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Security Solutions

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS AND
SECURING THE FUTURE

Helping secure
your world

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Editor's Note

2021 has thus far been a challenging year from a security perspective. This issue of personal security has been heightened due to factors such as; the Middle Eastern terrorism threat, identity theft and off/online scams. Because of the daily stresses of life that persons face recreational activities online has grown. The September 2021 issue of the Security Solutions will outline and examine some of the new and emerging trends in personal and public security.

In Article One the author discusses phone hacking and just how easily it can happen to you. 'According to tech journalist Natasha Stokes, there are at least a dozen ways they can break in, including via Bluetooth and snooping via unprotected open Wi-Fi networks' these as well as other avenues to phone hacking are explained here. With corona virus infections on the rise many persons are online and using their emails, but did you know that there is a hidden spy in

your email, Article Two discusses this and how it can be stopped. Securing yourself should not be only limited to your cyber world, but also include your actual physical soundings. One great feature to prevent crime is CCTV cameras, however choosing the right cameras is just as important as having them. Article Three discuss five helpful tips in choosing the right cameras.

Fraud is ever present in society but the pandemic has it on the rise, and fraudsters use various means and methods to fool / trick the unsuspected person. In order to make their scam believable they use Social engineering which is the understanding of what makes persons tick. The main weapons in scams are pressure, trust and fear. Article Four teaches you how to identify these scams. Scams can also be applied to fine items such as perfumes, expensive clothing and jewelry. The next articles highlights five points on how you can purchase your desired jewelry online.

The final article continues with the theme of physical security as there is a growing trend towards window tinting to protect against the sun's harmful UV rays, reduce energy costs, beef up security and improve the aesthetic looks of doors and windows. To learn more about these benefits read our Article number Six.

We hope you find these articles and the safety methods helpful in some manner and we at **Amalgamated Security Services Limited** will continue to fulfil our commitment to provide quality service for all customers.

Regards
Carril Reyes-Telesford
Senior Marketing Officer

Phone Hacking Is Easy – Are You a Victim?

Smartphone hacking is big news these days. And it's not just the recent sensational news about Pegasus spyware. Phone hacking is everywhere, and it could be on your cell right now. A few weeks ago, reports emerged showing that some governments were using a spy program called Pegasus to target not only terrorists but also journalists, businesspeople, activists, politicians, and others.



If you don't fit into one of these categories, you may think you have nothing to worry about. But the reality is that it's quite easy to break into and monitor calls, web usage, and text messages. Malevolent hackers can divert your incoming calls and texts to any number they want, and they don't need to be a criminal mastermind to do it," says expert Justin Meyers.

He told followers on the website Gadget Hacks: "Even friends and family members can reroute your incoming calls and messages so that they know exactly who's trying to reach you, and all it takes is seconds of access to your iPhone or wireless account."

We're not here to tell you how that's done. But Meyers, who usually writes specifically about Apple (iOS) mobile devices, cites numerous ways for people to tap into smartphones and to re-route calls. Sneaky hackers can reroute just the calls that aren't answered so the user never finds out. And not all of them need the hacker to physically have access to the device or even to trick the owner into downloading spyware. They can exploit security weaknesses in cell phone network technology or simply try an easy-to-guess account password for example.

According to tech journalist Natasha Stokes, there are at least a dozen ways they can break in, including via Bluetooth and snooping via unprotected open Wi-Fi networks.

Have You Been Hacked?

The important questions are whether your phone has been hacked and what you can do about it.

It's generally easy to check if your calls are being re-routed by checking "call forwarding" in your device's settings. If it's switched on, you'll find where the call is being forwarded to, and, if you didn't set it, you can switch it off. Simple as that.

On some networks, you can also key in certain codes that tell you if unanswered calls are being forwarded. Meyers lists the codes here:

<https://tinyurl.com/Scambusters-210729-1>

10 Signs You've Been Hacked

In addition, here are 10 of the signs that your phone has been hacked, and crooks may be tracking you or spying on your activities:

1. Your battery needs recharging more often.
2. Your phone seems to be running extremely slowly.
3. The device is misbehaving, doing things you don't expect.
4. You have apps on your device that you didn't install.
5. There is persistent background noise on every call.
6. The number of incoming calls and texts suddenly drops well below normal (suggesting they're being forwarded).
7. Your data bill seems to be much too high for your usage.
8. You find outgoing call numbers or SMS text messages you don't recognize.
9. You spot posts in your name that you didn't write on social media sites. Hackers get access to all your online accounts.
10. You keep getting pop-ups directing you to another site. A few pop-ups are not unusual, but too many suggest you've been hacked.



