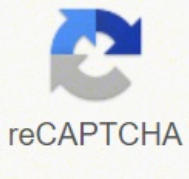




I'm not robot



Next

What to do if you get scammed on facebook marketplace

CC0/iAmMrRob/Pixabay From romance scammers to people pretending to be IRS agents, there are many different ways for criminals to defraud innocent victims out of their personal information and money. Fortunately, when it comes to perpetrating a scam, scammers tend to behave in predictable ways. That makes them easy to spot as long as you know what to look for. Suspicious Phone Calls One popular technique that scammers use is to place phone calls directly to people claiming to be anything from a bank to the IRS or an antivirus software company. Most of these businesses and agencies don't call customers directly, so no matter how official it sounds, play it safe. Hang up and call the business back at a number you get from their official website. CC0/mrgans/Pixabay Specific Payment Demands Scammers often have a preferred payment method, such as a prepaid debit card or gift cards. Legitimate businesses and government agencies, on the other hand, usually take multiple standard forms of payment, including credit cards that allow fraud protection. CC0/stephb/Pixabay Poor Presentation Legitimate businesses put a lot of effort into making sure their communications, either through emails, advertisements, mailings or text messages, are professional and polished. Additionally, scammers aren't always so concerned with proper spelling and grammar or using high-quality images. CC0/Gumbik/Pixabay Incongruous Email Addresses As part of their professional presentation, legit businesses and government agencies also give their employees a corporate email address that uses their name like mail@directpay.irs.gov. Online romance scammers may claim to work for Match.com, but if their email address doesn't actually end with "@match.com," don't trust them. CC0/Neitjub/Pixabay Special Offers Most people like feeling special, and that's something scammers can take advantage of by offering "special deals" that are only available for a limited few. This is usually a red flag. Think about these offers realistically. Why are they offering this deal to you, specifically? Is it just because they want to sell you something or gain your trust? CC0/stephb/Pixabay High-pressure Tactics Some people don't want to be impolite, so they'll keep listening even when someone starts badgering them. Unfortunately, scammers use this tendency to pressure people into handing over financial information. If someone calls you and seems too rude or pushy about getting info or payment from you, just hang up. You don't owe rude people your time. CC0/FirmBee Threats One particularly insidious high-pressure tactic that scammers use is to threaten people with fines or law enforcement. There are important processes involved with notifying consumers in the United States of outstanding debts, and they don't involve calling you and threatening to send the police. Again, the best defense is to just hang up when this happens. CC0/3839183/Pixabay Complicated Requests The Nigerian prince scam is a well-known example of a classic scam technique, pulling people in with a wild story. However, as with special offers, it's important to think about why you, of all people on the planet, are receiving this request for help. If the story is outlandish, it's probably a scam. CC0/WorldSpectrum/Pixabay Upfront Payment Requests With Promises of a Return Another way to spot a scam in the vein of the Nigerian prince fraud is to look for any requests for upfront payment that will result in a greater return. Legitimate investment opportunities require you to seek them out, not the other way around. CC0/paulsbarlow7/Pixabay Unclear Details Legitimate businesses and investment opportunities provide clear information for their customers — that's what an investment prospectus is for. If you're looking at a supposed deal or opportunity that is thin on detail, even down to contact information for you to call them back, that's a major red flag. CC0/ferarcosn/Pixabay MORE FROM QUESTIONS ANSWERED.NET Click here for a quick guide Quick Guide: Top Facebook Marketplace Scams and How to Avoid Them Scammers have a ton of different ways to separate you from your hard-earned cash on Facebook Marketplace. If you plan on buying or selling something on the platform, it's crucial to be aware of these. These are some very common Facebook Marketplace scams: Counterfeit items — fake copies of expensive products being sold as the real deal Gift card scams — scammers ask to be paid in gift cards before ghosting buyers, as gift cards are anonymous and can't be traced back to them Bait-and-switch — advertising one product before "switching" to another that's of less quality Broken products — selling broken products that are being passed off as quality items Fake rentals — fraudulent listings of houses and apartments QR code scams — sellers being asked to scan a QR code to "ensure the buyer has the right account" but the seller gets charged instead Car deposit scams — buyers who pay a car deposit for a fraudulent listing "Accidental" overpaying — sellers claim to have overpaid using a fake screenshot and then ask their buyers to pay back the "extra" amount Fake giveaways — fake giveaways that phish for information Fake accounts — fake accounts are used often to carry out scams For more information on Facebook Marketplace scams and what to do if you're a victim, check out the full article below. Facebook Marketplace is a great platform to buy and sell goods online. Since Facebook