1333 SOLUTIONS · CYBERSECURITY

Spot a Phishing Email in 60 Seconds

A ten-point checklist anyone on your team can use. Print it. Pin it up.

- [ ] **1. Check the sender's full email address**
  Hover or tap the name. Real domains match the company exactly. support@paypa1.com and billing@microsoft-secure.co are fakes.
- [ ] **2. Look for urgency and fear**
  "Your account will be closed in 24 hours." "Immediate action required." Real companies do not threaten. Attackers do.
- [ ] **3. Do not trust the display name**
  "Amazon Support" means nothing. The address after it is what matters. Display names are free to fake.
- [ ] **4. Hover over every link before clicking**
  The real destination shows in the status bar or a tooltip. If it does not match the visible text or the brand's real domain, stop.
- [ ] **5. Watch for generic greetings**
  "Dear Customer" or "Dear User" when a real provider knows your name is a red flag. Personalized does not mean safe, but generic is suspicious.
- [ ] **6. Spelling, grammar, and odd formatting**
  Pro attackers are getting better, but sloppy language, mismatched fonts, and strange spacing still leak through. Trust the weird feeling.
- [ ] **7. Unexpected attachments**
  .zip, .iso, .html, .htm, and macro-enabled Office files are high risk. If you did not ask for it, do not open it, even from a known sender.
- [ ] **8. Requests for credentials or MFA codes**
  No legitimate company will ask you to type your password into an email link or share an MFA code. Ever. No exceptions.
- [ ] **9. Payment or gift card requests**
  "Buy $500 in gift cards and send the codes" is always a scam. So is any unexpected wire transfer, especially if marked urgent or confidential.
- [ ] **10. When in doubt, verify out of band**
  Call the person or company on a number you already have, not one from the email. Ten seconds of verification beats ten days of incident response.

Think you are being phished right now?

Stop. Do not click, reply, or forward. Screenshot the message and talk to your IT lead.
Need help building a response plan? 1333 Solutions runs free 30-minute discovery calls.