What to Do To Protect Yourself

It's well-known that Android-based devices are more likely to be vulnerable to hacking, but it's not uncommon on iOS phones either.

Installing a reputable security app can significantly reduce vulnerability or identify a hack attack. And even if you've already fallen victim, installing an app now might be able to identify and remove the spyware. You should also avoid compromising your device by not "rooting" or "jailbreaking" it -- that is, using software that enables you to install unauthorized apps.

Other commonsense ways to protect yourself include monitoring for the tell-tale signs we list above, using strong passwords, turning off Bluetooth when you're not using it, keeping security and other software up to date, and using a virtual private network (VPN) -- see <https://tinyurl.com/Scambusters-210729-2>

Using encryption -- jumbling up both data and voice messages -- is also a powerful way to protect yourself from spies and eavesdroppers. You don't need to be a techie to do this. Free encryption apps are available for both iOS and Android phones. Stokes mentions Signal and Wickr Me as examples.

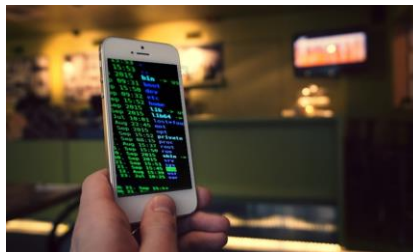
See her full report here: <https://tinyurl.com/Scambusters-210729-3>

What to Do If You've Been Hacked

As mentioned earlier, phone security apps may be able to kick the hackers off your phone. Also, change your passwords and let your contacts know you've been hacked. If that doesn't do the trick, you may need to consult a tech professional.

In addition, the nonprofit Cybercrime Support Network (<https://fightcybercrime.org/>) says you should tell your phone network provider and follow any guidance they provide, update to the latest version of your phone operating system, and notify any financial institutions you deal with. Also report the hack to the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (www.IC3.gov).

More than two-thirds of Americans already use smartphones, and it's easier than ever for phone hackers to strike. Take steps now to protect yourself!



Stop the Hidden Spy In Your Email

When an email lands in your inbox, you may think it's just for you, that the sender has no idea what you do with it, and that it's for your eyes only. Not so.

Crooks, spammers, scammers, and even legitimate marketing organizations can tell almost instantly if you opened it and what you did with it. They may also know your location and even what type of device you're using.

At its most basic level, this email tracking as it's known is down to a single tiny dot, invisible to the naked eye, hidden in the message. The culprit is known as a tracker pixel or spy pixel. As you may know, pixels are the little electronic dots that make up a digital image. And it's not difficult to drop a tracker into a message. There are many totally legal apps that allow anyone, whether an individual or an organization, to drop a pixel spy into a message. You don't need any technical or programming skills.

Earlier this year, an email messaging service called Hey identified that as many as two-thirds of the messages sent to its users contained these "spies," which are also known as "web beacons." The firm handles more than a million emails a day -- though, in this case, Hey tries to identify the pixels and block them. Multiplying that by the number of email service providers adds up to a huge number of spies, a

situation Hey describes as "endemic."



Tech site ZDNet explains: "The recipient of an email does not need to directly engage with the pixel in any way for it to track certain activities. Instead, when an email is opened, the tracking pixel is automatically downloaded -- and this lets a server, owned by a marketer, know that the email has been read, when, and how long it was open. "Servers may also record the number of times an email is opened, the IP address linked to a user's location, and device usage."

The spy pixel is usually buried inside a picture or graphic that's automatically downloaded into a message (rather than in an attachment) when you view or open it. The information can then be used to identify your level of interest and your potential vulnerability to a marketing message or even a scam.

Attempts to create laws to prevent the use of trackers have foundered because when an individual signs up to receive emails from organizations, they may unknowingly give their consent, buried in the small print of terms and conditions that most of us never bother to read.

Business magazine *Fast*

Company describes the use of trackers as "creepy," noting for example: "By using tracking pixels, a stalker could see when an object of his or her obsession has read their latest email screed."



How To Block the Trackers

Here are a few things you can do to block email tracking:

- Check if your email provider either routinely blocks trackers or will do so at your request. For example, do a search on "Does (name of your provider) block email trackers?"
- This search may also provide information about how to block the trackers yourself. You'll also find more detailed information on how to defeat the trackers on some of the most popular PC, Mac, and mobile email clients, as well as more useful background, in the previously mentioned Fast Company report here: <https://tinyurl.com/Scambusters-210708-1>
- Install an extension to your email that will spot and block them. Again, for example, search on "Apps to block email trackers in (name of your provider)." For example, an extension called Ugly Mail allows you to identify and disable Gmail trackers. Yahoo and

Outlook webmail can be blocked by another extension called Trocker.