is one of the most popular social media sites in the world, chances are Facebook Marketplace will have plenty of listings wherever you live. Unfortunately, there are also disadvantages to the platform, such as Facebook Marketplace scams. In order to stay safe from these scams, it's crucial to know what kind of scams are out there, how scammers operate, how to prevent scams, and what to do if you become a victim. Keep reading to find out more. Most Common Facebook Marketplace Scams Today Scammers on Facebook Marketplace will knowingly trick you into paying for something you didn't want in the first place. Your order either won't be delivered, will have serious flaws, or will be a different (and usually much less valuable) product altogether. Conversely, a Facebook scam can also involve tricking sellers into thinking they've found a legitimate buyer. Instead of paying for a product, these fake buyers use crafty tricks to scam the seller out of their cash. It's important to recognize some of the more common scams to avoid falling prey to them. We go over specific scamming strategies below. Counterfeit Items Counterfeit items plague many marketplaces, both online and offline. However, since Facebook is a global platform where anyone can sell to anyone (and it's often difficult to track down sellers), the risk of buying counterfeit products is magnified. Counterfeit items are essentially fake copies of any real product being sold as the "real deal." Criminals mainly copy high-cost products because these result in the biggest profits. There are many different types of counterfeit products to look out for, such as fake designer clothing, perfumes, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals (although Facebook doesn't allow selling prescription drugs), sports jerseys, and jewelry. Gift card scams A scam that's as old as trade itself is simply asking for payment and not delivering the product. One variation of this on Facebook Marketplace is when a seller asks to be paid with a gift card, and once they've received the gift card, they don't provide the product for sale. This scam is exceptionally hard to deal with for victims and authorities because gift cards are essentially anonymous. They are rarely connected to an individual or account. Even though they are often bought using a non-anonymous method (such as a credit card), this doesn't always mean the gift card itself can be traced. Bait-and-switch Another age-old malicious sales tactic you might encounter on Facebook Marketplace is the so-called "bait-and-switch" technique. This tactic involves advertising a decent or high-quality product for a relatively low price, which will suddenly no longer "be available" when a buyer contacts the seller. The seller will then offer the buyer a product with a higher price tag or a product of lower quality or quantity. In other words: all of a sudden, the deal is not as attractive anymore. Broken products Broken products are commonly sold on FB Marketplace. For buyers, it can be very difficult to check a picture to see whether or not a product is broken. Pictures don't always accurately reflect reality. They may have been taken at an earlier date, for instance, or perhaps they're pictures of a different product altogether. Fake Facebook Marketplace rentals Be aware of fake or misleading rentals on Facebook Marketplace. There have been instances of all sorts of deception on this front, from using inaccurate pictures to using bait-and-switch tactics — all the way to posting properties that are owned by someone else. Always make sure to visit the property you're looking to rent before transferring any money or signing anything. Needless to say, these scams can also happen when you're buying a home (as opposed to renting). QR code scams QR code scams happen so often on online marketplaces that, earlier this year, the State Bank of India (SBI) warned against scanning QR codes when selling an item. Criminals might fake interest in a product you're selling and even negotiate a little to make the scam more believable. They will then pay a small portion of the product's amount and, once it's time to pay the full balance, ask you to scan a QR code. They do this to "ensure their money gets to the right account." However, instead of receiving the money, you will end up paying the specified amount to the scammer. In general, QR codes carry a serious risk of fraud. Read more about it in this article. Car deposit scams Facebook Marketplace has become a popular platform to buy and sell vehicles. Be wary of sellers asking for car deposits, though. They might ask you to pay a percentage of the car upfront so they can hold the car for you. After you've paid the deposit, their ad might suddenly disappear. Or they might give you a fake address when it's time to meet up. Needless to say, your chances of getting back your deposit are as slim as getting that great car deal. "Accidental" overpaying So far we've mainly dealt with scams committed by sellers on Facebook Marketplace. However, sellers themselves can get scammed, too. One easy way scammers can do this is by faking payment receipts or confirmations with an amount that's higher than the asking price. You know how you get a message saying you've paid something using PayPal or another payment service? It's very easy to fake this message without actually engaging in a financial transaction. Case in point: the screenshot below. After convincing the seller they overpaid, the scammer will request the seller to pay back "the excess amount." Of course, the seller will