

Common Scams & Frauds



Bureau of Consumer Protection

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

SCAM STATISTICS



2.6 million
fraud reports



\$12.5 billion
reported lost

More than 1 in 3 people
who reported a scam also
reported losing money.



* *FTC 2024 Data Book*

Almost half of the world encounters a scam at least once a week

Estimated that only 30% of victims report being scammed

Worldwide losses are estimated to be **\$1.03 trillion**

* *2024 Global Anti-Scam Alliance Report*



SCAM STATISTICS

Younger people
reported **losing money
to fraud more often**
than older people.

44%
**20–29
year-olds**

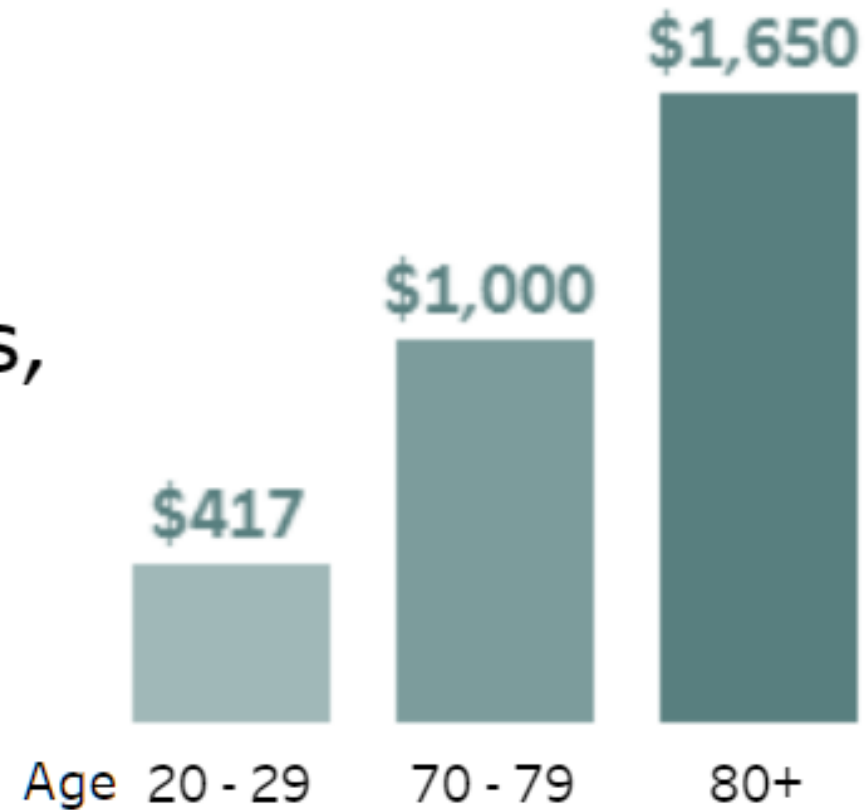
24%
**70–79
year-olds**

** FTC 2024 Data Book*



SCAM STATISTICS

But when people
aged 70+ had a loss,
**the median loss
was much higher.**



* *FTC 2024 Data Book*



SCAM STATISTICS

Big losses follow
scams that start
with a call or on
social media.

