

Title:

Sizing Up "Free" Offers

Word Count:

273

Summary:

Consumers receive a number of offers to try products or services for free or at reduced rates. They may sound great to shoppers who want to try something for a period of time before committing to join or purchase--but are the offers really a good deal?

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Consumers receive a number of offers to try products or services for free or at reduced rates. Often, these offers are used to market gym memberships, book clubs, magazine subscriptions, travel clubs and other services or goods. They may sound great to shoppers who want to try something for a period of time before committing to join or purchase-but are the offers really a good deal?

The National Consumers League provides information to help people judge a trial offer-and the company behind it-before saying "yes" to it. The group offers this advice:

Check Out The Company

Reputable companies will:

• Make it easy to contact them by giving you their name, address and telephone number.

• Disclose their privacy policy that explains what personal and financial information is collected about you, how the information may be used and with whom it may be shared.

To find out if a company with a trial offer has any complaints against it, contact the local Better Business Bureau or state/local consumer protection agency. You will find them in the telephone book or you can search for them online.

Read The Fine Print

Get all the facts before you agree to a trial offer. Know exactly what you're signing up for.

A reputable trial offer should:

• Tell you exactly what is being offered, how much it costs, the membership benefits and restrictions, the payment options and the cancellation policy.

• Provide complete information on the terms and limitations of the trial offer, including the length of the trial offer and what action you need to take if you do not want to continue after the trial period is over.