

6 Tips to Avoid Holiday Shopping Scams



In the wake of continued data breaches, shoppers should be on high alert while purchasing their presents this holiday season. The **Arkansas Bankers Association** recommends the following tips to keep your information safe, whether shopping in the store or online:

- 1. Monitor your account.** Use online and mobile banking to keep an eye on your transactions, especially during the holidays. Notify the bank right away if there's any fraudulent activity.
- 2. Beware of phishing scams.** During the holidays, criminals will create a fake email for a deal that's too good to be true. If you click on any links within the email, you may be downloading malware onto your computer or you may be asked for payment information that could lead to fraud.
- 3. Limit large sums of cash.** Even though we've seen financial crime migrate from physical to cyber, customers should be careful not to carry around large sums of cash when shopping. A bank will make you whole if there's fraud against your account. If cash is stolen, your money is gone.
- 4. Secure your internet connection.** If shopping online, make sure you do so from a password protected Wi-Fi network. Never access online banking from a public Wi-Fi network.
- 5. Shop safely.** Before making an online purchase, make sure the website uses secure technology. When you are at the checkout screen, verify that the web address begins with https. Also, check to see if a tiny locked padlock symbol appears on the page.
- 6. Read the site's privacy policies.** Though long and complex, privacy policies tell you how the site protects the personal information it collects. If you don't see or understand a site's privacy policy, consider doing business elsewhere.