Phone calls:
Highest **per person**
reported losses



\$1,500
median loss

Social media:
Highest **overall**
reported losses



\$1.9 billion
total lost

Email:
Highest overall
number of reports

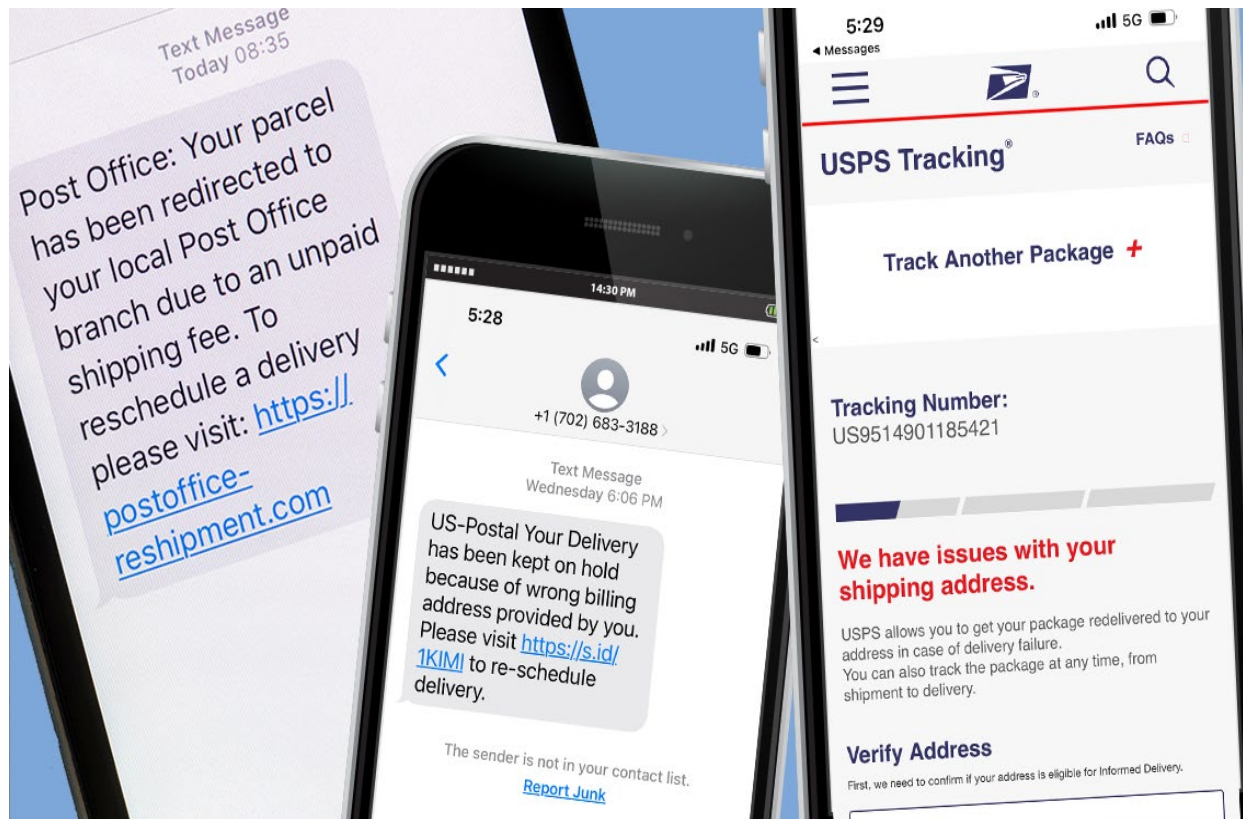


372,000
reports

* *FTC 2024 Data Book*



SCAM TRENDS: TEXT/EMAIL



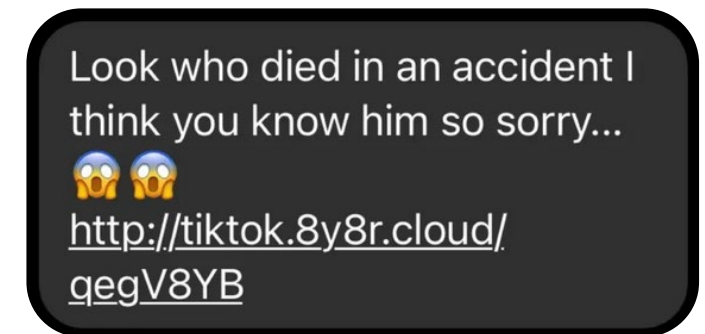
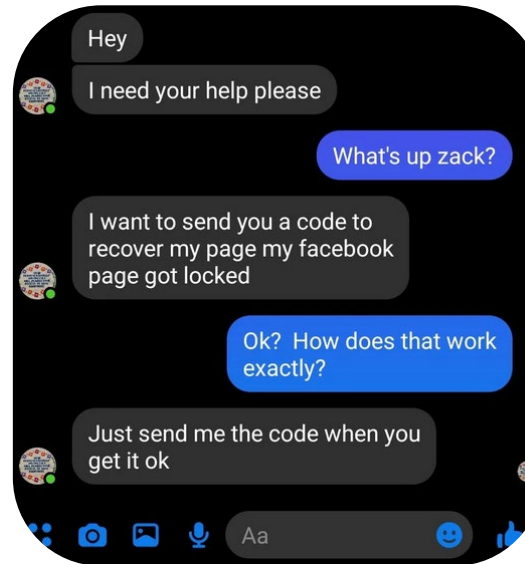
Text/Email

