12 Frauds of Christmas

Make sure you have a #FraudFreeXmas: Action Fraud and Thames Valley Police reveal 12 fraud types to look out for this Christmas

People celebrating this festive season are being encouraged to have a #FraudFreeXmas and stay alert to fraudsters taking advantage of the time of year, as Action Fraud reveal the 12 frauds of Christmas.

Action Fraud, the national fraud and cybercrime reporting service, has launched a Christmas campaign, revealing 12 fraud types to look out for throughout the festive season. People are being encouraged to stay extra vigilant online, and in person, as criminals will be seeking to take advantage of the time of year whilst people celebrate Christmas and the festive season.

Adam Mercer, Deputy Head of Action Fraud, said:

"Criminals do not stop for Christmas and will continue to operate, targeting busy people who are preparing for the festive season this year.

"We are launching the 12 frauds of Christmas campaign this year to highlight some of the fraud types to look out for during the festive season. Everyone celebrating should stay vigilant, as fraudsters will use the busy period to catch people out.

"Make sure you follow our advice this Christmas and protect yourself from becoming a victim of fraud or cybercrime. •

Detective Inspector Duncan Wynn, Head of Central Fraud Unit, Thames Valley Police said:

"Being targeted with fraud at any time of year can be distressing, but particularly so during the festive period.

"Fraudsters will take advantage of the pressure many of us feel to seek out bargains for loved ones, without breaking the bank.

“Be sure to research the RRP (recommended retail price) of items and remain wary of anything which seems to fall far below the original price without double checking first.

“Use the Check a website facility from Get Safe Online which is an easy-to-use online tool which helps you to determine whether a website is likely to be legitimate or a fraud â€¦ before you visit it.

“You can follow @TVPCyber_Fraud on X/Twitter to follow #fraudfreexmas.

“Finally, remember our ‘presence’ within our communities looking out for each other is the most valuable gift of all. •

New figures from Action Fraud show that the 12 types of fraud featured in this year’s Christmas campaign resulted in victims losing a combined total of £224 million during the 2023 festive period. Data also shows that nearly three million phishing emails were reported to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) from November 2023 to January 2024.

What are the 12 frauds of Christmas?

- Phishing
- Pet Fraud
- Online shopping fraud
- Social media and email account hacking
- Courier fraud
- Romance fraud
- Gift card fraud
- Charity fraud
- Investment fraud
- QR code fraud
- Holiday fraud
- Ticket fraud

What can you do to protect yourself from fraud this Christmas?

- **Protect your online accounts:** the password you use for your email account should be different from all your other passwords for online accounts. Use three random words to create a strong and memorable password, and enable 2-step verification (2SV).
- **Do your research:** make sure you do a thorough online search before making any big financial decisions. Check the authenticity of the company or organisation before

making any investment, donation to charity or booking tickets for a concert, event or holiday.

- **Be cautious about how you send money:** avoid paying via bank transfer and do not be pressured into transferring large sums of money. Any trusted organisation will not force you to transfer money on the spot and only a fraudster will try to rush you. For making purchases online, use a credit card if you can.
- **Be wary of unsolicited emails, texts, QR codes or contact on social media:** from seeing unbelievably good deals on tickets or holidays, to seeing a suspiciously cheap prices on items advertised, always double check the authenticity of what you are going to buy online before making a purchase or paying upfront fees .

    - Report suspicious emails by forwarding them to: report@phishing.gov.uk
    - Report suspicious text messages or spam call free of charge to 7726.

If you have lost money or provided your financial information to someone, notify your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, call Police Scotland on 101.

For more information on how to protect yourself, search for "Stop! Think Fraudâ€ •.

Message Sent By
April Baldwin
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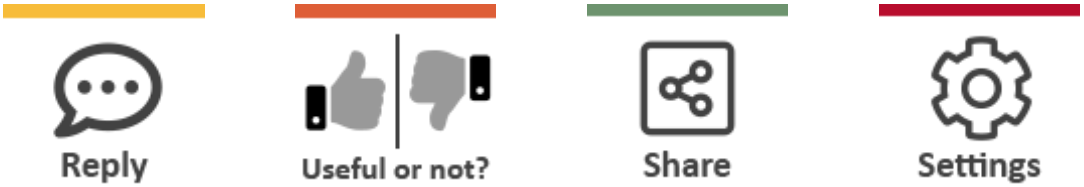

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