make it function, is something that you will want to immediately disregard. There are a few reasons for this, but the main one is that a product like this will have a naturally-higher fault rate. Also, products such as these often have safety issues related with them due to the electricity it takes to make them work. This can lead to hazards that you could potentially be liable for. Now, in the course of your sales journey, you may decide to sell a product that's powered in some way, but it's not recommended that you go down this road if it's avoidable in any way.

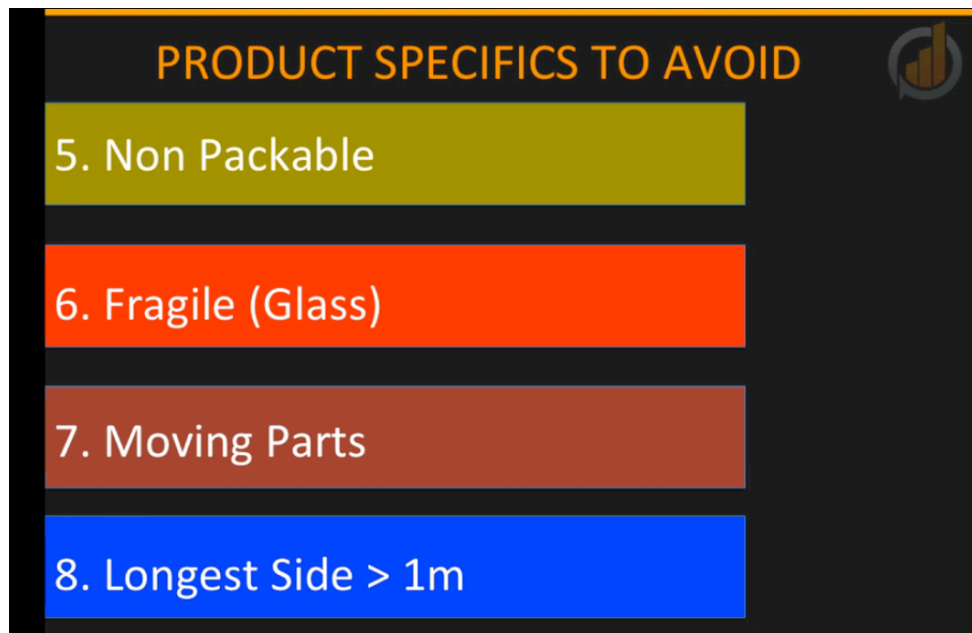
Another reason why you would want to avoid this is because of issues with plugs. You see, different areas use different types of plugs, and in some cases, there are different voltages too. This can cause a lot of complications. Robert and Steven are speaking from experience on this.

You'll want to avoid hazardous or chemical products as well. This isn't just a rule made up by Robert or Stephen either. Amazon won't fulfill any potentially hazardous products for you. It is possible to fulfill these products using a courier, but really, it's not worth doing. This is outside of the scope of this system anyway, as the training teaches that you should use FBA for your fulfillment. Therefore, things like liquids, gels, powders, and aerosol products should all be disregarded from your search. Anything that's corrosive or flammable is also out of the question. If you are ever unsure about whether or not an item is hazardous, by all means, you can contact Amazon or check their requirements on the website.

Prohibited products should be avoided, but this training isn't going to dive too deep into the specifics of this because this is something that you are probably going to be able to recognize as being unsuitable for sale. This includes things like nudity, unsafe products, intellectual privacy, plant/animal parts, drugs, tobacco, weapons, and pretty much anything that's harmful. Also, take note that knives used in a kitchen setting are best avoided as well. There is a full list of products that are prohibited on the Amazon site. This list is also included in the Utility Belt section of this training.

Multi Boxed items are another type of item that you should avoid. This includes anything that is packaged in more than one box. Basically, anything that you can fit into a single box or bag when it's being delivered to the customer is out of the question. A good example would be a garden furniture set.

Product Specifics to Avoid (5 to 8)



The next specific that you need to avoid are items that aren't packable. Certain products may be sold by other sellers that have an odd shape, even when they are broken down into different parts. A good example of this would be an oddly shaped lamp. For instance, IKEA lamps are often oddly shaped, and although they would sell fine in an IKEA store, they would be nearly impossible to pack onto a pallet or ship using a courier service. If the product you are researching is of a particularly odd shape, or if it has sharp corners or sharp edges, it would be best to avoid it.