- Malicious Links
- Hidden Sender
- Hacked Accounts
- Fake Phone Numbers



SOCIAL MEDIA

- Fake Ads with links to click
- Too good to be true:
 - Gift card giveaways
 - Investment offers
 - Items for sale (fake online retailer?)
 - Marketplace scams
- Imposter accounts
 - DMs / messages
 - Romance scams
 - Investment scams



SCAM TRENDS: PHONE



Don't trust Caller ID (Spoofing)

Robocalls

- Don't press any buttons
- Do not say "yes"

Incoming phone calls = unknown caller



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND SCAMS

Voice Cloning

- It only takes 3 seconds of audio to mimic a family member or co-worker's voice. Audio can be downloaded from social media.

Deep Fakes

- Impersonate public figures or create fake charity appeals after disasters

Phishing

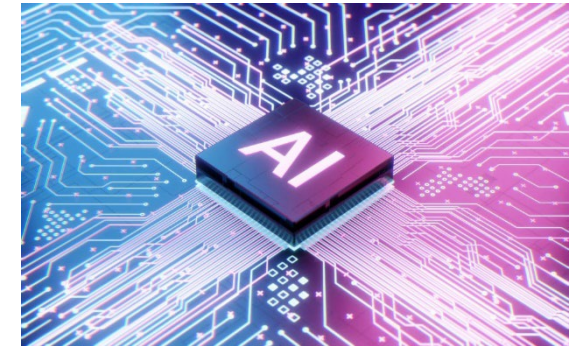
- A.I. helps craft very convincing phishing emails and fake websites

Spear phishing

- A.I. analyzes your online and social media presence to help create highly personalized “spear phishing” attacks

Chatbots

- Scammers can respond in real time with relevant, and convincing responses



DECEPTIVE PAYMENT METHODS (RED FLAGS)

- Cryptocurrency / Bitcoin Kiosks – ATMs
- Gift Cards
- Prepaid Visa / MC cards
- Wiring money
- Mailing cash
- Courier pickup at your residence



GOVERNMENT IMPOSTER SCAMS



Social Security

- Change in benefits

IRS

- Unpaid taxes
- Threaten intercept

Medicare

- Expiring benefits
- Try to obtain Medicare #

Law Enforcement/FBI

- Warrant for arrest
- Demand payment for fines



Social Security Administration

Date: December 26, 2023

Case ID: SSA9903-330U

SUBJECT: Suspension of SSN due to Criminal Activities

Attention,

Due to fraudulent activities, your Social Security Number (SSN) will be suspended within the next 24 hours.

We are writing to inform you that your Social Security Number is being suspended due to the FTC's discovery of unlawful activities in Texas involving your identity.

Your case has been referred to the Department of Justice for prosecution under the Criminal Code Act 1950 and other Texas criminal offenses, including the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 for:

1. Count 1 (Drug Trafficking) Act 258 Section D
2. Count 2 (Money Laundering) *** Act of 1986
3. Count 3 (Theft by Deception) Texas Supreme Court Coe conduct 1986

A legal complaint has been filed against you as of today. In accordance with our standard operating procedures, law enforcement agencies have uncovered 25 bank accounts opened with your Social Security Number to perpetrate a \$14 million fraud. In the entire state of New Mexico, these accounts were used for unlawful activities such as money laundering, narcotics trafficking, and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) fraud.

The department attempted to deliver legal documents to your most recent known address, but US Marshals who made a visit discovered the house deserted.

If you have received this email, it implies that we have exhausted all other means of contacting you; if you are innocent of the allegations, please contact the OIG at the number shown below.

To plead yourself, you can contact the Office of Inspector General (Social Security Administration) at +1 (888) 233-8593

Ken Paxton



Transcription Beta

"This call is from the Department of Social Security administration the reason you have _____ call from our department is to inform you that we just suspend your Social Security number because we found some suspicious activity so if you want to know about this case just press one thank you..."

Was this transcription [useful](#) or [not useful](#)?

