

Stay Safe: Spot the Signs of Scams

Criminals use many tricks to gain access to computer systems. Know what to look for to avoid a possible cyber attack.

TO

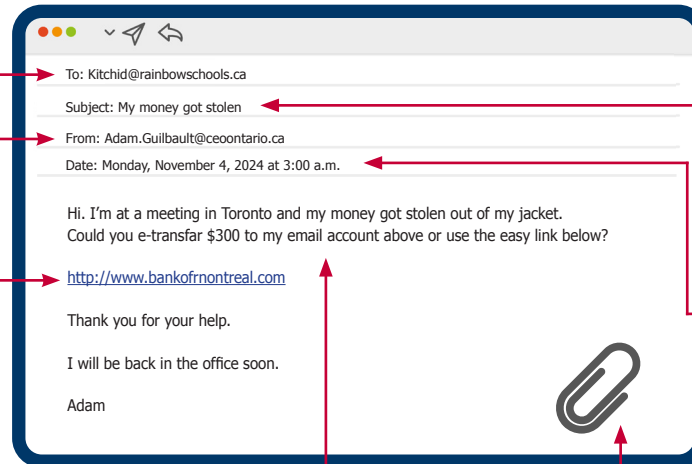
- I was cc'd on an email sent to one or more people, but **I don't personally know** the other people it was sent to.
- I received an email that was also sent to an unusual mix of people. For instance, it might be sent to a random group of people at my organization whose last names start with the same letter, or a whole list of unrelated addresses.

FROM

- I don't recognize the sender's email address as someone **I ordinarily communicate with**.
- This email is from **someone outside my organization and it's not related to my job responsibilities**.
- This email was sent from **someone inside the organization** or from a customer, vendor, or partner and is **very unusual or out of character**.
- Is the sender's email address from a **suspicious domain** such as micorsoft-support.com?
- **I don't know the sender personally and they were not vouched for** by someone I trust.
- **I don't have a business relationship** nor any past communications with the sender.
- This is an **unexpected or unusual email** with an **embedded hyperlink or an attachment** from someone I haven't communicated with recently.

HYPERLINKS

- I hover my mouse over a hyperlink that's displayed in the email message, but the **link-to address is for a different website**. (This is a **big red flag**.)
- I received an email that only has **long hyperlinks with no further information**, and the rest of the email is completely blank.
- I received an email with a **hyperlink that misspells** a known web site. For example www.bankofnontreal.com - the "m" is two characters — "r" and "n."



SUBJECT

- Did I get an email with a subject line that is irrelevant or **does not match** the message content?
- Is the email message a reply to something **I never sent or requested**?

DATE

- Did I receive an email that I normally would get during regular business hours, but it was **sent at an unusual time** like 3 a.m.?

ATTACHMENTS

- The sender included an email attachment that **I was not expecting** or that makes no sense in relation to the email message. (This sender doesn't ordinarily send me this type of attachment.)
- I see an attachment with a possibly **dangerous file type**, such as **.exe, .js, .vbs, .php, .asp, .iso, .dmg, .bat, .com, .hta, .jar, .msi, etc.**

CONTENT

- Is the sender asking me to click on a link or open an attachment to **avoid a negative consequence or to gain something of value**?
- Is the email **out of the ordinary**, or does it have **bad grammar or spelling errors**?
- Is the sender asking me to click a link or open up an attachment that **seems odd or illogical**?
- Do I have an **uncomfortable gut feeling** about the sender's request to open an attachment or click a link?
- Is the email asking me to look at a **compromising or embarrassing picture** of myself or someone I know?

DID YOU KNOW?

Social Engineering is the use of deception to manipulate individuals into divulging confidential or personal information that may be used for fraudulent purposes.