

Scams

This fact sheet looks at some strategies to protect yourself from being scammed. It can be used:

- as a discussion starter with friends or family.
- for self-reflection to check how much you already know and where can you find more information.



Hello (your name)!

CONGRATULATIONS YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO RECEIVE THE LATEST APPLE IPHONE!

Please make sure you claim your phone now.

If you don't, we have to pass this opportunity to the next lucky finalist.

Today's draw: (your email address)

Please click the button below and follow the instructions on the website.

CLICK HERE



Are you tempted? Scams are now so sophisticated, it is often very difficult to know if you're dealing with a genuine request or a scammer trying to trick you.

1. Did you know?

According to the ACCC (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission), Australians continue to be scammed out of millions of dollars every year. Have you received an offer that seemed too good to refuse, perhaps an email advising you that you've inherited a large sum of money from a long lost relative or maybe an invitation to connect with an online admirer? Scammers know how to entice you to get what they want.¹

2. Types of scams

The ACCC² lists different types of scams:

- UNEXPECTED MONEY - Inheritance scams, Nigerian scams.
- UNEXPECTED WINNINGS - Scratchie, travel, prize and lottery scams.
- FAKE CHARITIES
- DATING AND ROMANCE
- BUYING OR SELLING - False billing, online shopping, psychic and clairvoyant scams.
- JOB AND INVESTMENT - Fake money-making opportunities and pyramid schemes.
- ATTEMPTS TO GAIN PERSONAL INFORMATION - Identity fraud.
- THREATS AND EXTORTION

Scams are mostly delivered by phone, email and text message.



3. Strategies to protect yourself

NEVER

- Respond to emails asking for personal information.
- Send money, gift cards or give credit card details, online account details, or personal information to anyone you don't know or trust.
- Click on an email link to your bank or other websites when you are asked to provide personal information.

ALWAYS

- Contact an organisation like SCAMWATCH for help or to [report a scam](#).
- Manually type the organisation's URL (website address) into your browser rather than click on an email link.
- Try phoning the organisation by using a telephone contact number from the site you entered manually.
- Look for the signs of a hoax email such as incorrect spelling, grammatical errors, inconsistent formatting and poor artwork and colours.
- Seek help immediately if you think you've been scammed.
- Know your rights if you do get scammed. For example, if you have been sold something and feel you have been tricked, you have rights under Australian consumer laws. Find out more from the [ACCC website](#).

Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it's probably a scam.

4. Power words for scams

Understanding and being able to use these words will provide you with more power to avoid being scammed.

COERCION	A type of bullying or pressuring someone to do something without giving them time to check or gain advice.
FIT FOR PURPOSE	Goods received which do not meet the intended purpose for which they were advertised.

¹[ACCC Protecting yourself from scams](#)

²[ACCC Scamwatch](#)

GUARANTEE	An assurance about goods or services that they will work and do what you asked for.
MERCHANTABLE QUALITY	Fit for purpose and matching a sample or description.
MOBILE PREMIUM SERVICE SCAM	Where scammers create SMS competitions or trivia scams to trick you into paying extremely high call or text rates when replying to a text message.
PHISHING SCAMS	Attempts by scammers to trick you into giving out personal information such as your bank account numbers, passwords and credit card numbers.
PYRAMID SCHEME	An illegal marketing scheme where you are invited to pay to join a team or group but you need to recruit new members to make money.
URL	A uniform resource locator (URL), often called a web address.

5. Need more help? Want to know more?

- Visit [Suncorp Bank website](#) to read more about online fraud in banking.
- Find information about scams involving investments, managed funds, financial advice, superannuation and insurance on ASIC's MoneySmart website.
- Read about the [most recent scams](#) at ACCC's Scamwatch website, and learn more about how to protect yourself.



Disclaimer: The information on this fact sheet is general educational information. It is not financial advice. Financial Basics Foundation is not a financial advisor. The information is designed to improve your financial literacy by increasing your awareness and understanding of the topics described.