



Keep yourself safe from

Investment Scams

Criminals often convince victims to invest in schemes that are either worthless or don't exist. Sometimes a genuine investment company is impersonated, sometimes a fake company is 'created'. Be aware of websites, social media pages, unexpected emails or cold calls advertising high returns with little risk that could be propping up a fake organisation. Scammers may also create fake advertisements which show celebrities promoting investment opportunities, sometimes using deep fake technology to make the celebrity appear to be endorsing the investment in a video.

No investment is completely risk free, so you should never invest more than you can afford to lose, even when you're sure that the scheme is real. If you're not an experienced investor, consider seeking independent financial advice and always ensure that you carry out independent research on any companies you want to invest with. It doesn't matter if it's been recommended by someone you know or if it looks genuine – you can never be too careful.

Scammers will target anyone, no matter their age or experience. If you've been approached about an investment, check out the useful [ScamSmart](#) tool on the FCA website, before committing to anything.

Top tips for avoiding investment scams:

- If the offer seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Always check the company or financial advisor you want to invest with is on the [Financial Conduct Authority \(FCA\) register](#). This will also advise if a company has knowingly been impersonated and what steps to take, and provide legitimate contact details for them.
- Most cryptocurrencies are not regulated by the FCA, meaning they are not covered by the UK's [Financial Services Compensation Scheme \(FSCS\)](#). This ultimately means that if you're scammed into investing in cryptocurrency, it's unlikely you'll recover any money.
- Look up the company on a site such as [Trustpilot](#). You can read reviews by other customers and this can help you decide if you want to continue. Be wary of reviews shared by the company itself - these are likely to be fake or selective.
- If you're approached randomly for an 'exclusive' investment opportunity, be extremely cautious. Genuine firms would never send you a text or message on social media about an investment opportunity.
- A real investment firm would never ask you to download remote access software to your computer as part of an investment. If someone asks you to do this, it's a scam.
- Never allow anyone else access to any trading accounts you set up and be cautious if transferring funds between trading accounts – are you 100% sure you know who they belong to?
- Legitimate investment firms will never ask you to send more money to release money you've already invested. If someone asks you to do this, stop immediately.

Find out more by reading our article on [Investment Scams](#) or by visiting the [Take Five](#) or [FCA](#) websites.

If you're ever unsure about a payment you've been asked to make, or already made, get in touch with us on your app or by calling 159. We're here to help you. You might also want to speak to Victim Support, an independent charity that can provide support to victims of crime and traumatic events. Their [helpline](#) is open 24/7.