

What is identity theft?



Print

Criminals commit identity theft by stealing your personal information – that is, your name, address, date of birth, bank account numbers, passwords and so on – and then pretending to be you. This is fraud.

It's usually done for financial gain – for example, your bank account can be accessed and your money stolen or someone can make purchases or apply for credit in your name.

When using the internet, it's very important to take precautions to protect your identity details.



How to spot scam emails, texts or social media messages

We use cookies on this site to enhance your user experience

By clicking any link on this page you are giving your consent for us to set cookies. [More info](#)

OK, I agree

No, thanks

Scam messages even encourage you to open links or attachments. This will open a fake website where you will be asked to login to your PayPal account for example. The fraudsters then use these details to access your account and steal your money.

Other types of identity fraud include:

- Tax rebate fraud
- Benefit fraud
- Telecommunications fraud
- Pension scams
- Romance fraud scams
- PPI refund scams

For more information about Identity theft visit [Action Fraud](#).

We recommend that you read our guide on [How to protect yourself from identity theft](#).

This guide was updated on 02/03/2021

Next steps

[What is phishing?](#)

[A guide to internet security](#)

[Email safety tips](#)

[Email safety tips](#)

[How to stay safe on Facebook](#)

[How to stay safe online](#)

Search guides

Search

Remote Digital Championing!

Guides covering some tips and techniques for providing remote support to learners, an increasingly important service in times of social isolation.

Find out more

Free how-to guides for your website

Why not add our award-winning and extensive range of digital skills guides to your website?

[Find out more](#)

Start a Digital Champion movement!

Could your workplace do with developing its digital skills? With funded membership opportunities currently available, now is the perfect time for organisations to join our Digital Champions Network.

[Find out more](#)

Subscribe to our newsletter

Join our mailing list to receive the latest news, offers and expert insights from our team.

First name

Last name

Email address

[Submit](#)