- Check the terms and conditions of any organization that you sign up for to receive regular emails. Even if you don't feel like reading the lot, open the T&Cs and do a text search for words like "track," "monitor," and "email."
- Switch off the automatic downloading of images that accompany messages. Many email clients already do this, giving you the option to download them just for a specific email when you open it.



ZDNet quotes Hey founder David Heinemeier Hansson as describing email trackers as "a grotesque invasion of privacy." But it's more sinister than that. When scammers are able to monitor your behavior in such detail, you're much more likely to be a potential victim.

Reprinted from Scambusters.org

5 Helpful Tips to Choose the Right CCTV Cameras



Abdul

Waheed Zafar

Over the past ten years, CCTV cameras have become a lot better. Therefore, if you are going to purchase these units for your home or office, you may be a little confused. The reason is that there are different types of security cameras. They come with a lot of features that you may or may not need. Therefore, before you choose your desired devices, make sure you consider some helpful tips given below. This will help you make an informed decision. Read on to find out more.

1. Type of storage

Today's CCTV cameras are all-in-one-package. They contain a fast Micro SD card slot. All you need to do is insert your desired memory card into the slot to store the recordings. For example, you can use a memory card with a storage capacity of up to 128 GB. However, you can also go for the inexpensive models that don't have the memory card slot. They still depend on the HDD in the DVR.

2. Pan/Tilt

It is possible to rotate modern CCTV cameras both horizontally and vertically so you can get the maximum coverage. The two terms used for this purpose are Pan and Tilt. The good thing about some of the cameras is that you can rotate them using mobile phone apps.

Therefore, if you want maximum coverage, we suggest that you go for a unit that comes with a higher degree of Pan/Tilt.



3. Image quality

Today, it is better that you get a CCTV camera that records in 1080p resolution. After all, if you want better image quality, you need a higher resolution. But the downside is that higher quality videos take out much more storage space.

Therefore, if you have purchased a DVR with storage capacity in TB, you can purchase a camera that records in 1080p. However, CCTV cameras that come with SD card slots may not be enough for this purpose.



4. Motion sensors

Today, motion sensors are an important part of security cameras. With these sensors, these cameras can detect motion and alert the homeowner about the sounds and movements. The users receive notifications on their smartphones.

The downside is that CCTV cameras with motion and audio sensors are quite expensive. So, if you want to purchase them, you need to spend a good deal of money.



5. Ease of installation

As far as installation is concerned, wireless CCTV cameras are your best bet. The primary reason is that these systems don't use any cables. All you need to do is position and mount these cameras. Most of these units come with sticky pads and magnetic bases.

If you are looking to purchase CCTV cameras for the first time, we suggest that you follow these five tips. They will help you go for the best units to cover your needs. For CCTV Camera installation in Noida, WebsiteTrafficOnline is the best service provider. You can check out their website to know more about what they offer.

Article

Source: https://EzineArticles.com/expert/Abdul_Waheed_Zafar/1306631

Teach Yourself to Beat Social Engineering Crooks

Behind every scam, there's a piece of social engineering -- the technique and tactics that con artists use to convince people to give information away or behave out of the ordinary. They develop, or engineer, tricks that are calculated to deceive.

If it wasn't so evil (at least in this context), you could call social engineering a science. That's because being a good social engineer involves understanding what makes people tick. They know how to put pressure on you, spin a convincing hard luck story or strike fear in your heart. Pressure, trust, and fear are the scammers' frontline weapons.

When they succeed, they can get you to do whatever they want.



"Criminals use social engineering tactics because it is usually easier to exploit your natural inclination to trust than it is to discover ways to hack your software," says Internet security firm Webroot.

"The types of information these criminals are seeking can vary, but when individuals are targeted, the criminals are usually trying to trick

you into giving them your passwords or bank information, or access your computer to secretly install malicious software that will give them access to your passwords and bank information as well as control over your computer.

Reverse Engineer?

If you want to beat them at their own game, you've got to be constantly on the alert. In a way, you have to "reverse engineer" the scammers' tactics. You have to know and deal with what makes you potentially vulnerable.

