

Scams & online safety | Easy | 2 min read

Keeping an older relative safe online: how to start the conversation

If you are worried about a parent, grandparent or friend falling for scams, it is natural to want to help. How you raise it often matters more than what you say. The aim is to protect them while keeping their confidence and independence.

Choose your moment

Pick a calm time, not just after a scare. Start with a question rather than a warning, such as "Have you had any odd calls or messages lately?"

Be kind, not critical

Scammers are professionals who trick intelligent people every day. Say so. Avoid phrases like "you should know better". If they feel embarrassed, they may hide a problem rather than tell you.

Agree a few simple rules together

1. **If anyone asks for money or details, pause and check with someone first.** A family member, a neighbour or us.
2. **A real bank or the police will never ask you to move money.** Hang up and ring 159.
3. **Never let anyone take control of your computer.**
4. **Never share codes sent by text.**
5. **Real companies do not mind waiting.** Anyone pressing for a quick decision is suspicious.

Practical help you can offer

- Set up call blocking, or a call-screening phone, to cut down cold calls. Register with the free Telephone Preference Service at tpsonline.org.uk.
- Turn on two-step sign-in for email and bank apps.
- Help them use a password manager or a written list kept somewhere safe at home.
- Keep a short list of numbers by the phone, including their bank, Report Fraud and a family contact.

If they have been scammed

Stay calm and thank them for telling you. Ring the bank together on 159 or the number on the card. Report it to Report Fraud (formerly Action Fraud) at reportfraud.police.uk or on 0300 123 2040, or Police Scotland on 101. Age UK and Citizens Advice can offer further support.

When to get more help

If you would like a hand setting up safer devices for someone you care about, we can visit or talk them through it.

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.