

# Protecting yourself from scams

Each year thousands of Australians fall victim to financial scammers, with total reported losses of \$851 million in 2020, causing emotional and material harm to victims and their families.

Some people think that only the gullible and greedy fall victim to scams. The truth is scammers are clever and if you don't know what to look out for, anyone can fall victim to a scam.

## There are many ways to get scammed

Have you received an offer that seems too good to be true, perhaps a phone call to help fix your computer or a threat to pay money you do not owe? An alert from your bank or telecommunications provider about a problem with your account, or even an invitation to 'befriend' or connect online? Types of scams include:

- Fake authorities and government agencies
- Goods not delivered from online shopping
- 'Phishing' for your personal information
- Romance scams
- Puppies that don't exist
- Fake investment opportunities
- Threats to pay up
- Fake charities
- Fake jobs or employers
- Unexpected winnings
- Flubot (fake parcel delivery text)

### Top 3 scams in 2020



**\$328 million** lost to investment scams



**\$131 million** lost to romance scams



**\$128 million** lost to business email compromise (payment redirection)

## Protect yourself

Scammers are becoming more sophisticated. [Scamwatch](#) provides information on ways to protect yourself from scams:

- Be alert to the different types of scams and know who you're dealing with.
- Do not open suspicious texts, pop-up windows or click on links or attachments.
- Don't respond to phone calls about your computer asking for remote access.

## You can take action and STOP SCAMS!



### Speak up!

Avoiding scams is not a matter of 'common sense'. When it comes to scams you can help others.

- Talk about scams openly and without judgement.
- You can help someone identify a scam before it's too late.
- Sharing your experience on what to do can help others tackle scams.



### Report it!

If you have been or think you have been the victim of a scam you should report it to the relevant authority

- Report it to Scamwatch online: [scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam](https://scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam).
- If you think a crime has been committed contact police.
- If you have paid scammers from your bank account, contact your bank immediately.






### Get help!

It may feel embarrassing to talk about being scammed but is more common than you think, and you are not alone.

If you live in the ACT, Care provides free and confidential financial counselling, legal advice and community education. We may be able to:

- advise you on the immediate steps you can take to stop losing more money
- work with the financial institution to see if your lost money can be recovered
- lodge a complaint with the dispute resolution scheme for financial services
- negotiate with utilities, telecommunications and financial service providers to accommodate your financial difficulty.

#### Contact Care Consumer Law

-  02 6143 0044
-  [clc.admin@carefcs.org](mailto:clc.admin@carefcs.org)
-  [www.carefcs.org](http://www.carefcs.org)