If you're too trusting or gullible, you have to recognize this and adopt an attitude of skepticism about all that you see and hear. If you give way to pressure easily, you must set a personal rule for yourself to disconnect from whoever is pressuring you so you have time to review what's happening. And if you're the type who is easily scared by intimidation, you need to call on help and support from friends or family to help steer you past the threats.

The non-profit Center for Cyber Safety and Education says we all need to do more to counter the scammers' techniques, by following four key actions:

1. Make your starting point to question the intentions of anyone asking you for money or information. Seek and check proof of identity.
2. Be on your guard when you get a call from anyone you don't know. You have no way of being sure who

they are, even if their voice sounds familiar.

3. Think before acting. Tell yourself to slow down in a situation where you're being asked for money or information. Ask someone else for their opinion on what you're being asked.
4. Play your part in educating others about the risks. Tell your kids!

Look out, too, says the center, for red flags including paying with gift cards or money wire, or being told not to discuss your activities with anyone else.



Phishing -- tricking people into giving away information that can be used for identity theft -- is the most rampant form of social engineering. It comes in all shapes and sizes, from simple fake emails and websites to injecting fraudulent links, usually as ads, into search engines like Google. If you want to learn more about phishing, check out this detailed exploration from the Webroot security site (you may have to provide an email address before you download the pdf): <https://tinyurl.com/Scambusters-210620>

Webroot also offers the following tips to stall a social engineering attack:

- Think first, act later -- not the other way around.

- Get the facts. Thoroughly research any request for money or information.
- Don't let a link (e.g. in an email, on a website, or a text message) control where you land. Find the site you're interested in by yourself not via a link.

In fact, here at Scambusters we recommend using "don't click" as your default policy with links, unexpected attachments, and downloads -- allowing few if any exceptions.

- Foreign offers to buy, sell, or inform you of winnings/inheritances are fakes. It's a sweeping statement but nearly always true.
- Hit "delete" when you get messages asking for confidential information. Legitimate organizations simply don't make these requests.
- Use spam filters on email and set them to "high."
- Be suspicious... if you get an email offering help you didn't ask for or seeming to answer a question you never asked.

Sadly, social engineering is here to stay. But being aware of it and knowing how to counter it is a powerful starting point for beating the crooks. The more you learn, the less likely you are to get scammed.

Reprinted from Scambusters.org



5 Tips To Help You Purchase Your Desired Jewelry Online

By *Donq Wong*

These days, you can purchase almost everything online. The question is, can you purchase jewelry on an online store? Online shopping is quite common in the here and now. However, people still feel some hesitation when they need to purchase something expensive and sentimental. The good thing is that, when it comes to purchasing online, you can tap into a huge collection of products from the comfort of your home.

You don't need to leave your home to check out these products. In this article, we have 5 tips for you that can help you make this purchase.



1. Do Your Research

Before getting started, don't forget to choose a website that is reputable. What you need to do is read reviews online on many websites and online stores. To avoid surprises, make sure you check out jewelry listings as well.

Honest sellers will be more than happy to provide honest answers to the given questions. So, make sure you do your research before making an informed decision.

2. Read the Return and Shipping Policies

Before placing your order, don't forget to check out the return policies and shipping information. If you want to purchase something expensive, make sure you go for secure shipping. Apart from this, you should check out the return policy to make sure the retailer offers a flexible return policy for most of their items.

Ideally, make sure that this seller allows at least 7 days to return your products. It is important to keep in mind that new jewelry items are not returnable, which is always clearly stated in the policy.

3. Check the Appraisal or Certificate

Make sure that the jeweler offers an appraisal or evaluation. For example, if you are going to purchase an item that contains gemstones, make sure that there is a complete description of the item, such as color, weight in carat, cut, and clarity, to name a few.

You can use this document to make sure there is proof of ownership. After all, you don't want to end up getting scammed.





4. Understand the Warranty

Also, make sure that the jewelry item you want to purchase has a manufacturer warranty. If you want to purchase jewelry online, make sure that the warranty covers the defects that the item may have at least 12 months. This is quite important if you want to have peace of mind that you will get what you pay for.

5. Check your Size

Also, make sure that you know the size you need, especially when it comes to purchasing a ring. Apart from this, you may want to know the exact measurements of the listing prior to purchasing it. If you don't know your size, we suggest that you get in touch with a local jeweler.

Long story short, we suggest that you consider these 5 tips before purchasing your desired jewelry on the internet.

If you are looking to [buy cheap jewelry](#) or [cheap jewelry online store](#), we suggest that you check out BlingRunWay. They sell high quality jewelry.

