



LLOYDS BANK

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **Sleigh the scammers! Lloyds Bank issues fraud warning to last-minute Christmas shoppers**

- **Analysis shows the number of online shopping scams increased by a fifth (20%) in December last year**
- **Most common goods reported as part of festive purchase scams are trainers and clothes**
- **Average amount lost in the run-up to Christmas is £427**

Online bargain hunters are being urged to watch out for festive fraudsters, as scammers look to cash in on the last-minute shopping rush in the run-up to Christmas.

New research from Lloyds Bank reveals that the number of online shopping scams increased by 20% in December last year (compared to December 2020).

The average amount people were tricked into handing over was £427. However, those aged between 55 and 64 lost more than double that, around £1,000 on average.

Most of these scams start via online platforms such as Instagram or Facebook Marketplace, with victims lured in by the promise of cut-price or hard-to-find goods, especially during busy shopping periods like Christmas.

The most common items reported as part of online shopping scams in a typical December include trainers, clothes, gaming consoles and phones.

### **Consumers urged to be on their guard against scam threat**

Meanwhile a poll of more than 2,000 UK adults found that a third of people (33%) would take more of a risk at Christmas, such as purchasing from a website they haven't heard of before, if they are buying something that is hard to find elsewhere.

And around one in five people (18%) would take more risk if their priority is to find the cheapest option. This is a particular concern at the moment, with almost four-fifths (79%) of people saying the current rise in the cost of living makes them more keen to seek a bargain at Christmas.

The research also found that more than half of people (57%) still consider a bank transfer (also known as a Faster Payment) to be a safe payment method for buying items online, despite it offering much less protection than paying by credit or debit card.

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### **Liz Ziegler, Fraud Prevention Director, Lloyds Bank, said:**

*“With people especially keen to bag a bargain this Christmas given the cost of living squeeze, heartless fraudsters will be ready to trick unsuspecting victims out of their hard-earned cash.*

*“Online shopping scams come in all shapes and sizes, but the vast majority start with items advertised on social media, where it’s too easy for fraudsters to use fake profiles and advertise goods that simply don’t exist.*

*“The safest way to pay for things online is always by debit or credit card, and buy from a trusted retailer. Remember that if a deal looks too good to be true, it usually is.”*

### **‘Missed parcel’ delivery scams**

Another scam popular among fraudsters at this time of year involves fake emails and text messages which claim a parcel is awaiting delivery, and asking the recipient to click on a link to pay a fee.

The website will ask for personal and banking details and the fraudsters can then use this information to impersonate the victim’s bank.

Worryingly the research found that more than a quarter of UK adults (26%) say they always or often click on links in messages that appear to come from a delivery company.

### **Top tips to stay safe from scams this Christmas:**

- Always use your debit or credit card when you shop online. This helps to protect your money should anything go wrong.
- Low prices and great deals can hide scams. See if you can find them elsewhere. And remember, if an item is selling out, fraudsters can charge more to trick desperate buyers.
- Fraudsters use social media to post scam offers. They can even send them straight to your inbox. Always search for deals yourself.
- Make sure a seller or website is genuine. Look for good reviews from different buyers. Be wary of mixed, bad or no reviews at all. It’s safer to buy from a trusted retailer.
- Ask questions before you buy. If a seller can’t give any details about an item or tries to hurry you into paying, it’s a sign of a scam
- Never click on links in messages, even if you think you know the sender. Visit the genuine website of the delivery company to track a parcel.

## Notes to editors

### Scam transaction data

Figures based on analysis of relevant purchase scams reported by Lloyds Banking Group customers with transactions date between 1<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> December 2021, with comparisons made to equivalent figures from 2020.

### Consumer research

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2323 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

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