

Romance (Catfishing)

A scammer adopts a fake online identity to gain a person's affection and trust. They use the illusion of a romantic relationship to steal money and personal info.

Scammers target people through online dating sites, social media, and email. They have many excuses to avoid in-person meetings, video calls, or sending photos.

Romance scams are sometimes called 'catfishing'.

Kelly responds to a dating profile she really likes – 'Jim'. Over time they build a connection – she's emotionally attached. They talk on the phone and use email and text messaging. Then 'Jim' asks for her help – money and plane tickets.

WARNING SIGNS FOR ROMANCE SCAMS

- A profile that's too good to be true.
- Intimacy develops too quickly.
- The person refuses to send a photo or meet in person or via video call. Often say they work / live too far away / in a different country.
- The crisis or 'problem' is clearly made up.
- Asking for money or personal info.

IF YOU SUSPECT A SCAM ...

- PAUSE. Do a reality check. Talk to a trusted friend or family member.
- VERIFY. Search on Google to see if their profile photo is used elsewhere.
- Insist on video calls so you can see the person. Ask them to send a photo.
- Do NOT send money or personal info.
- End the contact, even if it hurts.



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