Article

Source: https://EzineArticles.com/expert/Dong_Wong/2659905

Window Tinting - Things You Need to Know

By *Subhashish Bose*

There is a growing trend towards window tinting to protect against the sun's harmful UV rays, reduce energy costs, beef up security and improve the aesthetic looks of doors and windows. As it is an investment for a long time, homes or business establishments need to make an informed decision on window films to know their benefits, the downside, and the best films that are appropriate for the project.

Different Types of Window Films and Their Benefits

There are three main types of window films available, each of which has its unique purpose.



These are:

Solar Film: If the purpose is to improve energy efficiency, the solar film is your ideal option. This tinted film absorbs or reflects (or does a combination of both) up to 99% of Ultraviolet rays from the sun. This prevents the occupant of the room from exposure to harmful ultraviolet rays, makes the indoor temperature stay cool in summer and warm in winter, prevents fading of interior furnishings, and reduces glare. All these have a combined effect of

increasing the indoor comfort level while saving on energy costs. Solar films are available in neutral tones.

Security Film: If avoiding storm damage or deterring burglars break-ins is your main concern, then security film is your best bet. This type of film is the thickest of all film types, though it does not reflect or absorb much heat. If ever there is damage to the window due to storm or break-in, the film prevents complete shattering of the glass, limiting the damage to a large crack, thus letting the window hold together.

Decorative Film

This is the thinnest of all film types available and is used mainly to bring beauty and added privacy to the room. The film has a clear or bold colour and absorbs or reflects minimal heat. It is available in a wide array of etched patterns, stained motifs, or opaque designs to protect from peering eyes.

The three types of films are sold in three options of permanence.



These are:

Temporary variety: The film can be repositioned or removed and cleaned easily. Renters would find it useful.

Semi-permanent Variety: This type is removable, though there may be some adhesive residue left behind on the window.

Permanent Variety: This is a single-use window film.

Decorative film is widely sold as a temporary tinting option and a great choice for renters, whereas the solar and security types are mostly used as permanent solutions, and are the ideal choice for homeowners.

The compatibility of Window Films and Window Glasses

As previously mentioned, the various types of window films absorb different degrees of heat. Security and decorative window tinting block minimal heat in comparison with the solar-type, and applying these films does not put much thermal stress on the windows. This makes them ideal to use on all the major types of window glasses, annealed, heat-treated annealed, and insulating types, with minimal risk of doing any damage to the window glass. However, the International Window Film Association recommends not to use solar film on certain window glasses that have higher heat absorption rates as that may cause an increase in thermal stress, increasing the chances of these glasses to crack.

The glasses are:

- Tinted annealed glass with a thickness of over ¼ inch
- Annealed glass with over 50% heat absorption rate or thickness of over ½ inch
- 10 years or more Insulated glass
- Insulated glass with seal failures

If you are in doubt, check the manufacturer's literature to find

the ideal window film for your specific needs.

Installing Window Film May Lead to Breach of Warranty

Sometimes, homeowners when reporting for window damage to the manufacturer find the window manufacturer's warranty void as they have installed a window film on the glass panes. Indeed, most manufacturers will not provide coverage to defects arising from modifying windows using window films. This is because certain types of window films could potentially cause damages to certain types of window glasses. Hence, it makes sense to confirm whether the manufacturer's warranty supports tinting.



Home Window Tinting is Economical

Installing window films does not cost an arm and a leg. A couple of dollars per square foot is all it costs to purchase an aftermarket film and install it yourself. Getting a professional to install it will cost a few dollars more. However, other window treatments, such as solar screens (a fabric that reflects and absorbs heat) and cellular shades (fabric covered with honeycomb-like cells to absorb heat) are priced higher per square feet of installations.

Professional Installation Produce Lasting Results

While applying window films yourself is an easy option as you save money, there are potential pitfalls to do-it-yourself

renovation. These include the appearance of wrinkles on the film, dirt, bubbles or streaks of cleaner showing up beneath the film, or the film ripping due to rough handling and becoming useless.

It is best to engage a professional window tinting company when installing the window tint. These experts have years of professional experience working on similar projects and can help you in selecting the right window tint that matches your needs, preferences, budget and ensure its proper installation.

Expert Help from Window Tinting Professional

For more professional tips on window tinting Perth WA for your home or office, visit our website <https://perthwindowtintingwa.com.au/> and get a free, no-commitment estimate for your project.

Article

Source: https://EzineArticles.com/expert/Subhashish_Bose/406310