

## SOME TIPS TO REMEMBER:

- If it's too good to be true, it probably is!
- If it comes from Canada, Europe, Africa, or Asia, it is probably a scam.
- ***If you didn't enter, how can you win?***  
It's also illegal to enter out of country lotteries.
- English, grammar, and spelling are usually very bad. If the pitch comes in the form of a telephone call, the scammer may have a foreign accent.
- Even if you are given a telephone number and address, the telephone is probably a throw away cell phone (untraceable) and the address is probably non-existent. Remember, these people always want you to **WIRE** them money, not mail a check.
- Never provide any personal information, such as social security number, credit card or bank account information over the phone, particularly to someone **who has called you**. Contact your bank, credit card company or other business and ask if they have requested this information over the internet or phone. ***Remember, they already have the information—they don't need to ask for it again.***
- These people are smooth. If you receive a phone call, they will try to be your best friend and pretend they are working in your best interest. If you decline their offer, they may turn pushy and nasty. ***Just hang up!***

## TO REPORT FRAUD & SCAMS:

FBI/Internet Fraud Complaint Center:  
1-800-251-3221 or  
[www.ifccfbi.gov](http://www.ifccfbi.gov)

Federal Trade Commission at  
[www.FTC.gov/ftc/consumer](http://www.FTC.gov/ftc/consumer)

Internet Crime Complaint Center  
[www.ic3.gov/complaint](http://www.ic3.gov/complaint)

For additional information on Scams and to read more about the various scams both old and new, go to  
[www.lookstoogoodtobetrue.com](http://www.lookstoogoodtobetrue.com)  
[www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com)  
[www.Pueblo.gsa.gov](http://www.Pueblo.gsa.gov)  
[www.Scambusters.org](http://www.Scambusters.org)

If you haven't already done so, you may want to sign up for the **Do Not Call Registry**. Once on this list, telemarketers are not supposed to call you. You can register via internet with the FTC, or phone 1-888-382-1222. This is a free service.

Unfortunately, these scams are rarely, if ever, solved as most of the scammers are out of the country.

***Do not feel bad about hanging up on someone who calls you wanting money, or personal information!***

## How Not to Become a Victim of

# SCAMS



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240 W. Alder Street, 101  
WALLA WALLA, WA 99362  
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# WHAT IS A SCAM?

A scam is any means someone uses to get you to part with your money. A scam can occur over the telephone, through the mail, over the internet, or in person. Most scams originate from Canada, Europe, Asia, and Africa and are virtually impossible to solve or discover who the scammer is.

Below are some of the more popular scams and how they operate.

## LOTTERY/CONTEST SCAMS:

It begins with an email, phone call or letter claiming you have won a lottery or contest. You are to contact a claims agent to collect your winnings, usually at an email address or telephone number. You contact the claims agent who either sends a claim form to verify your identity which you must return with your personal details along with copies of your passport and driver's license to "verify your true identity". The scammers now have enough information to duplicate your identity.

At some point, you may receive a check, usually a cashier's check, for thousands of dollars. The checks are usually on U.S. companies, even though the scam comes from Australia or Canada. You will be asked to deposit the check and wire a certain percentage, usually about 75%, to cover fees and taxes, before your big check arrives. The cashier's checks are counterfeit and have no value whatsoever. If you deposit the check and take cash back, your bank will and can hold you responsible for paying back the money withdrawn. If you get any type of lottery

notification, ignore it. Legitimate sweepstakes or lotteries (state lotteries) don't require you to pay "taxes" or fees in advance.

### **Remember:**

***If you didn't enter the lottery or contest, how could you win?***

## "PHISHING" SCAMS:

Internet scammers cast about for your financial information, thus, it is called "phishing." In a "phishing" scam, an email or pop-up window, which appears to be from a legitimate company or bank, informs the recipient their account may have become compromised or they have lost information. The recipient is directed to click on a link. The victims are then forwarded to a Website that appears identical to the legitimate one. The fraudulent Website requires the victim to enter personal and account information in order to verify their account. The victim is told that if the information is not provided, the account will be suspended. This information can then be used by criminals to make purchases or open new accounts in the victim's name. Some of the more popular businesses used are banks, e-Bay, PayPal, the IRS, among others.

***Legitimate businesses will never use the internet to obtain information.***

## INTERNET AUCTIONS:

You've advertised a car, boat, horse, or other big ticket item on one of the many internet auction or sale sites. You get an email from someone who just happens to be overseas right now, either visiting or living there and they want to purchase your sale item. They tell you they have an agent in the U.S. who will pick up the item. Once a couple of e-mails have gone

back and forth, the buyer says that he owes some money to the agent or the agent requires money up front to ship or pick up the item. The buyer states that he will send you a check for \$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00 over the purchase price or 3 or 4 US Postal Money Orders and would you please wire the excess amount to his agent. **These are counterfeit at best.**

Once the "buyer" has your money, you will never hear from him again. Why would someone who lives in another country want to purchase your item and then pay the same amount to have it shipped? No one will show up at your home, either.

## NIGERIAN SCAM:

This is an old one but it continues to go around. You get a letter, fax, or e-mail from some government or business official, usually in Africa, stating that they have millions of dollars that they cannot access because of "rules and regulations" within their country. They would like to wire transfer these millions of dollars into your bank account and for your trouble in allowing them to do this, you will receive millions of dollars. What they really want is your bank account number so they can raid your account.

If you do fall for this scam, they may request that you send money for all sorts of things, from paying off government officials, to having documents certified, to courier service, etc. Do not fall for this scheme.

***Ask yourself why would the person contact you and/or how did they get your name (at random)?***