

Staying safe online

A few simple precautions will keep you safe while you are online.

- **Make sure that your computer is secure** – Protect your computer with a firewall and with up-to-date anti-virus and anti-spyware software.
- **Don't open spam** – Spam is email that is sent automatically to millions of email addresses. It can advertise things such as drugs or pornography. If you receive an email from someone that you have never heard of, **don't open it**. Delete the email immediately. If you do open it by accident, don't click on any of the links and never reply to a spam message.
- **Protect your personal information** – Never give your passwords, PIN numbers or bank account numbers to anyone. Criminals send out phishing emails that look very authentic, asking you to confirm your PIN or to go to a website and log in. If you receive such an email, do not reply to it or click on any of the links, and delete it immediately.
- **Shop safely** – Only buy from online retailers that have a good reputation. If you buy from auction sites, such as eBay, follow their security advice very carefully. Don't download pirated software, music or videos. For more information on shopping safely, see our section below on shopping online.
- **Use strong passwords and have separate passwords for your financial accounts** – Read [Top Tips for Staying Safe Online](#) by the National Cyber Security Centre.
- **Public Wi Fi**: Newcastle city centre has [accessible public Wi Fi](#). This is great to browse, watch and chat. Do **not** access your bank account or sensitive information and keep your passwords secure from a hacker or malware virus.
- **Look for a padlock and security certificate** for a website (in the left hand corner of the browser bar)

For further information and security advice on a range of topics including: how to install anti-virus software; make backups; protect your privacy; set ground rules for children and grandchildren; and shop, bank and use online auctions safely, see the [Get Safe Online website](#).

If the worst happens and you are a victim of a scam, or if you want advice on how to protect yourself, call Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040** (national rate) for help or visit their website www.actionfraud.police.uk to report fraud or if you suspect you may have been targeted.

If your bank or building society is a member of [Stop Scams UK](#) you can ring **159** if you suspect you have had a scam call.

Please note that these are not for emergencies, if you feel that you are in immediate danger please call the Emergency Services on 999.

Support and resources to stay safe online

[Friends Against Scams](#) (part of the [National Trading Standards Scams Team](#)) offer free training, resources and support for people worried about or affected by scams. This includes Email and other online scams. They have an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool [AskSilver](#) that can safely check website URL addresses or images of text message, emails or letters you think may be a scam.

[Scam Marshals](#) help people by sharing their own experiences, reporting and recognising scams and sending any scam mail that they receive to the National Trading Standards Scams Team.

Other Useful Information

- [Digital Unite](#) has a huge range of free learning guides to help people with using computers, the internet, tablets and other mobile devices. The easy-to-follow guides cover the essential topics from getting started with a mouse and keyboard to web browsing, emailing, shopping online and internet safety.
- [Digital Voice](#) works with participants who are excluded from digital media, helping individuals and communities to access the internet and web information.
- [Choose](#) has a range of free guides on how to stay safe online, including how to stay safe when browsing the web, emailing and sharing personal information.
- [Fraud & Scams](#) article on InformationNOW
- [Scams, fraud and Cybercrime](#) during the coronavirus
- [Mobile Phones article](#) on InformationNOW
- [We are Digital](#) offer 1:1 home tuition and group training to all ages and skill levels.
- [Guide to using mobile apps securely](#) Ofcom provides a useful guide on how to keep your tablet and mobile devices safe.
- [Get Safe Online](#) is a source of free, expert, practical, impartial advice for staying safe online for consumers and small businesses
- [Citizens Online](#) run online events, provide a free digital support helpline and a trained team of digital champions who will call you back and offer friendly, patient support over the phone.
- [Media Savvy CIC](#) run a variety of digital skills courses for marginalised groups, including:- Basics, Social Media, eSafety, Employability, Money Matters.
- [The Cyber Helpline](#) support victims of cybercrime and online harm. Chat to their chatbot and get immediate advice on how to deal with your cyber security issue. If you need more help, it will pass you onto one of their volunteer cyber security experts.

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Useful Organisations

Action Fraud – report Fraud & Internet Crime

Website: www.actionfraud.police.uk

Digital Unite

Email: du@digitalunite.com

Website: www.digitalunite.com

AbilityNet

Email: enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk

Website: www.abilitynet.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 180 0028

Address: Acre House,, NW1 3ER

Get Safe Online

Website: www.getsafeonline.org

Telephone: 0300 180 0028

Choose

Email: getintouch@choose.co.uk

Website: <https://www.choose.co.uk/>

Telephone: 01273 252587

Address: Choose Ltd, W1H 1DP

Digital Voice

Email: julie@digitalvoice.org.uk

Website: <https://www.digitalvoice.org.uk/>

Telephone: 01207 566 866

Address: Chopwell Community Centre, NE17 7HS

Citizens Online

Email: info@citizensonline.org.uk

Website: <https://www.citizensonline.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0808 196 5883

Address: The Exchange , GL5 1DF

Media Savvy CIC

Email: info@mediasavvycic.co.uk

Website: <https://www.mediasavvycic.co.uk>

Telephone: 07873 176 145

Address: 27 Norfolk Street, SR1 1EE

The Cyber Helpline

Website: <https://www.thecyberhelpline.com/>

Telephone: 07873 176 145

Address: Room 2, 1st Floor, TN13 1DB

Stop Scams UK

Website: <https://stopscamsuk.org.uk/>

Telephone: 159

Address: 140 Borough High Street, SE1 1LB

Related Articles

[Internet, WiFi and broadband](#)

[Digital support](#)

[Getting online and using digital equipment](#)

[What you can do online](#)

[Keeping in Touch Online](#)

[Social Networking](#)

[Making your computer or mobile device easier to use](#)

[Mobile phones](#)

[Cyber crime, online fraud and scams](#)