Fragile items should be avoided too. This is an obvious one, but it's very important that it is mentioned. If an item is fragile, and therefore easy to damage, you must disregard it immediately from your research. You have to remember, an item will start its life in China, and then it will be packed into a box and onto a container. The boxes that contain your units will then travel thousands of miles, and it will then be unpacked and placed onto pallets that will be delivered in individual boxes by a courier to Amazon.

Your products will pass through many hands, so they need to be strong and well-packed enough to retain their original quality. In other words, they need to be delivered in perfect condition regardless of how far they have traveled. If a product is fragile, it's next to impossible to achieve this without breakages.

You also want to avoid products with moving parts, and there are a number of different reasons for this as well. You need to understand that the more components a product contains the more potential faults you will have. If the moving parts are easily damaged, you'll have to send individual parts out to customers after the sale has been made. If it's mechanized, there are many things that could go wrong with each component.

It's hard to create a one-size fits-all rule on this, but Robert and Stephen recommend that you think, "If these moving parts are integral to the function of the product on a regular basis, then I should avoid it." An example would be something like a hand-held blender.

The eighth specific that you should avoid is items with long sides. Robert and Stephen recommend that you avoid any product that is over 1 meter long on its longest side. That's because products such as these are too expensive and difficult to do via FBA. That's why it's best to avoid these large products. Not only can a product like this become an issue with Amazon, but in some cases it may even be impossible to ship an item like this to Amazon using your freight forwarder or courier. Again, here are some of the product specifics you will want to avoid:

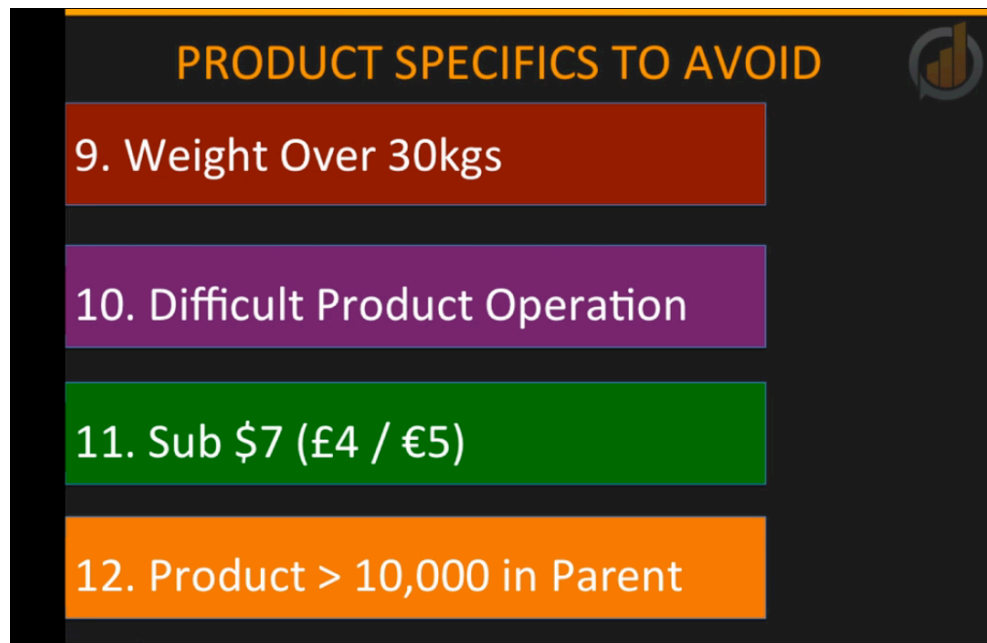
5. Non-Packable

6. Fragile (Glass)

7. Moving Parts

8. Longest Side > 1 m

Product Specifics to Avoid (9 to 12)



The list of product specifics to avoid is nearly complete. In this portion of the lesson, you'll be learning about products specifics 9 to 12, which are:

- 9. Weight Over 30kgs
- 10. Difficult Product Operation
- 11. Sub \$7 (£4/€5)
- 12. Product > 10,000 in Parent

Another product feature that you are going to want to pay close attention to is the weight of it. Any product that has a weight of over 30kgs, or 70 lbs, is too expensive or too difficult to do via FBA. It's best that you avoid these types of products. Not only is this an issue with Amazon, but there's also a difficulty and even an impossibility when it comes to transporting a product of this weight to Amazon.