0:00

-0:22

Speaker

Call Back

Delete



UTILITY IMPOSTER SCAMS



Water, Gas, Electric, Telecommunications:

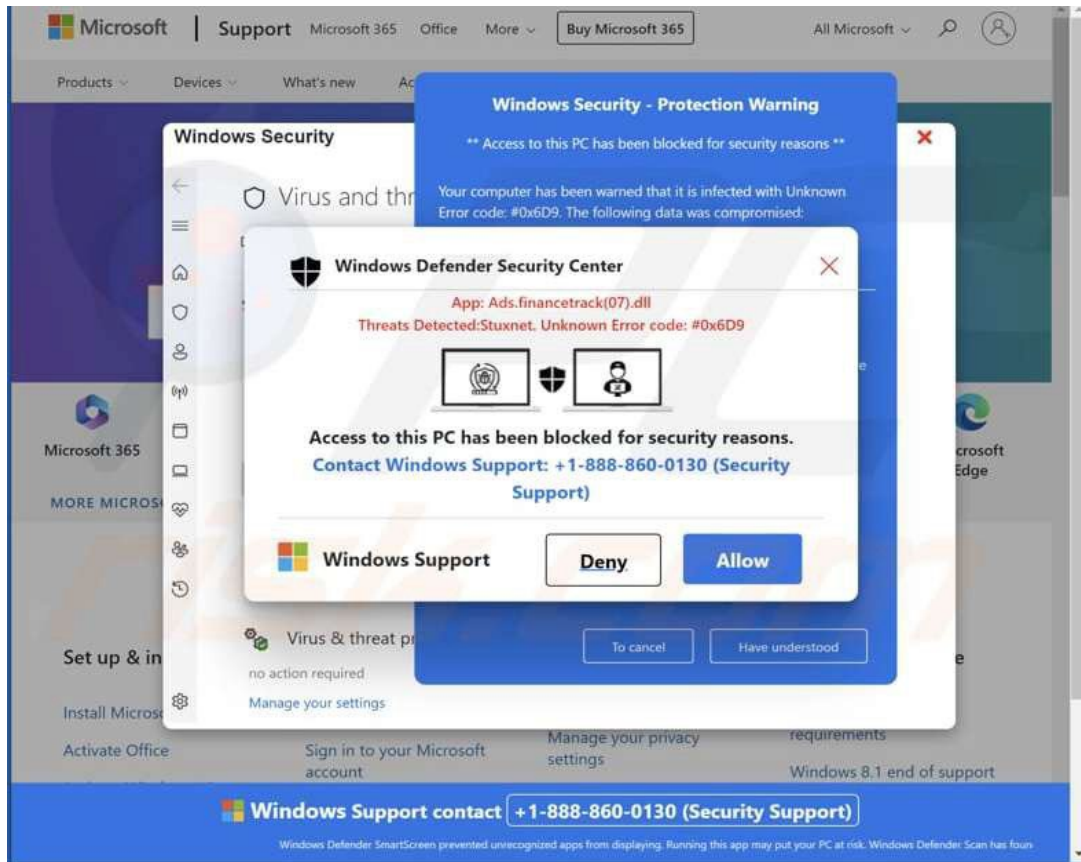
- Threaten to cut off service
 - “Crew is on the way”
- Ask victim to “verify” account information
 - Personal info
 - Payment/Banking info
- Rebate or discount promotion



TECH SUPPORT



TECH SUPPORT



Starts with a phone call or pop-up window

- Computer is infected with a virus, call this 1-800-number
- Request remote access to victim's computer
- Install Malware, Ransomware, Etc...
- May access online banking to transfer money from one account to another
- Talk victim into withdrawing money



ROMANCE / RELATIONSHIP / SWEETHEART SCAMS

- Can start through texting, social media, online gaming, dating sites, etc....
- Profess their love for you early in the “relationship”
- Refuse to meet face to face
 - Travel expenses needed to meet
 - Serving overseas in military
- Encounter major problem, needs money
 - Medical/family emergency



LOTTERY, CONTESTS & SWEEPSTAKES SCAMS



- Film crew, giant check, and brand-new car arriving tomorrow
- Request payment prior to prize
 - Shipping
 - Taxes
 - Processing fees
- Illegal to play foreign lotteries



GRANDPARENT SCAM



GRANDPARENT SCAM

- Grandchild has been arrested or involved in a crash
 - “crash” may involve a broken nose, why?
- May use A.I. to mimic a grandchild’s voice
- Trick you into saying a name
- Get information from social media
- “Shhhh” don’t tell anyone
- May impersonate law enforcement or lawyer
- Family password



AUTO WARRANTY SCAM



FINAL WARRANTY NOTICE

Dear Valued Customer,

This notice is to inform you that your vehicle's factory warranty has expired, or may expire soon depending on your current mileage.

