Looking to save money on a holiday or break?

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GO Travel

Don't fall for a fraud.

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Whatever kind of holiday or short break you're thinking about, chances are you'll be searching for — and maybe booking it — online. But with the steep rise in the cost of living, you may be reconsidering what kind of holiday you'll be booking, and how you can save some money along the way.

Whether you're looking for an all-inclusive holiday in the sun, a winter break on the slopes, a cruise, flights or a staycation in an apartment, caravan or chalet, getting a great deal may be more important than usual. It also means that you could be a target for a fraudster taking advantage of the fact that you *really* want to get away, but you also want to watch the pennies.

Fraudsters use fake websites, listings, emails, advertisements, social media posts, texts and phone calls to trick you into buying and paying for what you think is a genuine holiday. Whereas what you might actually get is a disappointed family and no chance of getting your money back.

To help avoid this happening to you, we've put together some expert tips on safely searching and booking holidays and travel with confidence.
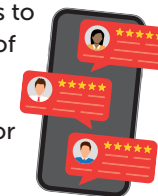
#HolidayBooking

Don't fall for a fraud

- **Always do your research** into accommodation, flights, cruises, package holidays or pilgrimages to check they're authentic.

- **Be wary** of unusually cheap holidays/ flights or high deposits.

- **Confirm that accommodation really exists** by finding it on Google Maps and looking for independent reviews and recommendations. If you can, call and speak to the owner/agent directly to try to ascertain if the person you're booking the holiday with is authorised to sell it to you. If the number is not provided, email and request it. Ask questions to see if they have knowledge of the area.

- **Check reviews** on TripAdvisor or similar sites.

- **If you're booking accommodation via Airbnb**, always keep communications and payment on the Airbnb platform, and don't be tempted off it as this may indicate an attempt at fraud. Read Airbnb's safety advice for guests.

- Never pay for holidays or travel by **bank transfer** to a company or person you haven't had personal experience of buying from previously. If you do and it's a fraud, you may never get your money back. Paying by **credit card** means more chance of getting your money back if something goes wrong.

- Make sure travel agents and tour operators you book holidays and travel through are **members of trade associations** such as ABTA or ATOL, by checking on these bodies' websites.

- To check if a website you plan to book a holiday on is likely to be legitimate or fraudulent, enter its address at **www.getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite**.

- **Check terms and conditions** prior to making any payment.

- **Before paying online or providing any confidential details**, type in the website address you know to be correct (instead of following a link) and ensure the payment page is secure (begins with 'https' and has a locked padlock in the browser window frame).

- **Keep confirmations and payment receipts**, and check bank / credit card statements for irregular entries.

- If you've lost money to fraud, always **report it immediately** to your bank, as this will increase your chance of getting your money back and the fraudster being traced. Also report it to Action Fraud, the UK's national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre, on **0300 123 20 40** or at **www.actionfraud.police.uk**. In Scotland, report fraud to Police Scotland by calling 101.

For full information on booking and paying for holidays and travel online with safety and confidence, visit **www.getsafeonline.org,** select 'Protecting Yourself' then 'Holiday & Travel Booking'

Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.

For more information and expert, easy-to-follow, impartial advice on safeguarding yourself, your family, finances, devices and workplace, visit **www.getsafeonline.org**

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