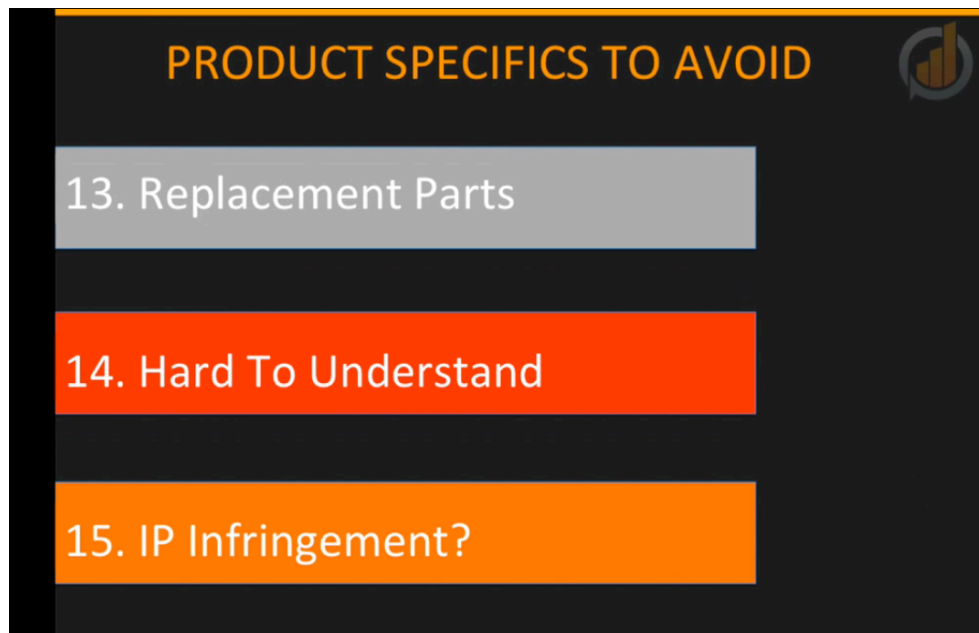
Products that are difficult to operate could also be problematic. If something is complicated to use or set up, disregard it immediately. Robert recommends that you choose no product that takes a person more than five seconds to figure out how to use and/or set up. Also, you'll want to avoid items that have a 'knack'.

Items that are under \$7 (£4/€5) are too cheap to make an adequate profit off of and should be avoided as well. That's because when you have a low-priced item, you generally will have to order a lot of units from your supplier and also sell a lot to make a return. Customers are also an issue at this price point. Cheap products tend to attract the lower end of the market, which Robert refers to as 'bargain hunters'. Drawing from him and Stephen's experiences, he says that these types of customers cause a lot of customer service issues.

If you're selling something that's cheap, you'll find that you need to find a higher volume of products. This increases the odds that some of your products may be faulty. This can in turn cause feedback and review issues with these 'bargain hunter' customers. The sale of a product should bring in as close to \$5 in profit as possible so that you can achieve your goal of following The Rule of 5. Remember, you want to get five sales a day, for five products, in five different countries, at a \$5 average profit. That will bring you \$18,750 per month. You'll probably agree that this is a great goal to strive for.

You'll also want to look for products that have a sales rank of less than 10,000 in its parent category. If it's any higher than that, you will want to stop researching it, at least for the moment. The whole point of this system is to find products that are in-demand and are selling right now. Items that are below 10,000 in a parent category, give you enough demand to validate the potential that your product will sell. This being said, it's important that you realize products can change in ranking over time. So, you might find that a product is rising in sales ranking, and when it is ranked under 10,000, you might want to reconsider it.

