

12 SCAMS of Christmas

Look-Alike Websites



When stores sell out, you may find the items online on different websites than the official retailer's. Remember, it's easy to mimic a real website. Some sellers will take your money and run, leaving you without the gift or money to buy it elsewhere.

Social Media Gift Exchange



Purchasing one gift and receiving 36 sounds like a great deal, but this seasonal scam is actually a pyramid scheme, which is illegal.

Grandparent Scams



Seniors should be cautious if they get a call from a grandchild claiming to be in an accident, arrested or hospitalized while traveling in another country. Never send money unless you confirm with another family member that it's true.

Temporary Holiday Jobs



Retailers and delivery services need extra help at the holidays, but beware of solicitations that require you to share personal information online or pay for a job lead. Apply in person or go to retailers' main website to find out who is hiring.

Free Gift Cards



Pop-up ads or email offering free gift cards are often just a ploy to get your personal information that can later be used for identity theft.

E-Cards



Electronic cards can be great fun, but be careful. Two red flags to watch out for are: the sender's name is not apparent; you are required to share additional information to get the card.



Fake Shipping Notifications

These can have attachments or links to sites that will download malware on your computer to steal your identity and your passwords. Don't be fooled by a holiday phishing scam.



Phony Charities

Everyone is in a generous mood during the holidays, so scammers take advantage of that with fake charity solicitations in email, on social media sites, and even by text. Check out charities at give.org before donating.



Letters From Santa

Several trusted companies offer charming and personalized letters from Santa, but scammers mimic them to get personal information from unsuspecting parents. Check with bbb.org to find out which ones are legitimate.



Unusual Forms of Payments

Be wary of anyone who asks you to pay for holiday purchases using prepaid debit cards, gift cards, wire transfers, third parties, etc. These payments cannot be traced and cannot be undone.



Travel Scams

With busy holiday travel, bargains may be tempting. Be cautious when booking through online ads, never wire money to someone you don't know and ask for references.



Puppy Scams

Be very careful buying pets online, especially during the holidays. You may get a puppy mill pooch with problems, or you may get nothing at all because it was a scam.

For more information about scams please visit: www.BBB.org