Take action now to protect yourself from increasingly high labor cost and unexpected repair bills! Call us IMMEDIATELY to take advantage of this final offer. You have been preselected for this exclusive offer.

NATIONAL AVERAGE REPAIR COSTS

Air Conditioning \$1,500	Power Windows \$400
Alternator \$650	Transmission \$3,800
Computer \$1,400	Steering \$1,200
Engine \$3,700	Water Pump \$525
Starter \$725	Ripper Motor \$600

Actual repair cost may vary depending on vehicle model

Ask Our Warranty Specialist...

- 0% interest free financing guaranteed on first call activation.
- All major credit cards and checks accepted.
- This card is good for an additional \$250 off. Ask an agent for details.

Business Hours:
Monday-Friday 7am-9pm
Saturday 9am-2pm C.S.T.

“We’re trying to reach you about your car’s warranty”

- Often a robocall or a mailing
- Urgent - only available for a limited time
- Offers no actual coverage



CHARITY SCAMS



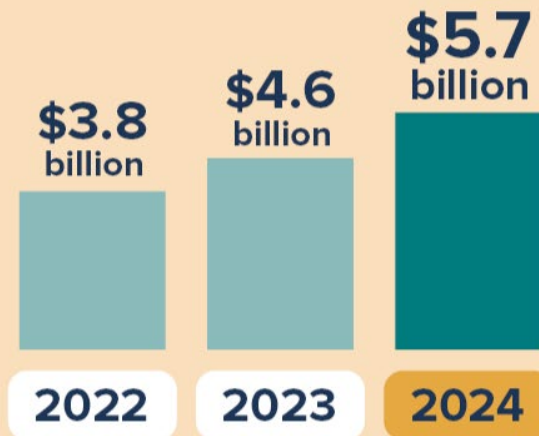
Charities are non-profit

- Not covered by the “Do Not Call List”
- Often say they support local fire and police services
- Impossible to tell a real call from a fake call
- www.Charitynavigator.org