Product Specifics to Avoid (13 to 15)



Above you will find a screenshot of the last three product specifics to avoid. They are:

13. Replacement Parts

14. Hard to Understand

15. IP Infringement

Replacement parts for another item must be avoided at all times. This refers specifically to items that are component parts to a branded product and are integral to the functionality of that product. An example of this would be a printer toner. You can sell a toner that will fit a specific brand or model of printer. This would be integral to the functionality of that product, and as a result, it should be avoided. The reason for this is because there are many potential issues that you could run into involving licensing and compatibility. Plus, it is very hard to build a sustainable business this way since product models change all of the time.

You also don't want a product that's hard to understand. In short, if you don't know what the product is, move on immediately. This could cause you to get into something that blindsides you. Obviously, this is highly discouraged in this training.

The last specific that you must avoid is the issue of IP infringement. Never, under any circumstances, sell products that are connected to any well-know brand, character, or name. A

good example would be a product related to a Disney character. You'll see these offered from Chinese suppliers from time to time, but you don't ever want to get involved. If any of the 15 specifics that were covered are present in any of the products you're looking into, move on quickly, discarding them from your search.

Finding the Best Selling Products



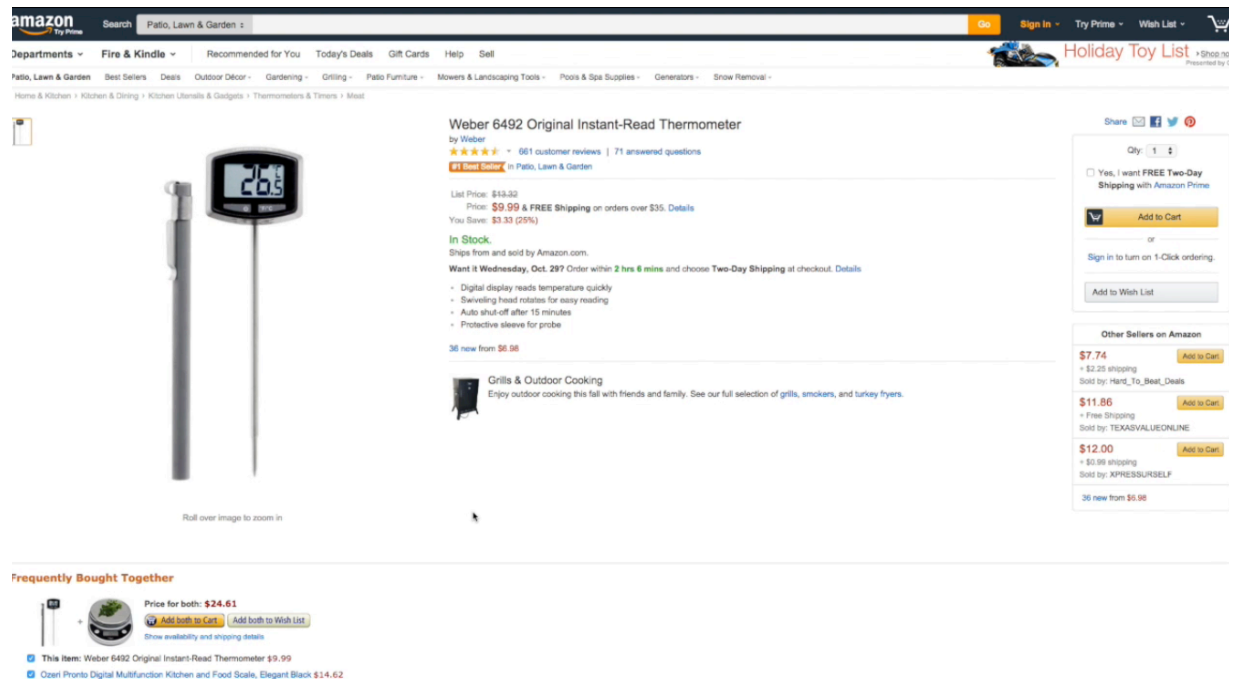
The screenshot shows the Xcellerator software interface. At the top, there is a black header with the Xcellerator logo on the left and a 'User' profile icon on the right. Below the header, the main area is titled 'Search'. On the left side of the 'Search' section, there is a green square icon and a magnifying glass icon. The central part of the 'Search' section contains a form with several input fields: 'Short Description' (with a placeholder text 'Short Description'), 'ASIN', 'Site' (with a dropdown menu showing 'US'), 'Price' (with a dropdown menu showing '\$'), 'Category' (with a dropdown menu showing 'Others'), and 'Rank' (with a dropdown menu showing '1'). To the right of these fields is a blue 'Create' button. Below the form, there is a table with columns labeled 'Short Description', 'ASIN', 'Site', 'Price', 'Category', and 'Rank'. The table currently shows 'No search items'.

