

# Spot the signs of holiday fraud



As travel restrictions become more relaxed, Action Fraud, the national reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime, is warning the public to remain vigilant against holiday fraud when booking flights or accommodation online.

In the financial year 2021/22, Action Fraud received 4,244 reports of holiday and travel related fraud – a substantial increase of over 120% when compared to the previous financial year.

Victims reported losing a total of £7,388,353 – an average loss of £1,868 per victim.

Action Fraud has launched a national awareness campaign this week to urge the public to think twice before handing over money and personal information when booking holidays.

Over 7% of victims reported falling victim to suspects impersonating legitimate travel companies, including clone comparison websites, airline websites and holiday accommodation websites.

In some cases, victims have searched for flight tickets online and have found a website they believe to be the company's genuine website. In other cases, victims reported responding to an approach or advertisement on social media or using what they believed to be legitimate flight comparison websites to search for flights.

In both instances, victims reported being contacted by someone purporting to be from the airline, or flight comparison website, to take them through the booking procedure and take payment.

The fraudster may completely end contact after receiving payment or provide the victim with fake booking information.

Sadly, some victims have only become aware that they have been the victim of fraud when they arrive at the airport and are unable to check-in.

## Tops tip to avoid falling victim to holiday fraud

- **Stay safe online:** check the web address is legitimate and has not been altered by slight changes to a domain name – such as going from .co.uk to .org.
- **Do your research:** don't just rely on one review – do a thorough online search to ensure the company is credible. If a company is defrauding people, there is a good chance that consumers will post details of their experience, and warnings about the company.
- **Look for the logo:** check whether the company is an ABTA Member. Look for the ABTA logo on the company's website. If you have any doubts, you can verify membership of ABTA online on their [website](#). If you're booking a flight as part of a package holiday and want more information about ATOL protection, or would like to check whether a company is an ATOL holder, visit the [CAA website](#).
- **Pay safe:** wherever possible, pay by credit card. You should avoid paying directly into a private individual's bank account.
- **Check the paperwork:** you should study receipts, invoices and terms and conditions, and be very wary of any companies that don't provide any at all. When booking through a Holiday Club or Timeshare, get the contract thoroughly vetted by a solicitor before signing up.
- **Use your instincts:** if a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is.



**Beware of  
"too good  
to be true"  
holiday deals**

**ActionFraud**  
National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre  
actionfraud.police.uk

**ABTA**  
Travel with confidence

A photograph of a small dog wearing red sunglasses, sitting on a colorful beach ball on a sandy beach.

**Booking  
a holiday?  
Always  
pay safe**

**ActionFraud**  
National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre  
actionfraud.police.uk

**ABTA**  
Travel with confidence

A collection of travel-related items including a passport, a camera, a pair of sunglasses, a pair of headphones, and a tablet displaying a travel app.

**Booking a  
holiday online?  
It pays to do  
your research**

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**ABTA**  
Travel with confidence

A family of four (mother, father, and two children) sitting on luggage, smiling.