

Online Shopping Safety

Even though millions of people order millions of dollars worth of merchandise online each day without problems, you still need to be proactive in protecting your sensitive information when doing business online. Thanks to MSN and U.S. News and World Report, here are some online shopping safety tips:

1. Social Security Number

NEVER give your social security number to anyone online. If you are asked for this information during the checkout process, it's probably a scam.

2. Website Look and Feel

Online scammers are very savvy and do their best to trick you. Sometimes it is hard to tell if something is legitimate, but red flags can be:

- Poor website design
- Strange URL (web address)
- Multiple pop-up windows that you can't close

3. Secure vs. Non-secure

When shopping online you should only buy from secure websites. One way to be sure a site is secure is by looking for https vs. http.

4. Passwords

It's tough to remember all the passwords that you have. Sometimes it's easier to create a simple password for everything. But don't take the easy way out; you'll be happy in the long run. Online thieves are very good at their jobs and can easily crack your code if you are using your name, birth date, phone number, etc. as part of your password. Also, if your password is the same for different sites, you make it very easy for a thief to hack your account.

5. Social Media

The point of social media is, well, to be social. However, be social with people you actually know and stay away from strangers. Many retailers use social media to drive business, but accounts sometimes get hacked and fake messages can be sent. If you don't know who the person is that sent a message, just ignore it.

If you have any questions, call Align at **800-942-9575**.