end up with not a single dollar in their bank account, but the scammer walks away with whatever amount he "overpaid." Fake giveaways Another common scam on Facebook Marketplace is advertising fake giveaways. Scammers hope that, by offering fake giveaways, they can get users to either click on links that will install malware on their device or that will prompt them to provide their sensitive data in order to participate in the "giveaway" (phishing). Once scammers obtain your sensitive data, they will find every possible way to abuse it. Frankly, fake giveaways are more common on other platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook (as in, the social media platform, not the marketplace). However, since these platforms are extremely popular and these scams do occasionally also happen on FB Marketplace, it's good to be aware of them. Red flags of potential fake giveaways include: the account behind the giveaway being very new; spelling errors or text which looks like it's been translated using a translation app or website; or a "prize" that seems very unlikely or too good to be true. There have been instances of scammers offering free cryptocurrency on FB Marketplace (see the screenshot below). Of course, these giveaways are fake. They're just tricks to get users to click on links that likely contain a ton of malware or to steal crypto or money from them. Fake accounts Fake accounts are a very common sight on Facebook and, as such, also on Facebook Marketplace. Technically, they are more of a scam-enabler than a scam. However, we do want to go over this malpractice. Many Facebook scams are executed using fake accounts to protect the criminal's anonymity. Recognizing fake accounts is the key to preventing many scams. Facebook Marketplace is connected to your regular Facebook profile, and contacting people on Facebook Marketplace works by using FB Messenger. This means you can check how long a seller on FB Marketplace has been active on Facebook. If they created their profile very recently, this is often a red flag. Of course, someone could have created a Facebook account recently to advertise on Facebook Marketplace. However, considering Facebook launched as early as 2006 and the fact that it's the world's most popular social medium, skepticism is more than justified if you come across an account that was created yesterday. Other red flags of fake accounts are empty or strange bios and very few or no friends. If you suspect an account might be fake, you're much better off looking at another seller or buyer. Tips on Preventing Facebook Marketplace Scams Now that we've discussed some Facebook Marketplace scams in detail, it's time to talk about tips on how to prevent these scams from happening to you. Follow the tips below if you want to protect yourself from cybercriminals on Facebook Marketplace. 1. Check the seller's profile and reviews if you've found a seller or buyer on Facebook, check out their profile to make sure they're not using a fake account to scam people like yourself. A very recently created account with zero or very few friends and empty bios is a red flag. If you've found a seller, check out their reviews. Reviews become public once a seller has five or more of them. For expensive purchases, we recommend staying away from new sellers without visible reviews. 2. Don't believe "too good to be true" offers Consider if the deal you've found on a luxury item seems "too good to be true" — it often is. You could unknowingly be buying counterfeit items or paying a deposit for a fraudulent posting. Too-good-to-be-true offers come in all shapes and sizes, but they often concern expensive items such as jewelry and clothing of very exclusive brands. Selling fake high-end watches, for instance, is quite common on Facebook Marketplace. So much so that it motivates some people to search for fake listings and report them, such as a few dedicated forum members from this specialist watch forum. 3. Use trustworthy payment options Never pay anyone on Facebook Marketplace using gift cards. If they scam you or don't provide the promised goods, it's virtually impossible to track them down using a gift card. It's much better to have evidence of payment in the form of a wire transfer or a PayPal receipt. If offered, always use Facebook Pay to pay for your purchases, especially because some products are eligible for Purchase Protection that way. We'll talk more about this below. 4. Don't scan QR codes when receiving money Never scan a QR code a potential buyer sends you under the pretense that you'll receive the money in your bank account this way. Scanning QR codes is for paying money, not receiving it. Think before you deposit Before paying a deposit on a product, always make sure you trust the seller. We recommend only paying a deposit for products that come from a reputable seller. If someone asks you for a deposit, think about whether this makes sense for that given product in the first place and, if so, if the amount is fair, considering the total value. Deposit scams happen a lot with cars and property, so be extra careful if you're browsing these categories. A man selling his house in Toronto had a buyer show up with pictures of his property. She was scammed into paying a \$1,000 deposit to strangers. Cases like this can easily be prevented by inspecting a product or property in person before paying a deposit. 