
10 things you can do to avoid scams and fraud



10 ways to keep yourself protected

The FBI estimates that senior citizens lose more than \$3 billion each year to financial scams. Help protect yourself and your loved ones by following these 10 practices:

- 1. Spot imposters.** Scammers often pretend to be someone you trust, like a family member, a charity, or a company you do business with. Don't send money or give out personal information in response to an unexpected request via text, email, or phone call.
- 2. Verify online.** Type a company or product name into your search engine along with words like "complaint" and "scam". Or search for a phrase that describes your situation, for example "call from 000-000-000".
- 3. Don't believe your caller ID.** Technology makes it easy for scammers to fake caller ID information, so the name and number you see aren't always real. If you think the caller might be telling the truth, call the company on a number you know to be true to verify.
- 4. Don't pay upfront for a promise.** Someone might ask you to pay in advance for things like debt relief, credit and loan offers, mortgage assistance, or a job. They might even say you've won a prize, but first you have to pay taxes or fees. That is most likely a scam.
- 5. Consider how you pay.** Sending money through Western Union, MoneyGram, or cash apps like Venmo and Zelle is risky because it can be difficult to get your money back. That is also true for reloadable cards and gift cards. Government offices and real companies would never require you to use these payment methods.



- 6. Talk to someone.** Before you give up your money or personal information, talk to someone you trust—con artists want you to make decisions in a hurry. They might even threaten you. Slow down, and check out their story thoroughly.
- 7. Hang up.** If you answer the phone and hear a recorded sales pitch, hang up immediately.
- 8. Be skeptical about free offers.** Some companies use free trials to sign you up for products and bill you every month until you cancel. Always review your monthly statements for charges you don't recognize, and cancel any recurring charges immediately.
- 9. Don't deposit a check and wire money back.** By law, banks must make funds from deposited checks available generally within days, but uncovering a fake check can take weeks. If a check you deposit turns out to be a fake, you are responsible for repaying the bank.
- 10. Sign up for free scam alerts** at ftc.gov/scams

Report fraud to Wells Fargo

Zelle/Wires/Online Fraud
866-867-5568

Identity Theft
800-869-3557

Credit Card
800-642-4720

Checking
800-869-3557

Small Business accounts
800-225-5935

Phishing email/text messages
reportphish@wellsfargo.com

Tell someone

Report scams and fraud to the Federal Trade Commission to stop further criminal activities at [Reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/report-fraud)