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Be cyber secure: social media scams

Around seven-in-ten Americans use social media to connect with one another.[1] While the average user is connecting with friends and family, cyber criminals are also actively using social media platforms to scam users out of money and gain access to personal information.

Here are some common types of social media scams to look out for:

- **Romance/Confidence scams** — Cyber criminals will create a fake online identity and try to establish a trusting and caring relationship. Once the relationship is established the cyber criminal will deploy different methods to ask for money.
- **Giveaways and sweepstakes that lead to malicious links —** An ad may pop up or you may receive a message that states you have won a giveaway or sweepstakes that can lead to malicious links that are intended for you to send money or pry for information.
- **Fake celebrities —** It is not uncommon to see a plethora of imposter celebrity accounts. Some of these accounts may have a large following but are not verified. Cyber criminals may utilize these fake accounts to steal from fans.
- **Fake investment opportunities —** this "opportunity" may show up in the form of a post or direct message asking for money, gift cards or even a wire transfer.

Here are some tips that can help protect you from social media scams:

- **Make sure you only click on links from trusted sources,** and if you are on social media channels, look for verification check marks to confirm the channel is legitimate.
- **Be careful** when posting personally identifiable information on social media. Enable security settings on your social media profiles to limit what you share publicly.
- **Update all operating systems, apps, and security software —** including antivirus programs and firewalls.
- **Don't fall for the bait.** If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- **Never trust unknown individuals.** Verify everything they claim and do not send sensitive information to anyone whose identity you cannot confirm.
- **Remember** that Bank of America, like many businesses, will never ask you for account details unless you call us first.
- **Report** the incident to local law enforcement immediately and contact your bank.

Visit www.bankofamerica.com/security to learn how to help protect yourself and those closest to you.

[1] *www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/social-media/*