

How to spot a bootleg Jem DVD while shopping online

Packaging

Official releases are usually sealed and they have a hologram of authenticity on the case. Most Jem fans know and recognise the artwork of all of the official releases. Custom artwork or screen captures used as DVD covers indicate copies/bootlegs.

Here are pictures of official releases for quick reference (pictures are courtesy of Jem's Space).

Australia:



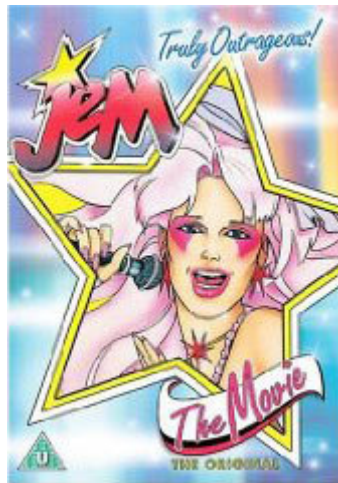
The Netherlands:



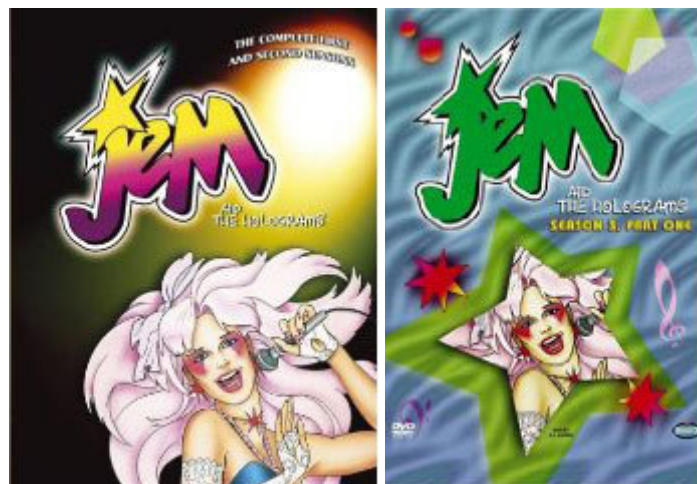
Sweden:



United Kingdom:



Unites States:



France:



Check with the seller

If you can't tell through looks alone, you should double check with the seller.

Ask very specific questions like "are these official Rhino (or other manufacturer) releases and are they sealed?". If a seller is not willing to give you this information or they lie and tell you it is when it's blatantly obvious when you receive the DVD that it isn't, you have the right to ask for a refund and report them to eBay or Amazon for using misleading auction/product descriptions and giving misleading information to secure an illegal sale. Any contact through eBay's own internal messaging system will record/log the lie they sent which will further substantiate your argument. Documented contact of this nature is sure to get them on eBay and Amazon's questionable seller list and if more people come forward to corroborate the allegations, the seller will eventually be banned.

Other online signs and considerations

Bigger companies are not stupid enough to sell bootlegs on eBay/Amazon as they have a reputation to uphold. This will be substantiated by their feedback rating - would you be willing to risk your reputation if you had a feedback score in the thousands for the sake of a bootleg sale?

You'll find that most bootleggers aim to sell their illegal copies using new accounts with a small number of feedbacks as it doesn't matter to them if they get banned. They have no reputation to protect as indicated by their low feedback scores. Likewise if you see a seller with multiple DVD boxset listings, and very low feedbacks, chances are they're not going to be an official trader, just some opportunist running off copies to sell en-mass.

Compilation DVDs of harvested videos from YouTube or Vimeo (or similar online video upload stores) or DVD sets containing highly compressed video which claim to be complete (all 65 Jem episodes) yet span over a very small number of DVDs, indicate poor quality video and are sure to be bootlegs - certainly NOT DVD standard as guaranteed by an official release.

I've received my DVDs – what should I look for in person?

At first glance, an official DVD should have bright, crisply printed artwork on both the box cover and the DVD label itself. If your purchase looks wishy-washy and is without a DVD label it will almost certainly be a copy.

The written surface of the DVD is the next thing to look at (the side that the movie is burnt to that goes face-down in your DVD player). If the written surface is silver, your DVD is official. If the written surface is pink or purple, your DVD is most likely a copy, as this is the colour of the dye used on commercially available blank DVD media.

Running DVDs in a computer will confirm if they are official or not.

Nero's free Info Tool: <http://www.nero.com/enu/support-nero8-tools-utilities.html>

will tell you if the DVDs have region protection (official ones will be protected, copies won't be) Nero's Info Tool will also advise the size; most official DVDs tend to be larger than the commercially available 4.7GB blank media that can be bought in any computer store, so if the DVD you put in your computer is around 4.3GB, it will be a copy, as this is the size that all copying software will shrink the contents of an official DVD to, to squeeze it onto a blank 4.7GB DVD, while preserving maximum possible quality.

If you doubt your purchase's authenticity based on these considerations, please contact eBay/Amazon with your reasons and request a refund. This will also notch up points to ban the seller.

Lastly, make sure you ward off other potential buyers in eBay or Amazon's feedback section.