



## Your Guide to Beating the Crooks

Our experts reveal the secrets to avoiding scams and rip-offs

[AARP Bulletin \(/bulletin/\)](#), April/May 2017 |  Comments: 1



— JOHN RITTER

**ONE IN 10 AMERICANS** will fall prey to phone scams this year, and millions more will be ripped off online or in person. Older Americans are prime targets for scam artists. It's time to stop the bad guys. To help, the Bulletin assembled an all-star antifraud team to reveal the top scams of 2017 and tell you how to defend your home, investments and identity, and how to be safer when you shop or travel.

Fraud costs Americans tens of billions of dollars a year, and the crimes keep getting more brazen and sophisticated. Every 2 seconds, someone's identity is stolen. That's why AARP created the [Fraud Watch Network \(http://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork\)](http://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork) to empower you to protect yourself and your family from fraud and scams.

Don't become a victim. Take action. In this special report, you'll learn how.



POON WATCHARA-AMPHAIWAN

The Fraud Squad, left to right, Kevin Mitnick, Frank Abagnale, Gerri Walsh, Doug Shadel, Karl A. Racine and Sid Kirchheimer.

## Identity Theft

Watch out for these common scams and [keep your identity safe \(/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-identity-theft.html\)](/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-identity-theft.html).

By Kevin Mitnick, hacking expert and author of *The Art of Invisibility*.

## Home hazards

How to [protect yourself from popular home scams \(/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-home-hazards.html\)](/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-home-hazards.html).

By Sid Kirchheimer, anti-fraud crusader and author of AARP Bulletin's Scam Alert column.

## Investment scams

Sophisticated sales techniques are just the trappings of these well-worn [financial cons \(/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-investment-scams.html\)](/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-investment-scams.html).

By Gerri Walsh, senior vice president at the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA).

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## Telephone frauds

[Phone fraud \(/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-telephone-scams.html\)](/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-telephone-scams.html) complaints have increased nearly 60 percent since 2010. Watch out for these common scams.

By Doug Shadel, director of Washington state's AARP office and an expert on fraud schemes targeting older people.

## Travel trouble

When you travel, you cross paths with scammers who want to [separate you from your vacation funds \(/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-travel-scams.html\)](/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-travel-scams.html).

By Frank Abagnale, an FBI consultant for over 40 years and the [AARP Fraud Watch Network \(/money/scams-fraud/fraud-watch-network/\)](/money/scams-fraud/fraud-watch-network/) ambassador.

## Retail rip-offs

The explosion in online shopping has made millions more vulnerable to [shopping scams \(/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-retail-fraud.html\)](/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-retail-fraud.html).

By Karl A. Racine, attorney general for the District of Columbia.

## How to Stop Fraud

**[Next: Identity Theft \(/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-identity-theft.html\)](/money/scams-fraud/info-2017/fraud-protection-identity-theft.html)**

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AARP's [Fraud Watch Network \(http://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork\)](http://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork) puts proven tools and resources right at your fingertips – from news articles, to fraud literacy quizzes, to a scam-tracking map that tells you about fraud in your community.

## Operation Stop Scams

The Fraud Watch Network has more than 150 fraud-related events taking place nationwide this spring. [Learn more about events near you \(http://www.aarp.org/operationstopscams\)](http://www.aarp.org/operationstopscams).

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