



NATIONAL
CYBERSECURITY
AWARENESS
MONTH



DO YOUR PART.
#BECYBERSMART

PHISHING

Phishing attacks use email or malicious websites to infect your machine with malware and viruses in order to collect personal and financial information. Cybercriminals attempt to lure users to click on a link or open an attachment that infects their computers, creating vulnerability to attacks. Phishing emails may appear to come from a real financial institution, e-commerce site, government agency, or any other service, business, or individual. The email may also request personal information such as account numbers, passwords, or Social Security numbers. When users respond with the information or click on a link, attackers use it to access users' accounts.

HOW CRIMINALS LURE YOU IN

The following messages from the Federal Trade Commission's OnGuardOnline are examples of what attackers may email or text when phishing for sensitive information:

- "We suspect an unauthorized transaction on your account. To ensure that your account is not compromised, please click the link below, and confirm your identity."
- "During our regular verification of accounts, we couldn't verify your information. Please click here to update and verify your information."
- "Our records indicate that your account was overcharged. You must call us within 7 days to receive your refund."
- To see examples of actual phishing emails, and steps to take if you believe you received a phishing email, please visit "

SIMPLE TIPS:

- **Play hard to get with strangers.** Links in email and online posts are often the way cybercriminals compromise your computer. If you're unsure who an email is from—even if the details appear accurate—do not respond, and do not click on any links or attachments found in that email. Be cautious of generic greetings such as "Hello Bank Customer," as these are often signs of phishing attempts. If you are concerned about the legitimacy of an email, call the company directly.
- **Think before you act.** Be wary of communications that implore you to act immediately. Many phishing emails attempt to create a sense of urgency, causing the recipient to fear their account or information is in jeopardy. If you receive a suspicious email that appears to be from someone you know, reach out to that person directly on a separate secure platform. If the email comes from an organization but still looks "phishy," reach out to them via customer service to verify the communication.
- **Protect your personal information.** If people contacting you have key details from your life—your job title, multiple email addresses, full name, and more that you may have published online somewhere—they can attempt a direct

For more information about how you can Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart, visit www.cisa.gov/ncsam

