

How to Spot a Scam



There are just about as many scams in the world as there are scam artists. According to law enforcement experts, however, most scams tend to follow one of these four patterns:

Free Prize

The consumer is promised a free prize in exchange for purchasing or testing the merchandise.

Investment

The consumer is offered the opportunity to invest at a deep discount or earn an extremely high rate of return. The investment instruments frequently do not exist.

Business Opportunity

The consumer is offered the chance to make big money working at home or buying a franchise. Promised earnings may be inflated or fictitious.

Charity

The consumer is asked to contribute to a nonexistent charity or one in which most of the money goes directly to the fundraiser.

Any offer with these traits should be viewed with suspicion. It's also important to keep in mind that those who perpetrate fraud and scams tend to choose victims they view as the easiest prey. So if you never let greed overtake your better judgment, you are unlikely to fall prey to fraud.