6. Use Facebook Messenger to communicate Facebook recommends always using Facebook Messenger to communicate with buyers and sellers. This way, you'll have a record of your communication in case of a dispute. Of course, you can also communicate through email, WhatsApp, or a similar communication platform. The important thing is you don't just agree to a bunch of details by phone and have no evidence to back up what was discussed. What Does Facebook Do to Prevent Scams? Facebook offers three main ways to help protect its buyers and sellers: Review system. Once a seller has 5 reviews or more, reviews will be visible to buyers. Unfortunately for sellers, buyer ratings are private. However, according to Facebook, they still use these reviews to improve the platform's safety. Purchase Protection. Facebook Marketplace offers Purchase Protection for eligible items that are paid for using Facebook Pay. Purchase Protection is a handy system that withholds payments to the seller for several days, or until the buyer has marked an item as received. If there is an issue with the item, or the seller doesn't deliver, the buyer can get a refund. Resources. Lastly, Facebook has a useful and extensive resources page on buying and selling responsibly on Facebook Marketplace. What to Do If You Get Scammed on Facebook Marketplace Even if you're really careful, you could always get unlucky and become a FB Marketplace scam victim. If this happens, we recommend following the steps down below, in this order: Contact your bank and block your account. Some FB scams, such as the ones involving QR codes, and phishing, can compromise your bank account. If you feel this is the case, always make sure to contact your bank, alert them about the situation, and cooperate with them on what to do next. Press charges at your local police department or online. In most jurisdictions, many Facebook scams are a punishable offense and, as such, the state or country you're in can persecute these criminals and bring them to justice. Make sure you don't have malware. If you suspect your PC has been infected with malware as a result of the scam, procure an IT security professional to make sure your device is free of (dangerous) malware. Report the buyer or seller that scammed you. Also, report the listing if it's still available. In the section below we'll explain how to do this. You can also report the scam to a page that aims to warn people about all sorts of online scams, such as the Better Business Bureau's scam tracker. How to Report a Scammer on Facebook Marketplace Keep in mind you should only report users and listings that violate FB Marketplace's Commerce Policies. After all, users submitting fraudulent reports might face consequences as outlined in Facebook's Purchase Protection Policies. In order to report a seller, follow these steps: Go to Facebook Marketplace and click on a listing of the seller you wish to report. Click on the seller's name. Click on the three little dots. Select "Report Seller." Follow the instructions. To report a buyer, follow the steps below: Click on "Your Account." Select "Your Listings." Click on a listing purchased by the buyer you want to report. Click on the message between you and the buyer. Select "See More" if you can't find it. Click on the three little dots. Choose "Report Buyer." Follow the instructions. In order to report a listing or hide it (just for you), follow these steps: Click on the listing you want to report or hide. Click the three little dots. Choose "Hide Item" or "Report Post" and follow the on-screen instructions. Staying Safe from Facebook Marketplace Scams There are a lot of ways scammers can trick you on Facebook Marketplace. These range from the most simple (not delivering a product) to quite advanced, such as using QR codes. Fortunately, there are also a lot of ways to protect yourself, such as checking out seller profiles and reviews; using Facebook's Purchase Protect; avoiding gift card payments; and, ultimately, common sense. Armed with these tips, we wish you a happy shopping experience! Top Facebook Marketplace Scams and How to Avoid Them: Frequently Asked Questions Do you have a question about Facebook Marketplace scams? Check out the frequently asked questions below. You most definitely can. In fact, there are many different ways cybercriminals could scam you, such as using a fake profile to get you to pay for a product they will never deliver, selling you counterfeit items, making you fall for a fake giveaway, and many others. To learn more about all these scams and how to protect yourself, check out this article. This is a tricky one, but there are some things to look out for: many FB marketplace scammers use fake accounts. If an account has just been created, has very few friends, or contains an empty bio, you should be on high alert. Also, check out the reviews a seller has. Generally, we recommend you stick to sellers with visible reviews (reviews become visible when they are five or more of them). Furthermore, stay away from listings that seem too good to be true. For more tips, check out this article. Safe payment methods to use on FB Marketplace are payment methods that register and keep a record of payments made, such as payments by credit card, PayPal, and Facebook Pay. Facebook Pay is a great payment method and we recommend choosing it when possible because doing so will give you purchase protection on a lot of goods. Payment methods to stay away from include methods that cannot be tracked and don't give you any proof of payment, such as gift cards and cash payments. These methods make it impossible to track down the seller in case there is a dispute or you are scammed.

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