



## Top 10 Most Common Scams in 2024

Organizations like Consumer Fraud Reporting, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Fraud.org, and Better Business Bureau constantly collect reports on scams and are able to identify trends. So far this year, these are the scams they've identified as the most common.

**The biggest takeaway when avoiding scams, if it sounds too good to be true—it probably is!**

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### 1. Identity Theft, Phishing, and Pharming Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** Scammers pose as trusted organizations or someone you trust and solicit personal information.
- **How to avoid it:** Be cautious of suspicious requests for sensitive data.

The FTC explains it like this... The message could be from a scammer, who might:

- say they've noticed some suspicious activity or log-in attempts — *they haven't*.
- claim there's a problem with your account or your payment information — *there isn't*.
- say you need to confirm some personal or financial information — *you don't*.
- include an invoice you don't recognize — *it's fake*.
- want you to click on a link to make a payment — *but the link has malware*.

### 2. Phone Call Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** Unsolicited calls from purported reputable organizations can be deceptive.
- **How to avoid it:** Verify the caller's legitimacy by hanging up and contacting the company directly.

### 3. Debt Collection Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** Watch out for aggressive debt collectors demanding personal information.
- **How to avoid it:** Ask for details to confirm authenticity before making any payments.

### 4. Fake Government Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** Demands for money or personal details from alleged government agencies (IRS, FBI, Medicare).
- **How to avoid it:** Ask for details to confirm authenticity before giving away

personal information.

## 5. Scam Text Messages

- **How to identify the scam:** Unsolicited messages requesting personal information, requesting payment, or for you to click a link.
- **How to avoid it:** Delete the message and don't click on any links.

## 6. Loan or Credit Fixer Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** False promises of business or personal loans even if your credit is bad or for credit repair services. They will often ask for a fee upfront.
- **How to avoid it:** Don't make upfront payments and verify the legitimacy of services and companies before paying anything or providing personal details.

## 7. Fake Prizes, Sweepstakes, Free Gifts, or Lottery Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** Convincing messages that claim you won some sort of prize, lottery, or gift that requires a small fee or to enter your personal details.
- **How to avoid it:** Disregard claims of winnings that you didn't enter or require payment upfront. Genuine lotteries don't ask for fees to claim prizes.

## 8. Online Shopping Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** Purchasing something online, either on a bogus website that is slightly misspelled or from an online marketplace where you have to pay before you actually receive the product.
- **How to avoid it:** Exercise caution with online purchases, especially from unfamiliar websites. Research, read reviews, and use secure payment methods to minimize risks.

## 9. Car-Related Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** Basically anything to do with a car (car loans, car buying, auto repairs or warranties) that sound too good to be true or from an institution you've never heard of.
- **How to avoid it:** Be wary of car-related transactions. Verify vehicle history, verify institution legitimacy, and avoid online transactions with untrustworthy sources.

## 10. Fake Check Scams

- **How to identify the scam:** Fraudulent checks, especially if something looks wrong on the check, you don't recognize the bank name or there's an overpayment in the amount.
- **How to avoid it:** Verify checks with issuing banks (not using the contact details on the check) and avoid wiring money to unknown parties.

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