

Amazon Smile - A free donation program for everyone

Have you ever thought about your charitable donations. Am I giving enough? Am I giving to much? When you pass a donation bucket, do you think, 'I would donate if I had some change', or 'I'll donate on the way back'. Well this program may be for you. Especially if you do a lot of shopping on line at Amazon.com. AmazonSmile is a program started in 2014 that gives donations to a charity you designate based on your purchases at Amazon.com, or more accurately, smile.amazon.com.

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon that lets you enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the eligible charitable organization of your choice.

You can manage your purchases and other account information on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile using a single account. You can use your existing Amazon.com account on AmazonSmile if you have one, or create a new account if you don't.

On your first visit to AmazonSmile, you will be prompted to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Your selection will be remembered for the next time you shop, and then every eligible purchase you make on AmazonSmile will result in a donation.

You can choose from almost one million 501(c)(3) public charitable organizations that are registered and in good standing with the IRS. You can even select eligible charitable organizations that have not yet registered to receive donations from the AmazonSmile program and Amazon will contact your chosen organization to ask them to register to receive donations from AmazonSmile. Many Lions organizations are already registered to receive.

From time to time Amazon highlights one or more charitable organizations from the total list of eligible organizations to make it easier for customers to choose an organization to support from the almost one million available, but they do not endorse any particular organization or the causes they support.

You may change the charitable organization you want to support at any time, and the purchases after the change will accrue donations for your newly selected charitable organization without affecting purchases made prior to the change.

There is **no cost** to charitable **organizations** or to **you**, the AmazonSmile customer. Customers will have access to the same products, features, services, and prices as on Amazon.com. The shopping experience is identical to Amazon.com with the added benefit that the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from purchases to charitable organizations selected by you.

The purchase price for each item is the sale price, excluding shipping, handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, and service charges, and less any rebates, returns, and bad debt. For example, if you purchase \$200 on smile.amazon.com, before shipping and other fees, \$1 will be donated, at no cost to you, to your selected charity. Imagine, if your purchases amount to \$2000 over a year. The total donation would be \$10. Then imagine 1000 Lions doing the same. Now you have \$10,000. Over time this will add up to quite a contribution. It may not seem like much, but over time it will make a difference.

100% of the donation amount generated from your eligible purchase on AmazonSmile will be donated. The donation amounts generated by your purchases are combined with the donation amounts from all other customers that selected the same organization, and each quarter the AmazonSmile Foundation makes donations to registered charitable organizations by electronic funds transfer. Donations are generally transferred approximately 45 days after the end of each calendar quarter. Donations are not made for products that are returned. The amount that the AmazonSmile Foundation donates as a result of your AmazonSmile purchase is not tax deductible by you, since it is the AmazonSmile Foundation making the donation.

This doesn't mean you can't also make direct donations to your charitable organization, but the program does allow you to make donations whenever you purchase on smile.amazon.com without even thinking about.

Personally, I have the **Lions Foundation of North Dakota** listed as my donation preference since I signed up over a year ago, but many other Lions organizations are also listed. LFND wasn't on the list at the time, but Amazon held on to my purchase donations until they were registered. All it takes is a quick trip to smile.amazon.com, set up an account and your preferences, or use your present Amazon account, and whenever you shop Amazon, go to smile.amazon.com instead.

Happy Shopping !

Butch Frank – New England Lions