



# ≡ GIFT CARD FRAUD ≡



## WHAT IS GIFT CARD FRAUD?

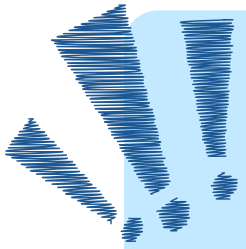
- Criminals deceive victims into buying gift cards and sharing the codes with them.
- Fraudsters like being paid in gift cards as they are quick to buy, easy to spend, difficult to trace and almost impossible to reverse once the code has been shared.
- Like with many other types of fraud, the criminals use urgency, fabricated stories and pressure tactics in order to trick people into handing over these gift card details.
- Criminals may ask victims to visit several different stores to purchase the gift cards
- They will instruct victims to claim the gift card is for a family members birthday present or a gift for a friend to avoid questioning by staff.
- Fraudsters may go into shops themselves and scratch off the protective film at the back of the gift card to reveal the code. They use mobile apps to record the security numbers and 'drain' the balance the moment a legitimate customer activates the card, meaning that when the customer comes to use the card, the balance will be £0 as the funds will have already been stolen.

## BE SUSPICIOUS IF:

- Someone you meet online, whether that be a friend, or a partner, begins asking you to purchase gift cards to help them pay for things.
- You are asked to pay a bill or tax using a gift card or threatened by a service provider that your electric/water will be turned off unless you pay using gift cards immediately.
- You are texted and instructed to buy a gift card by an unknown number claiming to be a family member
- You are told you have won a contest, but in order to claim the prize you must pay an upfront fee using a gift card.



## ALWAYS REMEMBER:

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- Do not send gift card codes to anyone you do not know personally or to anyone who you have met online that suddenly starts asking you to purchase gift cards in order to 'help' them.
  - Gift cards can only be used to purchase goods. Eg Apple gift cards are used for Apple products only. Amazon gift cards can only be used to purchase from Amazon. They **can't** be used to pay for health care, cars, household bills etc. and they can't be put towards a deposit for a house.
  - Be truthful if questioned by staff members, they may be able to recognise a fraud before you and help.
  - Report it as soon as you can to your bank and also to Report Fraud (details below)
  - Before buying a gift card in-store, check for signs of tampering and ask the at the till to verify the balance.

## WHERE TO REPORT

- Report to your bank and/or the payment service provider.
- Report to **Report Fraud** on 0300 123 2040 or visit <https://www.reportfraud.police.uk/>

**STOP!**  
**THINK FRAUD**



**WEST YORKSHIRE**  
**POLICE**