# Vinted’s expansion into vintage furniture offers bargains but risks abound



The online marketplace Vinted, widely known for buying and selling second-hand clothes, has recently expanded its offerings to include vintage and antique furniture. With over 16 million UK users, the platform’s move into this new market has sparked interest and concern among antiques experts regarding the authenticity and quality of items listed.

Antiques specialists caution buyers that while purchasing on Vinted might offer savings of around 20 percent compared to traditional dealers, there are significant risks involved. Alex Davison, manager of Newark Antiques & Interiors, emphasised the challenges in verifying authenticity online: “Specialists guarantee authenticity as they have a reputation to protect. There is no substitute to seeing an item in person and talking to a furniture expert.” He warns that photographs are a crucial tool in assessing items but may not always reveal the complete story.

Independent vintage furniture trader Paul Evans from Nottingham shared his approach when using Vinted: “You want to see the item from all angles and any blemishes should be clearly shown – that means at least half a dozen high resolution photos. If it is not well lit, then this is a warning sign. Do not feel embarrassed about asking to see more pictures if there are not enough being shown on the website.” Both traders advise buyers to scrutinise item descriptions carefully and communicate openly with sellers, requesting written guarantees on authenticity and condition where possible.

Under UK consumer law, specifically the Consumer Rights Act, sellers have no obligation to disclose faults, but misrepresentation of goods is prohibited. Evans recommends buyers be wary of overly flattering descriptions such as “as new” that conflict with photographic evidence, saying: “An honest trader will detail imperfections. In the unlikely event an item really is as new then you should expect to pay a huge premium.”

The terms “antique” and “vintage” are often used loosely on Vinted listings. Evans notes that these labels can sometimes be a cover for “worthless old junk” and urges buyers to request specific information about an item’s age and provenance. Under Vinted’s rules, buyers who receive items that are “significantly not as described” — including fakes — can demand a full refund within two days of receipt by providing photographic evidence and a detailed explanation. Buyers initially must cover return postage, which should be reimbursed upon successful claims. A mandatory buyer protection fee also applies to all purchases to cover payment security, customer support, and refund policies. For items priced under £500, the fee ranges from 30 to 80p plus 3 to 8 percent of the purchase price; for items over £500 it is 3 percent.

Despite these protections, experts warn outcomes can vary. Davison highlights that “the market is fraught with such dangers,” with some items described as antiques showing modern construction details such as interior woods or joints inconsistent with true period pieces.

The reliability of buyer reviews on the platform has also come under scrutiny. Davison pointed out that disreputable sellers sometimes commission fake glowing reviews to boost their reputation, saying “Telltale signs of fake reviews to look for include spelling mistakes and generic terms such as ‘really nice piece’.” The Department for Business and Trade estimates that up to one in six online reviews may be fabricated. Jess Jones, a Vinted trader from Clapham, shared her perspective: “A problem with Vinted is the descriptions often include limited photos, and the reviews can be fake – I have been cheated by sellers in the past. This is why I would be wary of buying antiques on the site.” She added that as more users familiar with Vinted from buying clothes explore furniture, the market may become more established.

To gauge the accuracy and value of listings, Paul Evans reviewed 13 antiques available on Vinted, comparing expert appraisals with asking prices. His findings revealed mixed results:

* An “antique vintage mahogany mirror” listed for £30.10 was identified as oak and not old; Evans described it as “car boot sale tat,” valuing it at £10.
* A “Tenerife antique style pocket mirror” at £3.33 was actually a 1970s kitsch powder compact, worth around £10.
* “Antique brass lions’ feet” for £21.70 were fairly priced despite the item having just three legs.
* A “rosewood Edwardian clock” listed at £324.29 was a nice piece but neither perfect nor fashionable, and valued at about £150.
* A “very old antique clock” at £14.35 was deemed cheap junk and probably non-functional, worth about £2.
* An “exquisite Victorian games table” priced at £1,545 was identified as an 1980s-style chess table with a polish finish, valued near £500.
* “Brass Corinthian column table lamps” at £515 were typical 1970s items of average quality, worth £200.
* A “Victorian double-barrel telescope” priced at £42.70 was labelled cheap and nasty rubbish, with no value recommended.
* An “antique rivet cabinet” at £63.70 was a 1980s reproduction, possibly worth £30.
* A “very good bureau” sold for £42.70 was actually very poor quality and suggested better used for firewood.
* A “rare beautiful vintage book cabinet” at £63.70 was a 1930s Art Deco oak piece, a bargain valued at £100.
* An “1800s antique porcelain figure” sold for £3.85 was a genuine 1880s German piece valued at around £30.
* A “very good antique chair” listed at £32.70 was a standard mahogany side chair, fairly priced at £30.

These assessments underscore the difficulty of distinguishing genuine antiques from reproductions or lower-quality items when shopping online through platforms like Vinted.

In summary, while Vinted’s expansion into vintage and antique furniture offers new opportunities for enthusiasts and bargain hunters, buyers are advised to proceed with caution. The lack of in-person examination and variable seller expertise can lead to mismatches between advertised and actual quality or authenticity. Experts advise thorough scrutiny of photographs, item descriptions, seller reputations, and open communication before committing to purchases.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://company.vinted.com/newsroom/vinted-expands-footprint-Nordics> - This URL provides information about Vinted's expansion into new markets, highlighting its growth as a second-hand marketplace. However, it does not specifically mention the expansion into vintage and antique furniture.
2. <https://sustainabilitymag.com/articles/second-hand-not-second-best-the-vinted-expansion> - This article discusses Vinted's expansion beyond fashion into other areas like electronics and toys, but does not specifically address antique furniture. It emphasizes the platform's focus on operational excellence and sustainability.
3. <https://www.nssmag.com/en/lifestyle/38715/vinted-growth-global-expansion-ipo-luxury-verification> - This link mentions Vinted's global expansion and growth, including its valuation, but does not specifically detail its entry into the antique furniture market. It does highlight luxury item verification processes.
4. <https://www.nssmag.com/en/fashion/38591/vinted-sales-growth-expansion-new-markets> - This article notes Vinted's sales growth and expansion into new markets. While it emphasizes the platform's success as a clothing resale site, it does not specifically address vintage or antique furniture.
5. <https://www.trendhunter.com/trends/vinted> - This URL discusses Vinted's expansion into the Canadian market and its focus on second-hand fashion, but does not address its involvement in antique furniture.
6. <https://www.vinted.co.uk/> - This is Vinted's UK website where users can explore listings, including potential vintage or antique furniture, though specific verification of authenticity is not detailed here.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/mailplus/article-14655025/Vinted-treasure-trove-antiques-worse-car-boot-sale-antiques-expert.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data