

# PROTECT YOURSELF FROM PHISHING SCAMS

## STOP.THINK.TELL.

In today's digital age, identifying phishing emails and messages has become a complex challenge. These scams have evolved to a point where they can even deceive experts. However, equipping ourselves with knowledge can help us stay one step ahead. Here are some key points to keep in mind:

### Spotting Phishing Signs

1. **AUTHORITY:** Be cautious if a message claims to be from an official entity like your bank, doctor, solicitor, or a government department. Criminals often impersonate these figures to manipulate you into compliance.
2. **URGENCY:** Watch out for messages pressuring you with tight deadlines (e.g., 'within 24 hours' or 'immediately'). Scammers often employ threats of fines or negative consequences to spur immediate action.
3. **EMOTION:** Be mindful of messages that evoke panic, fear, hope, or curiosity. Threatening language, false promises, or curiosity-driven content are tactics scammers use to entice victims.
4. **SCARCITY:** If a message offers something in short supply, such as concert tickets, money, or a miraculous medical solution, exercise caution. Fear of missing out can lead to hasty responses.
5. **CURRENT EVENTS:** Stay alert if a message capitalises on ongoing news, significant events, or specific times of the year (e.g., tax season). Scammers use these to lend credibility to their scams.

### Take Action: Protect Yourself

If you find yourself doubting the authenticity of a message, take these steps:

- Avoid clicking links or using contact details provided in the message.
- Use trusted contact information: visit the official website, dial their publicly advertised number, or log in directly to your account.
- Familiarise yourself with an organisation's list of actions they'd never request from you and cross-check if the request matches.

### Report Suspicious Messages

Help protect others from becoming a victim:

- If you're suspicious of an email, forward it to: [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)
- If you're suspicious of a text, forward it to: 7726
- 

Your vigilance can make a significant impact in safeguarding the online community.

## Stay safe and stay informed!

**Avon and Somerset Police**  
**SERVE.PROTECT.RESPECT.**

[www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk) | Follow us on   

