

In 2017, Canadians lost over \$95 million because of scams and only five per cent of victims come forward to report a crime.

Below is the BBB's top 10 scams list with information on how much money was lost based on the people reporting them:

- **Online purchase scam** (over \$13 million lost)
- **Wire fraud/Spearphishing** (over \$20 million lost)
- **Online dating scams** (over \$19 million lost)
- **Employment scam** (over \$5 million lost)
- **Cryptocurrency scams** (over \$1.7 million lost)
- **Income tax scam** (over \$5 million lost)
- **Miracle weight-loss scam** (losses unknown)
- **Advance fee loans** (over \$1.5 million)
- **Shady contractors** (over \$3 million lost)
- **Fake invoices** (losses unknown)

RCMP Victims Guide - www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/scams-fraudes/victims-guide-victimes-eng.htm

- What should I do if I become a victim?
- Collect your thoughts
- Track all communications
- Obtain a copy of your credit report
- Review your credit reports
- Contact your local police
- Contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC)
- Review all of your bank and credit card statements
- Notify credit card companies, banks and other financial institution and change all of your passwords
- Notify Canada Post and utility and service providers
- Notify federal identity document issuing agencies
- Notify provincial / territorial identity document issuing agencies

Common Frauds and Scams - www.canada.ca/en/services/finance/fraud.html

- Identity Theft and Identity Fraud
- Credit Card Fraud
- Real Estate Fraud
- Debit Card Fraud
- Charity Scam
- Prize Scams
- Romance Fraud
- Phishing and Vishing
- Grandparent Scam/emergency scam, and many more...

What do most frauds and scams have in common and what should you watch out for?

- The intention is to trigger a quick reaction from you. Upsetting or exciting information is used, there is a demand for an urgent response, or they employ a false pretense or statement. Messages are normally not personalized but they can be.
- Typically, the messaging will ask you to "update", "validate", or "confirm" your account information or face dire consequences. They might even ask you to make a phone call.
- Often, the message or website includes official-looking logos and other identifying information taken directly from legitimate websites. Government, financial institutions and online payment services are common targets of brand spoofing.
- Some scams may employ distraction to target another vulnerability. For example, you may be asked to pay a large fine for some "behaviour" but the actual intention is to get you to call a number and keep you on the line as it is a pay by minute phone number.

Fraud Prevention Quiz - www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/04251.html

Examples pulled from headlines

- <https://nationalpost.com/news/world/the-10-year-challenge-really-really-looks-like-a-data-mining-operation>
- <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/calgary-senior-landline-phone-scam-tiffanys-1.4809250>
- <https://globalnews.ca/news/4806823/romance-scam-ontario-senior/>

Links to videos of interest on this topic

- <http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/04272.html>
- <https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/cnt/prtct-yrslf/prtctn-fml/snrs-nln-en.aspx> - Warning, this video has a very loud high-pitched sound at the beginning, turn your speakers down. It may also appear at the end.
- www.bbc.com/capital/story/20180727-why-so-many-people-fall-for-scams

Extra resources

- <http://www.antifraudcentre.ca/index-eng.htm>
- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/financial-legal-matters/scams-and-fraud>

There is evidence that some people who have been victimized are too embarrassed to report the incident to the authorities. For your own wellbeing and to help others from becoming victims, if you have been victimized (or think you have been) report the circumstances immediately to your local police department.

TIP – Put the non-emergency phone number of your local police in your contact list. You may also want to consider putting the number for the Canadian Anti-fraud Centre in too.