INVESTMENT SCAMS – FTC 2024

Losses to investment
scams **kept climbing.**



Pig Butchering
\$75 Billion in 2023 worldwide

AARP Report
95% of Investment Scams involve
Cryptocurrency

Dfi.wi.gov
(608) 261-9555



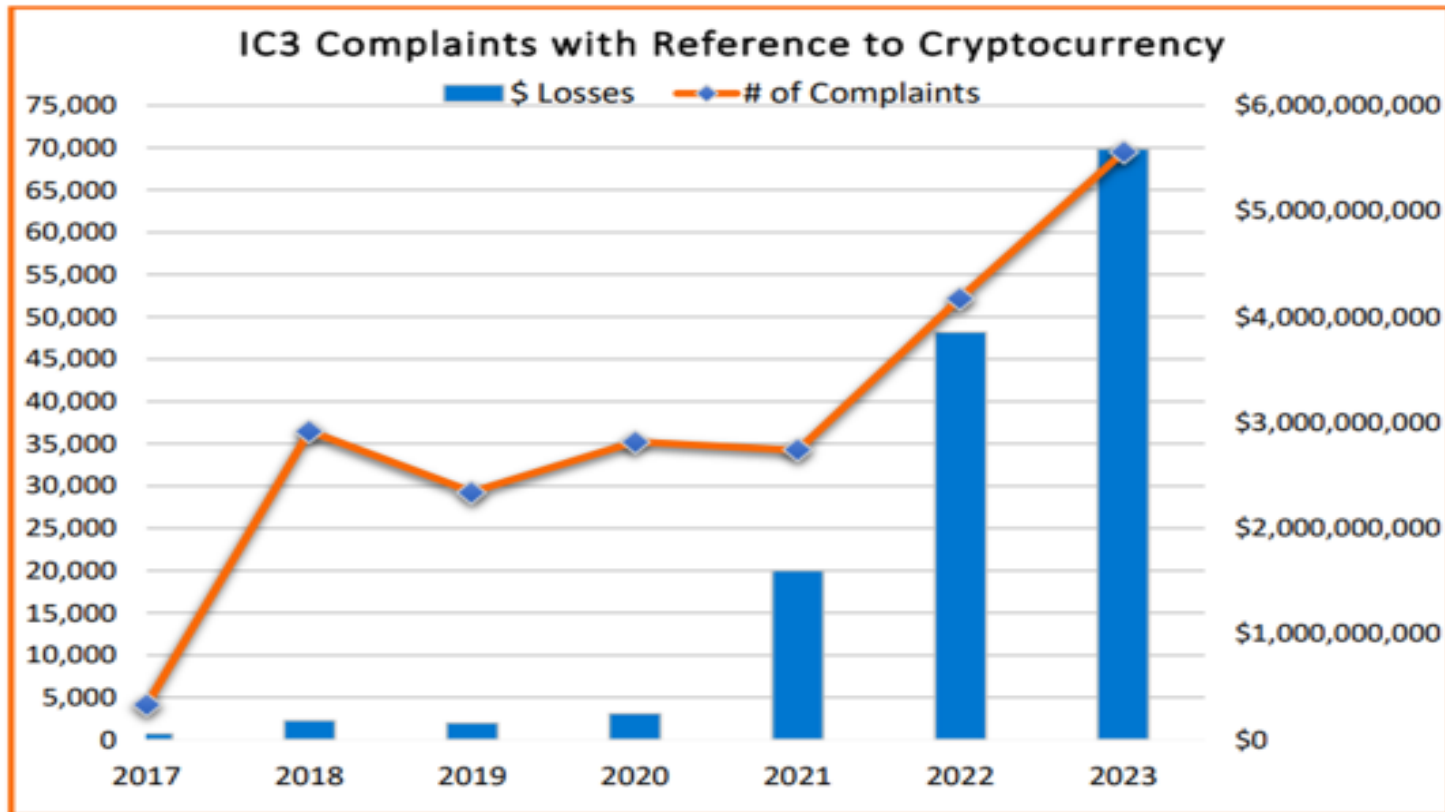
State of Wisconsin

Department of Financial Institutions

Only invest with someone you
know & trust



CRYPTOCURRENCY



- **2023**
\$5.6 Billion in Losses
- **45% Increase from 2022**
- **Victims over 60 years old**
Account for 30% of losses
- **2024**
Total loss expected to exceed \$7 Billion
- **Wisconsin Overall Loss:**
\$92,084,459

**STATISTICS FROM THE FBI'S 2023 CRYPTOCURRENCY FRAUD REPORT*

**SOURCE: 2023 IC3 Report & 2024 Chainalysis Crypto Crime Report*



HOW TO AVOID BEING SCAMMED

- Remember the Federal government won't call you. They'll send a letter
- Avoid urgent, intimidating, & threatening messages
- Don't trust anyone who wants you to lie or keep something a secret from family and friends
- Don't trust an online romance who refuses to meet or video call
- Never give remote access to your computer



HOW TO AVOID BEING SCAMMED (CONT.)

- Never pay to claim a prize
- Never click links in unknown or unsolicited texts and emails
- Only give to charities you contact directly
- Never follow investing advice from someone you met online
- Be cautious of A.I. impersonating loved ones
- Only trust phone numbers listed on your bills and on the back of the cards in your wallet



WHAT IS BEING DONE

STIR/SHAKEN

- Framework for an industry-standard caller ID authentication technology
- When a call fails authentication, you get a message alerting you of a potential scam

Operation Stop Scam Calls

- A joint initiative by Federal and State agencies to stop illegal telemarketing calls



DO NOT CALL LIST: TELEMARKETING VS SCAM CALLS



Wisconsin Do Not Call Registry



Register Your Phone



Verify Your Registration

Register at DoNotCall.gov or (888) 382-1222



WHAT YOU CAN DO?



HOW TO STOP UNWANTED CALLS



Report unwanted calls at
ReportFraud.ftc.gov

How to stop unwanted calls ON A CELL PHONE



See what **built-in features** your phone has.



See what **call-blocking** and **call-labeling services** your carrier offers.



Download a **call-blocking app**.

- Some apps are **free**, but others charge a monthly **fee**.
- Some apps will **access your contacts**.
- Calls might be **stopped, ring silently**, or go straight to **voicemail**.



