

How to avoid social media scams

Social media is a great place to connect with friends, family members and followers. But it also creates opportunities for cyber criminals to send phishing messages. Here's what you should know to stay safe when connecting with others online.



Get familiar with the red flags of phishing

Knowing the signs of phishing can help you tell the difference between a perfectly safe link to a cute cat video and a link to malware. Look for red flags like:

urgent or threatening language

requests for sensitive information

suspicious links and attachments

unexpected messages and offers

account spoofing and information mismatches

anything too good to be true

typos and unprofessional design

Block your fake friends

Received a new friend request? Make sure they are who they say they are.

Message them on another platform to verify their identity

Look for personal information, like an email address

Do not accept requests from people you don't know

Never click links or open attachments unless you have confirmed the sender's identity

Get to know phishing tactics

Some phishing tactics are more common on social media. Be on the lookout for:

prizes from contests and giveaways that you never entered

urgent requests from "long-lost" family members or friends

fake job opportunities and brand deals

accounts impersonating people you know

romance scams

financial scams

Take preventative measures

The good news? **77% of Canadians**¹ almost always check if messages on social media are genuine before clicking links or responding to them! Follow their lead and:

be cautious about the personal information you share online

delete suspicious messages and do not click links or attachments

spread awareness about the signs of phishing with those around you

use the social media platform's settings to control who can send you friend requests and who can see your list of friends

¹ Oh, Behavel (n.d.). https://cybsafe-resources.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/CYBSAFE-Oh,+Behavel+2023-FINAL+REPORT-231002MS.pdf?_hsmi=276595761

Get more tips to protect yourself and your accounts at