

Staying Safe Online – ROMANCE SCAM

Scammers use dating or friendship to win your trust and take your money.

How this scam works:

People online are not always genuine. Scammers will go to great lengths to convince you a romantic relationship is real and then manipulate you to give them money.

A common approach is once they've gained your trust, they have an 'emergency' and ask you to give them products or money to help them.

Or they ask you to do things for them, like set up accounts or transfer money they give you. Scammers can wait years to build this trust.



3 warning signs

- 1 Whilst scammers may find you and connect on social media, they usually prefer to chat off social media and will suggest moving to something else, like WhatsApp messaging.
- 2 There will always be an excuse why they can't meet in person or show themselves on camera.
- 3 They will often need money for personal emergencies such as an expensive medical procedure or the immediate care of a close relative.

3 ways to protect yourself

- 1 Check the person is who they say they are
 - Take things slowly. Ask lots of questions and watch for things that don't add up.
 - Search for the scammer's name along with the word 'scam' in an internet search, check for websites about romance scams in the results.
- 2 Be careful what you share (and what you don't)
 - Never send intimate pictures or videos of yourself to people you don't know. Scammers use these to blackmail people.
 - Don't keep your online relationship a secret. Speak to people you know about it. It can be easier for others to spot the warning signs.
 - Be careful about what you share about yourself online. Scammers can use information about your hobbies, job or family to target you.
- 3 Learn how to spot a fake profile
 - Things to look for:
 - Photos that look too professional
 - Very little personal information
 - No connection to social media accounts



Never transfer money to someone you have only met online.

Think you've been scammed?



If you think you have been a victim of a scam it's important to call **Heritage** on 13 14 22 (available 24/7) promptly to limit any further loss and to see if the transactions can be reversed or disputed. If you are overseas please call +61 7 4694 9000.

DO NOT make further payments to the scammer.

Please ensure you change your passwords to secure your account and report the scam to [ACCC \(www.accc.gov.au\)](http://www.accc.gov.au) via the report a scam page. For more information on how to protect yourself from scam visit the [Scamwatch website \(www.scamwatch.gov.au\)](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au).



Go to our website to download more information about scams: www.heritage.com.au/scams

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