HOW TO STOP SOME UNWANTED CALLS



android

< Block numbers

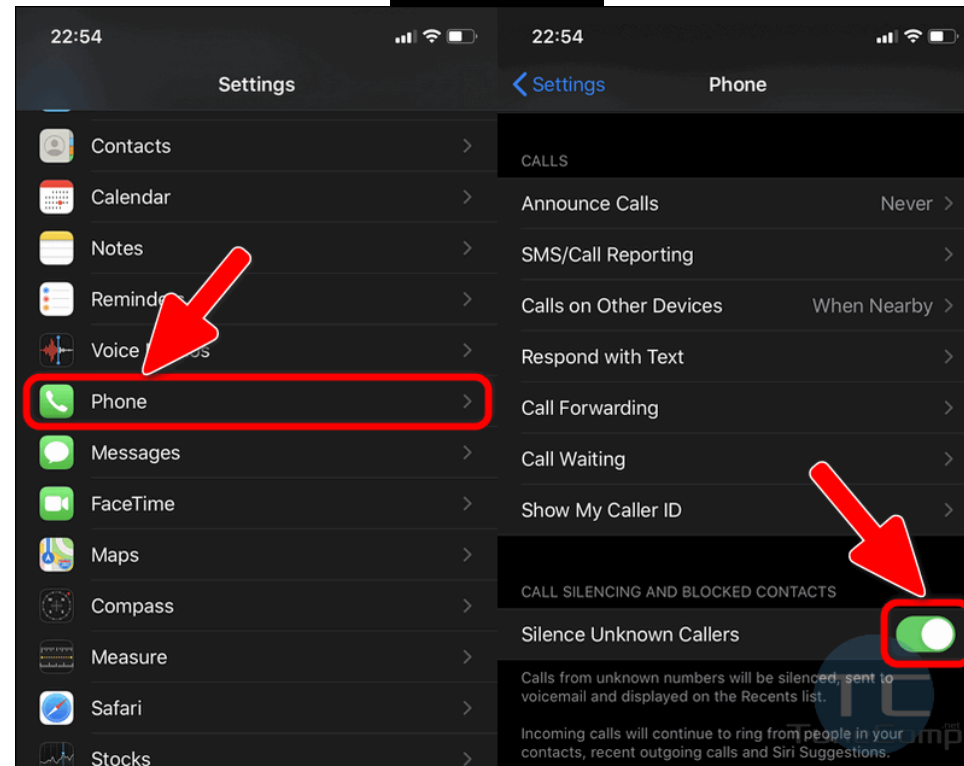


Block calls from unknown numbers



Block spam and scam calls

Block all spam and scam calls



VICTIM OF A SCAM

- Report to local law enforcement and www.ic3.gov as quickly as possible
 - Notify financial institution(s) to stop the transaction
 - If you mailed money or gift cards, contact USPS as soon as possible to stop shipment
 - File a complaint w/ WI Bureau of Consumer Protection
-
- Don't be ashamed and allow an opportunity to help
 - Support others and encourage them to file a complaint



FILING A COMPLAINT WITH DATCP

- Consumers have several options to submit a complaint:
 - File online at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov.
 - Download the form on DATCP's website.
 - Contact DATCP's Consumer Protection Hotline and have a complaint mailed to you.
- Completed complaints and copies of relevant documents should be mailed to:
DATCP Bureau of Consumer Protection
PO Box 8911
Madison, WI 53708-8911
- Hotline staff can schedule onsite appointments to assist with submitting a complaint.
- Video tutorials on DATCP's website explain how to submit a complaint and what to expect afterwards.



LEARN MORE ABOUT DATCP



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X (Twitter) 



Consumer Protection

REQUEST A PRESENTATION @ DATCP.WI.GOV

- General Consumer Protection
- Safe Online Shopping
- Consumer Protection for Young Adults
- Children's Online Awareness
- Common Scams & Fraud
- Identity Theft & Privacy Protection
- Scams & Fraud Targeting Small Businesses
- Privacy & Security for Businesses
- Landlord & Tenant - Rights & Responsibilities
- Home Improvement Contracts
- Motor Vehicle Repair





Division of Trade and Consumer Protection | Bureau of Consumer Protection

(800) 422-7128 – DATCPHotline@Wisconsin.gov – datcp.wi.gov

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP)