

Personal Finance 101: AVOIDING SCAMS & FRAUD

Scams and frauds are evolving faster than ever, targeting people of all ages with convincing stories and high-pressure tactics. A single click or rushed decision can lead to financial loss and identity theft—but the good news is that most scams can be stopped before they succeed. By learning the warning signs and following a few simple steps, you can protect yourself, your money, and your peace of mind.

Your Anti-Scam Action Plan

- **Pause:** Breathe and tell yourself “this could be a scam”
- **Verify:** Use a trusted number or website you already know — never the link or number in the message
- **Consult:** Call a trusted contact; talking it through exposes red flags
- **Protect:** Don't share one-time codes or passwords; enable multi-factor authentication
- **Report:** Use official reporting portals

“I think it's more challenging to identify gift card scams, since many people buy gift cards legitimately during the holiday season,”

~ Ryan Murphy, BSACS, Risk Manager with Rocky Mountain CU

The Dos and Don't of Scam Prevention

- ✓ **DO:** Use credit cards for online purchases; dispute rights help recover funds
- ✗ **DON'T:** Pay by gift card, wire, or crypto on instruction — those are scam favorites.
- ✓ **DO:** Block/filter unwanted calls and texts; use call screening.
- ✗ **DON'T:** Trust caller ID, links, or attachments from unsolicited messages.
- ✓ **DO:** Turn on multi-factor authentication and use unique passwords.
- ✗ **DON'T:** Share one-time codes or allow remote access to strangers.

Scan to learn about identifying scams and frauds. And be sure to follow us on social media!



Common Scenarios and What To Do



Credit Union Imposter

Hang up; call back using the number on your card or agency website.



Tech Support Pop-Up

Don't call or click; close the browser and run security software. Financial institutions will never ask you to move money to “protect it.”



Prize/Lottery

If you must pay a fee to claim a prize, it's a scam.



Online Shopping/Social Ads

Research the seller, pay by credit card (dispute rights), keep records; avoid gift cards/crypto/wires.



Romance/Investment

Be skeptical of fast online relationships tied to crypto/investment advice. Don't send money or move funds.