

Scams & online safety | Easy | 2 min read

HMRC, TV licence, Amazon and PayPal scams

Scammers like to pretend to be big names that most of us deal with. The messages look different but follow the same pattern: something is wrong, and you must act quickly.

Common examples

- **HMRC:** a text or email says you are owed a tax refund, or a call says you face arrest over unpaid tax.
- **TV Licensing:** an email says your licence has expired or your payment failed, with a link to "update your details".
- **Amazon:** a call or message says there is a suspicious order or your Prime membership is about to renew, and asks you to press a number or click a link.
- **PayPal:** a message says your account is limited or someone has taken a payment.

Signs it is not genuine

- It creates panic, or promises free money.
- It asks for bank details, passwords or codes.
- It does not use your name, or the sender's address looks slightly odd.
- It pushes you to click a link or phone a number inside the message.

What to do

1. **Do not click, call back or reply.**
2. Go to the real website by typing the address yourself, or open the company's official app, and look at your account there.
3. Forward suspicious emails to **report@phishing.gov.uk** and suspicious texts to **7726**.
4. Delete the message.

Good to know

HMRC does not threaten arrest by phone or text, and does not ask for payment in gift cards. Amazon will not ask you to give control of your computer or buy vouchers. If an account really has a problem, it will show when you sign in the normal way.

If you shared details

If you gave out a password, change it at once on the real site. If you gave card details, ring your bank on 159 or the number on your card. You can report scams to Report Fraud (formerly Action Fraud) at reportfraud.police.uk or on 0300 123 2040, or Police Scotland on 101.

When to get more help

If you are unsure whether a message is real, pass it to us or someone you trust before doing anything.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.