

How To Avoid Phone Scams

The amount of reported phone scams have increased this year — use this information to identify potential scammers and put an end to scam calls once and for all!



Common Scams

A Government agency demanding immediate action with threat of arrest.

Bank fraud alerts requesting personal information over the phone.

Free cruise or vacation offers.

Free medical test kits or treatments.

Debt relief or credit repair.



Calls From Unknown Numbers

Do not pick up! Legitimate callers will leave a voicemail or send a text. Answering robocalls or spam calls increases your chances of receiving even more.

Search the number on the web along with the word “scam” to see if it’s been reported before.

Do not respond to questions like, “Can you hear me?” A recorded “yes” from your voice can be twisted to mean you agreed to a purchase or charge.

Do not provide personal information or payment over the phone to an unverified caller.



Reporting Unwanted Calls

Telephone Scams

File a complaint on the Federal Trade Commission website for suspected telephone scams.

Sales Calls/Robocalls

Sign up for the National Do Not Call Registry, a free service blocking you from receiving sales calls. If unwanted calls continue after 31 days on the registry, they are probably scams and should be reported at [donotcall.gov](https://www.donotcall.gov).

Caller ID Spoofing

Report caller ID spoofing to the Federal Communications Commission at [consumercomplaints.fcc.gov](https://www.consumercomplaints.fcc.gov).



Caller ID Can Be Deceiving

Spoofing

The call appears to be coming from a number you recognize, like a bank’s customer service line, insurance office, or, in some cases, your own phone number.

Neighbor Spoofing

The call comes from a number in your area code in hopes that you’ll be more likely to answer.



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Blocking Out Scammers

There are several apps and features through your cell phone provider to block these pesky spam calls.

✔ Your Wireless Carrier

See if your carrier offers services to block scam calls. Some will automatically change the caller ID to "Potential Spam" when you receive an unwanted call.

✔ On Your Cell Phone

Many smartphones have settings that can block calls from numbers you've never contacted before. Keep in mind, this setting may also block legitimate people from getting in touch if they are calling for the first time.

✔ Apps: Block Spam and Robocalls

For little-to-no cost, you can use smartphone apps to block spam calls. Popular apps include **Hiya, Nomorobo, YouMail Voicemail & Spam Block** and **Truecaller**.

Please note that the referencing of third-party apps is for illustrative purposes and does not indicate an endorsement. Independently research the suitability or trustworthiness of any app before using it.

 **56 million** people lost money from phone scams in 2020, an increase from the year before.¹

Nearly half of people affected by phone scams downloaded a spam-blocker app after the incident.¹

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