

# Privacy Tips for when Love is in the Air and Online

Romance or online dating scams often start on social media or on dating sites or apps. It happens when a person is tricked into believing they are in a romantic relationship with someone they met Online; however, that person is not who they seem and can be a cybercriminal using a fake identity looking to gain trust, personal information, and/or money.

## 1. Beware of the warning signs.

Simply knowing how a romance scammer operates can help you identify and avoid one.

**Roses are red, violets are blue, and romance scammers can fool you, too.**

Look for the red flags:

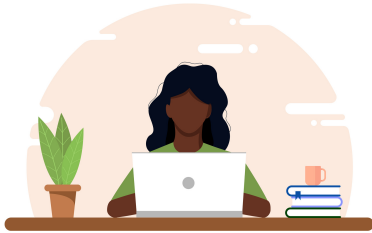
- The relationship moves fast and increases in intensity.
- They say they are far away and/or break promises to visit.
- They claim they need money and ask for specific payment methods.



## 2. Evaluate your Online presence.

The more you share Online, the more personal information someone knows about you.

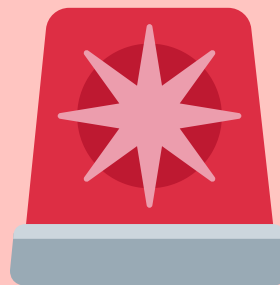
**Bears love honey, flowers love dew, bankers love money, and scammers like clues about you.**



Turn on your privacy settings on your social media accounts and limit what you make public.

## 3. Think before you act and refer to outside help.

Be cautious of communications that push you for immediate action or ask for personal information. Never share personal information through email, especially if you do not know the sender.

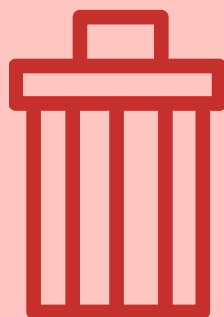


And if someone continues to ask for help or immediate action, refer them to a professional.

## 4. When in doubt, throw it out.

Links in email, tweets, texts, posts, social media messages and online advertising are an easy way for cyber criminals to get to you. Be cautious of clicking on links or downloading anything that comes from a stranger or that you were not expecting.

Everyone has a digital presence waiting to be viewed, so consider doing a reverse image search to see whether their photos were used on other sites.



## 5. Never send money Online to someone you haven't met.

Don't give out your financial information, top off a cash reload card, or send gifts or money to someone you haven't met face to face.

**Love is a circle, round and round, love goes up, and love comes down, love is on the inside, trying to get sought, Love through wire transfers it is not!**



## 6. Stop communicating and report the incident.

If you're suspicious or unsure that you're being scammed, cut off communication immediately, block their phone number or email, if possible, and report the activity.

How to report an Online dating scam

- If you've sent money, contact your bank right away.
- If using social media or a dating app, report the individual online.
- Collect any records you have of your online relationship, including conversations and transactions.
- File a police report and/or seek legal advice.



**Before you let someone steal your heart Online, keep these tips and pointers at the top of your mind. You don't want your love story to end in a cybercrime, so take it one step at a time.**