Now you're going to learn how to find the best selling products that you can begin logging in your search results. The first thing that you're going to want to do is go to Amazon.com, and then on another tab, you'll want to have the Xcellerator software opened up. Log into this software using your own personal username and password, and you will find yourself in the 'Search' area shown above. This is where you are going to log the research that you do on Amazon.com. You can, of course, use perform research on different platforms like Amazon.uk and Amazon.de as well.

Once you are logged into the software, open the tab that you have Amazon.com opened up in. Next, click 'Shop by Department' in order to open up the list of top-level categories that was discussed previously in this course. Also, get out your list of categories to avoid, which you also learned about earlier in the training. You will also need the list of restricted categories.

In the case study example, Robert chose the 'Home, Garden & Tools' category and the 'Patio, Lawn & Garden' subcategory. When he clicked on the link for this subcategory, this brought up the main page for this category and the products that were listed there. Now you need to find the top-level sellers within the category you have chosen. When you scroll down the page, you will find that there is 'Best Sellers' section included on the page for this subcategory. This is updated hourly, by the way.

Simply click on the link to enter this section, and you will be presented with the Top 100 Amazon best sellers for this category. Starting at #1, you will want to start applying the 'Product Specifics to Avoid' that you learned about. So, you would click on the first product and check to see if it has any of the specifics listed. If it has any of those characteristics, then you will want to disregard that product and move on to the next. If a product does not have any of the specifics that you want to avoid, you are going to want to record the data pertaining to the product that you have found in the software. After that, you'll move on to the next bestselling product.



Above you'll see the listing for the current bestseller in 'Patio, Lawn & Garden'. As you can see, this is a thermometer. It's battery-operated, so immediately it was disregarded. The second item listed required power as well, so Robert moved on. The third product was a hazardous or chemical item. That wouldn't work either, and Robert went on to the fourth. This item was a 3-sided grill brush. It is shown below. Robert checked it against his list and discovered:

- It's not powered
- It's not hazardous
- It's not prohibited
- It's not multi-boxed
- It's packable
- It's not fragile
- It doesn't have any moving parts
- It's longest side is not over one meter
- It doesn't weigh over 30kgs
- It's not difficult to operate

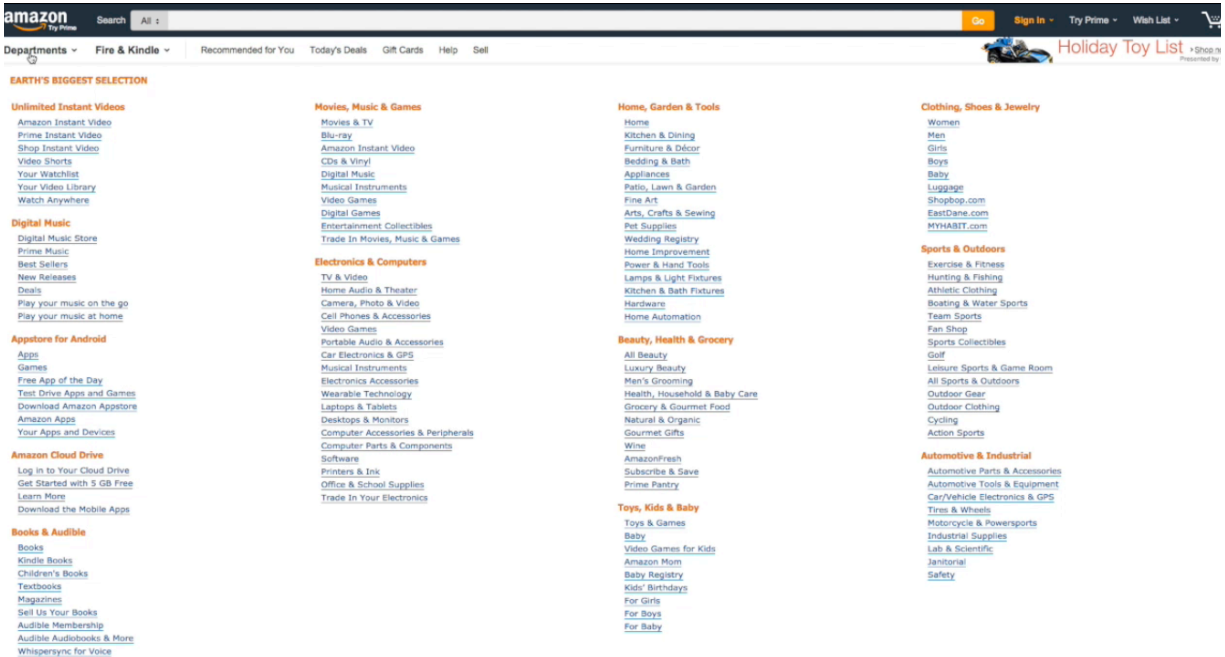
- It doesn't cost less than \$7
- It's not over 10,000 in its category
- It's not a replacement part
- It's not hard to understand
- It wouldn't cause any IP infringement problems

