

Scams & online safety | Medium | 2 min read

Remote access scams and tech-support cold calls

A caller says they are from Microsoft, your broadband provider or "tech support" and that your computer has a problem. They ask you to install a program so they can "fix" it. This is a scam, and it is one we see often.

The key rule

Never give a stranger control of your computer. Real companies do not ring people out of the blue to say your computer is faulty.

How it works

- The caller sounds friendly and technical.
- They may ask you to open a harmless-looking screen to "show" errors. These screens are normal and do not mean anything is wrong.
- They ask you to install a remote access tool such as AnyDesk or TeamViewer. Once you do, they can see and control everything.
- They then ask you to log in to online banking, "to receive a refund", and move money without you noticing.

What to do if someone rings

1. Say you are not interested and **hang up**. You do not have to be polite to a cold caller.
2. Do not follow any instructions, even small ones.
3. Do not install anything or type anything into the computer.

If you have already let them in

1. **Turn off Wi-Fi or unplug the network cable**, then shut down the computer.
2. Ring your bank on **159** or the number on your card, from a different phone if you can.
3. Do not use the computer for banking until it has been checked.
4. Change your passwords later, from a clean device.
5. Report it to Report Fraud (formerly Action Fraud) at reportfraud.police.uk or 0300 123 2040, or Police Scotland on 101.

Staying safe

Remote access tools are useful when you ask a trusted person, like us, for help. The difference is that you start the contact, and you know who you are talking to.

When to get more help

If anything like this has happened, contact us. We will check the computer, remove anything unwanted and help you secure your accounts.

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.