

New Risks and Emerging Technologies

2019 BBB
Scam Tracker
Risk Report

37,283

SCAMS
REPORTED
IN 2019

THE **5** Riskiest Scams

1 Employment Scams
A job offer comes with high pay, options to work remotely, and flexible hours. To get the job, a candidate must complete forms that require personal and/or sensitive information and may be required to “purchase equipment” with part of the proceeds of what turns out to be a fake check.

2 Cryptocurrency Scams
Cryptocurrency is purchased from, traded by, or stored with a person or exchange site that turns out to be fraudulent. Sometimes these digital assets are purchased as part of a fraudulent Initial Coin Offering (ICO), in which investors are scammed into paying money or trading digital assets for a company or product that never materializes.

3 Online Purchase Scams
A buyer makes a purchase online from an individual seller or company, but the item never arrives. Or, in other scenarios, a person sells an item online, but the check received for payment is fake.

**4 Fake Check/
Money Order Scams**
A check is sent to a consumer that contains an “accidental overpayment” or some other overage. The consumer is asked to wire back the excess money. The check appears real and “clears,” so the consumer thinks it is okay to withdraw funds, but weeks later the bank discovers the check is phony. The consumer now owes the withdrawn funds to the bank plus penalties and fees.

**5 Advance Fee
Loan Scams**
A loan is “guaranteed,” but comes with upfront charges, including taxes or “processing fees.” When the charges are paid, the loan never materializes and the applicant is left with larger debts.

BBB Scam Tracker helped save consumers
\$42 MILLION in 2019.*



EMPLOYMENT

.....
was the
**RISKIEST
SCAM**
for both men
and women,
as well as
for students
and military
spouses



ONLINE PURCHASE

.....
was both the
**MOST COMMON
SCAM**
(largest exposure)
and **SCAM TYPE
WITH THE MOST
VICTIMS** (highest
susceptibility)



CREDIT CARD

.....
**TOP PAYMENT
METHOD**
used to pay
scammers
(2016–2019)

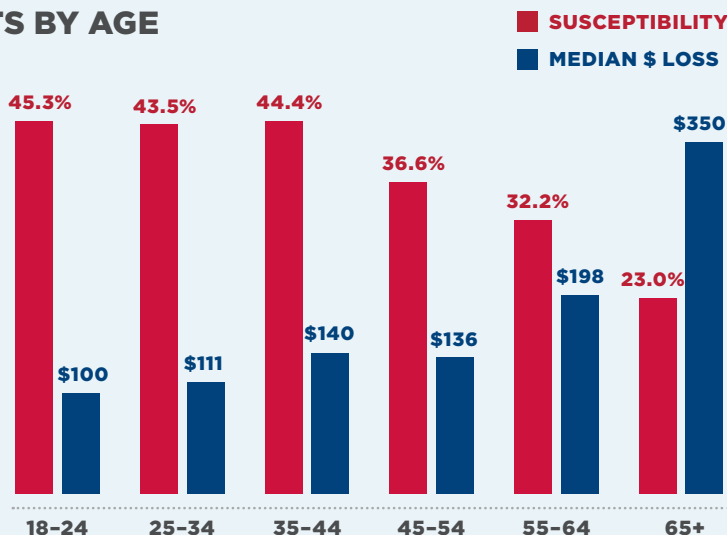


PHONE

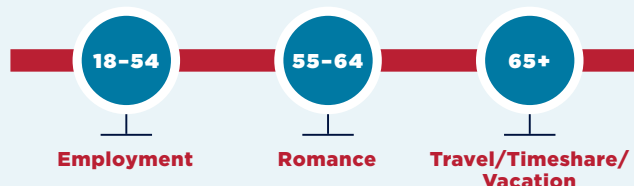
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**TOP MEANS
OF CONTACT**
used to
approach victims
(2016–2019)

HIGHLIGHTS BY AGE

Susceptibility
decreases
with age, but
when **losses**
occur, they
are higher
in the older
age groups.

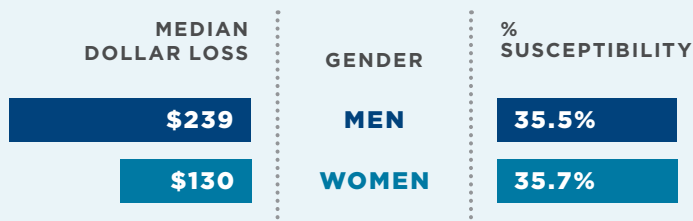


Riskiest Scam Types by Age



HIGHLIGHTS BY GENDER

Gender differences in **susceptibility** are small, but the **dollar losses** reported are much higher for men.



* Estimate based on 1.2 million unique visitors to BBB Scam Tracker x \$160 median USD loss to scams in 2019 x 21.8 percent of unique visitors that stated in a 2020 survey of the tool that BBB Scam Tracker helped them avoid being scammed.

Detect. Protect. Report.
BBB.org/ScamTracker

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