Cyber Byte

#2 **November 2026.**

Black Friday provides the perfect occasion for cyber criminals to disguise their online scams.

UK shoppers spent a record £26.9 billion online during November and December 2025. With Black Friday deals already underway, in what is regarded as the biggest shopping event of the year – it is also a busy time for cyber criminals as they try to catch us out.

Fake online shopping websites are a favourite choice, and they utilise technology to make copycat versions look identical to the genuine website.



These can be difficult to spot and will often include unbelievable too good to be true offers for the latest hot deals.

The internet is also awash with seasonal triggers using emotion, and high online activity messaging i.e.*"30 people have purchased this in the past ten minutes"* putting you under pressure to buy before alleged stocks are sold out.

Criminals manage fake websites which are designed to trick people into making payments, revealing their bank details, passwords, or other personal information.

They will also insert malicious links into SMS text messages, emails, and increasingly on social media posts, with links to fake websites.

We want you to shop online safely, with trusted retailers, and the following links from our trusted partners will provide you with additional support and guidance.

Shopping and paying safely online | National Cyber Security Centre

Sort the detail. Shop smart. - Cyber Scotland

If you have been a victim of crime, and it is not an ongoing emergency, you can report this to Police Scotland on 101.