

# ALERTS

## TRADING STANDARDS

### 04/06/2026

### **Warning for online shoppers after spike in criminals gaining unauthorised access to retailer accounts**

Report Fraud is urging online shoppers to stay alert for unusual activity on their accounts following a rise in criminals gaining access to buy expensive goods.

Recent reporting highlights Argos as a key trend in this activity. There has been a significant increase in cases mentioning the retailer, reflecting how criminals are targeting well-known brands. Argos is actively working with authorities and its customers to identify suspicious activity and strengthen safeguards.

Criminals are using login details obtained from data breaches to gain unauthorised access to retailer accounts. This is possible due to the practice of reusing the same password across multiple online accounts. Once they have control of the account, criminals will place online orders and then collect the good in-person at a physical store. In some instances, the goods are paid for using payment details not connected to the victim of the compromised account.

These fraudulent orders are frequently fulfilled through 'click and collect', allowing offenders to retrieve goods in person.

Argos has been contacting customers who may have been affected and continues to work closely with partners and shoppers to help protect accounts and prevent further incidents.

#### **How can you protect yourself?**

All shoppers with any retailer should take measures to protect their online account. Here is what you can do:

**Reset passwords:** if you noticed any unauthorised activity on an online account, you should change your password immediately. You should also do this for any accounts that use the same password. A good way to make sure your passwords are secure and strong is to combine 3 random words to create a unique password. You should opt for a passkey if you can.

**Enable 2SV:** whenever available, protect your online accounts by enabling 2-step verification (2SV).

**Shopping online:** if you decide to create an account for the store you're buying from, don't allow them to store your bank details for future purchases.

## WHERE TO REPORT

**Protect others by reporting incidents like this.**

**Report suspicious texts** you have received but not acted upon, by forwarding the original message to 7726, which spells SPAM on your keypad.

**Report suspicious emails** you have received but not acted upon, by forwarding the original message to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

**If you, or anyone you know, have been affected by this fraud or any other scam, report it to Report Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting [www.reportfraud.police.uk](http://www.reportfraud.police.uk)**

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