Microsoft Security

# Five tell-tale signs of a tech support scam

In a tech support scam, criminals trick you into believing that you require a repair for your software or device. Some scammers may try to charge a fee to 'fix' the non-existent problem, and others will attempt to steal your personal or financial data or even try to access your network in order to deploy ransomware.


Don't become the next victim of a tech support scam. Here are five tell-tale signs of tech support scams, along with helpful information for what to do if you find yourself under attack:

## 1 If this happens...

You get an unexpected call from someone claiming to be tech support (Be aware! Some scammers have tools to generate fake Caller IDs).

### Remember

Microsoft never makes unsolicited phone calls. We won't call you to offer tech support if you don't reach out to us first.

## 2 If this happens...

You get an error message asking you to call a number urgently.

### Remember

Microsoft error messages never include phone numbers. The Microsoft Edge browser blocks known support scam sites using Microsoft Defender SmartScreen.

## 3 If this happens...

Your tech support contact asks you to pay them to fix your 'problems' with cryptocurrency or gift cards.

### Remember

Legitimate support technicians will advise you of possible fees before they deliver service. And if a payment is required, it will never be in the form of gift cards or cryptocurrency like Bitcoin.

## 4 If this happens...

Your support technician asks you to download software from an email or third-party website.

### Remember

You should always be able to download software from an official website or app store. All Microsoft software can be downloaded from our official website or the official websites of our partners.

## 5 If this happens...

Tech support asks you for your password or other private, sensitive data.

### Remember

Microsoft tech support never asks for your password, National Insurance Number or other personal data.

## What to do if you think you're in the middle of an attempted tech support scam

- Uninstall any applications scammers have asked you to install.
- Run a full scan with Windows Security to remove any malware.
- If you have given scammers access to your computer, reset your device.
- Change your passwords.
- If you have already paid, call your credit card provider as soon as possible.
- Report the scam at www.microsoft.com/reportascam.
- Report unsafe websites in Microsoft Edge by going to Settings and More > Help and Feedback > Report unsafe site.

Explore more cybersecurity awareness topics and skilling opportunities at https://aka.ms/cybersecurity-awareness.

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