

SSL Certificate Information

What is an SSL Certificate and how does it work?

SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) is the transaction security protocol used by websites to protect online communications. The most common use of SSL is to provide protection for confidential data, such as personal details or credit card information, entered into a website.

The SSL Certificate provides two primary functions:

- SSL Encryption allows data to be transmitted over computer networks in a secure manner*
- Identity Assurance (validation) allows the business running the site to 'prove' that they are who they claim to be*

Once a secure transaction is initiated, (i.e. click the Submit or Buy button to begin a transaction on a website), there are four basic steps taken to establish a secure connection:

- 1. The browser checks the SSL Certificate to make sure that it is valid and that the site you are connecting to is legitimate.*
- 2. Data encryption levels are established based on what the browser and website server can both use to understand each other.*
- 3. The browser and server send each other unique codes to use when encrypting the information that will be sent.*
- 4. The browser and server start talking using the encryption, the Web browser shows the encrypting icon, and the Web pages and information are processed securely.*