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Buyers warned about life-threatening fake consoles

Bargains from Asia could be poorly
-made counterfeits

by Verity Burns published on 5 December 2008

HM Revenues & Customs has issued a warning to gamers to be vigilant when buying games consoles and adaptors from abroad this Christmas, as it says many could be life-threatening counterfeits.

Hundreds of imported fake games consoles seized at UK freight depots were found to have been supplied with potentially dangerous power adaptors.

The goods had been purchased from a number of websites, many based in Asia, which claimed the items were "genuine Nintendo products".

Nintendo DS consoles were some of the most popular consoles with buyers looking for a bargain, getting them for around £40 instead of the usual RRP over here of £100.

Nintendo has confirmed that the Nintendo DS and DS Lite consoles are indeed fake, and that the power adaptors supplied with them were not Nintendo manufactured either.

This meant that they had not been electronically tested to meet UK safety standards, and that they could therefore be very dangerous.

HMRC's head of Intellectual Property rights Pamela Rogers said: "At best, these consoles would have led to disappointment on Christmas morning; at worst, they could have caused serious harm or injury.

"UK consumers must be vigilant when purchasing goods online. Buy from a reputable or regulated site and, if purchasing from outside the UK or a new website, research the site - check all the facts before you buy".

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As for the moral to this story, we'll leave it to Mike Rawlinson, managing director of ELSPA, to round up.

He said: "We are asking all concerned parents to be diligent - often when a bargain seems too good to be true it actually is".