

How to spot an AI scam

A one-page guide from Pragmatic AI Advice, by Vorr Labs

WHO THIS IS FOR

Anyone who gets phone calls, texts or messages, and wants to know when "AI" is being used against them. You do not need to understand AI to use this page.

WHAT IS HAPPENING

Fraudsters can now use AI to copy a real person's voice, and sometimes their face. A call can sound like your son, your granddaughter or your bank, and the number on your screen can be faked as well. The story is usually urgent: an accident, a lost phone, a frozen account, money that has to move now.

The technology is new. The trick is old: make you act before you check.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Any one of these is a warning sign.

- An urgent story, and pressure to act straight away.
- A request for money, a bank transfer, a one-time passcode (the code your bank texts you), a PIN or a password.
- A request to let someone take control of your computer.
- A familiar voice from an unfamiliar number, or one that cannot answer a question only they would know.
- A caller who tries to rush you, or will not let you call them back.

WHAT TO DO

1. **Hang up.** You do not owe a caller an explanation.
2. **Call back on a number you already trust:** the one saved in your phone, printed on a bill, or on the back of your bank card. To reach your bank, dial **159**.
3. **Agree a safe phrase** with close family and friends, and keep it inside that circle. If a caller claiming to be family cannot give it, hang up.
4. **Remember:** your bank, the police and your phone or internet provider will never call to ask you to move money, share a passcode or hand over control of your computer.
5. **If you have already paid or shared details, do not panic.** Call your bank straight away on the number on your card, then report it.

WHERE TO GET HELP

- **To report fraud** in England, Wales or Northern Ireland: Report Fraud, reportfraud.police.uk or **0300 123 2040**. In Scotland, call Police Scotland on **101**.
- **Scam text:** forward it to **7726**, free. **Scam call:** text 7726 with the word "Call" followed by the number.
- **Scam email:** forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk.
- **Support after fraud:** Victim Support, **08 08 16 89 111** (England and Wales, free, 24 hours). In Scotland, 0800 160 1985 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm). In Northern Ireland, Victim Support NI, Belfast 02890 243133 or Foyle 02871 370086.
- **In immediate danger:** 999.

WANT TO GO THROUGH THIS WITH OTHER PEOPLE?

We run a two-hour beginner group session, in person across the North East and online, on what AI is, what it is not, and how to stay safe. Plain English, gentle pace, no question too small.

Details and prices: vorrlabs.com/aihelp/. Or email vincent@vorrlabs.com.