



## Scam Calls and Scam Texts FAQs

### What are scam calls and scam texts?

Scam calls and scam texts are unwanted, unsolicited, nuisance communications. The intent of scam calls and texts is often to mislead the receiver to share personal information or money to the scammer.

### Why am I getting so many scam calls and scam texts lately?

More people are working from home, shopping online, banking online and using social media. This creates opportunities for scammers to steal data and money from unsuspecting users. Though your phone service provider is likely to be already blocking suspicious numbers, some calls get through as it is difficult to quickly recognise scammers and block their calls and texts efficiently without blocking genuine numbers.

### How did the scammers get my number and why are they targeting me?

Scammers use software to call or text a range of numbers at the same time and then note which are answered. Answered numbers are recorded as genuine in-use numbers and may be sold on the internet to other cyber criminals. Therefore, making your number ex-directory or adding your number to the “do not call” register for direct marketing will not prevent scams. If you have fallen victim to a scam previously, you may be contacted by other scammers who claim to be able to help you to get your money back for a fee.

### What can I do to protect myself from being scammed?

Unfortunately, scam calls and texts can be difficult to identify. Vigilance is important, such as:

#### Do's

- **Hang up** if a caller pressures you, claims urgent action is needed or threatens negative consequences. **Ask someone you trust** if they think the call was genuine.
- If a call or text message claims to be from a bank, government agency or a company you do business with it is best not to engage with the caller or message the sender. Instead, **end the call, look up their official contact details** and contact them back to verify if the call is legitimate.
- If you have friends or relatives abroad that may be calling you, **store their number** (including the country prefix) in your phone. Get to know the prefix for the country they might be calling from.



- If you dial back an unknown number by mistake, **hang up immediately** if there appears to be no recipient on the other end or where you are left on hold.
- If you are receiving calls late at night, you could **turn down the volume** on your home phone or **select silent mode** or do not disturb mode on your mobile phone.
- If you are getting persistent calls from a number you don't know, **contact your service provider**, and request that **calls from that number be blocked**.
- Sometimes, scammers display a phone number like your own on your caller ID, to increase the likelihood that you will answer the call. If your number is being used in this way, contact your service provider and request that calls from that number be blocked.
- Some mobile phones have the capability of allowing you to screen, block or silence nuisance numbers from contacting you. **Check your phone settings** to see if this is a feature of your handset or contact your service provider who may be able to assist.

## Don'ts

- **NEVER provide any personal information**, for example, banking details/PPS number/credit card details/name, address/passport numbers, passwords etc to someone who contacts you.
- **Do not follow instructions from a recorded message.**
- Be wary of receiving multiple calls or missed calls from the same unfamiliar number, especially if it is like your own number. **Do not call back** any number that you do not recognise or where no voicemail message left.
- If you click on a link in a scam text, **close the web page and message immediately**. Do not follow any instructions given after clicking the link.
- **Never use a number** given to you by the caller.

## Who should I contact if I have shared personal information?

Scam calls and scam texts are **illegal**. Therefore, you should contact and **An Garda Síochána** immediately, as well as **your financial institution** if you have shared personal information relating to your finances.

ComReg Connects

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<https://www.comreg.ie/advice-information/scam-calls/>

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