Since this item meets all the criteria, you would want to record it as part of your search list. So, you'll pull up the 'Search' interface of your Xcellerator software, and you'll start by entering in a short description of the item. In his case study example, Robert simply entered in 'BBQ Grill Brush'. Next, you'll want to enter in the product's ASIN. Again, this can be found in the 'Product Details' section of the product's listing. Then, you would enter in the site, which was the US site, and the price, which was \$7.99. You'll also add in the product's rank and category. In this case, the rank was 5 and the category was 'Other'.

The next product listed on Amazon was a solar powered LED light. Since it is a powered product and it requires external parts, this wouldn't fit the search criteria. The next product that Robert looked up was a barbeque grill cover. This product met all of the specifications, so this would be a product that you would want to record in the software. Again, you would take down the product's ASIN, the site in which you found it in, the price, the product's rank, and the category it is in as well as a short description of what the product is.

You'll want to go through each and every item within the top 100 and record the data of the viable items you find in the software. In other words, you are only going to record the products that meet all of the criteria listed above. By default, only 20 results will be shown at one time, but there are links to bring up more results located down at the bottom of the page.

Expanding Past the Best Sellers



Now that you know how to find top-selling products, it's time to expand your search past the bestsellers. Begin by going to the Amazon.com homepage, and open your Xcellerator research software in another tab as well. Again, you're going to look up the list of departments, shown above, and then choose a category. In his presentation, Robert opened up the same category that he started with, which was 'Patio, Lawn & Garden'.

When you enter the main page of the category you have chosen, scroll down to the bestsellers in that category. Now, you have already searched the top 100. This time, you'll want to start looking into the subcategories. You will want to begin by looking at the first subcategory. Then, you want to go through the top 100 in this subcategory, applying the same criteria to these products as you did when you searched through the other products. As you do, add the products that are feasible to your list. Doing so will grow your list even further.

Once you have finished going through the first subcategory, go back to the main bestsellers page and choose the second subcategory listed. Go through the top 100 for this subcategory as well, and then continue on by going through each and every subcategory on the list. When you finish doing all of this, you can even drill down even further by looking at the products within the subcategories of a subcategory.

You will start to see duplicates appearing, and you won't want to record these. Just record one set of data for each relevant listing. Of course, anytime you find a product that is absent of the 'products specific to avoid' criteria, you'll want to record it inside of the Xcellerator software. If you do happen to make a mistake inside of the 'Search' section of the software, simply click on the 'Edit' link at the end of that row. This will make the information come back up to the top and open up the fields, allowing you to change the price or whatever you need to do.

You can even delete an item at this point if you need to. For example, you may decide to do so if you realize that it really doesn't meet all of the qualifications. Once you finish editing an item, simple re-click the 'Edit' button for that item, and it will pop back down into your research area. After you have completely exhausted the parent category for a certain department, go back into the 'Departments' section of the site to select another top-level category to research. Again, you will also want to search through the top products in the subcategories of that category as well as its sub-subcategories.