



Imposter Scams

Paying with a gift card or wiring money is like sending cash. Do not send money to people you do not know.

- Do not give out your personal information to people you do not know.
- Do not give access to your computer to people you do not know.

How do I spot an imposter scam?

Most imposter scams look like this:

- someone asks you to put money on a gift card or to wire money

A scammer might use different ways to convince you to send money. The scammer might say:

- you have a problem with your computer and you have to pay to fix it
- you owe taxes to the IRS
- you won a prize, or inherited money, but you have to pay fees first
- you won the lottery, but you have to pay some taxes first
- a friend or family member is in trouble and needs you to send money to help
- you got a check for too much money and need to send back the extra

These are all tricks. When you hear stories like these, you have spotted an imposter scam.

How do I avoid an imposter scam?

Scammers are good at being friendly. They also are good at fooling people. Here is how you can stop a scammer:

- Never send money to someone you do not know.
- Never send money because someone contacted you:
 - > even if you feel like you know the person
 - > even if the person says he is your friend or related to you

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What if I already sent money to someone I don't know?

If you sent money to someone who contacted you, report it to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

- Call the FTC at 1-877-382-4357
- Go online: [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/identity-theft/identity-theft-reporting)

The FTC uses complaints to build cases against scammers. Any information you can give helps investigators.