

## QR CODE SCAM

### *What is QR CODE Scams?*

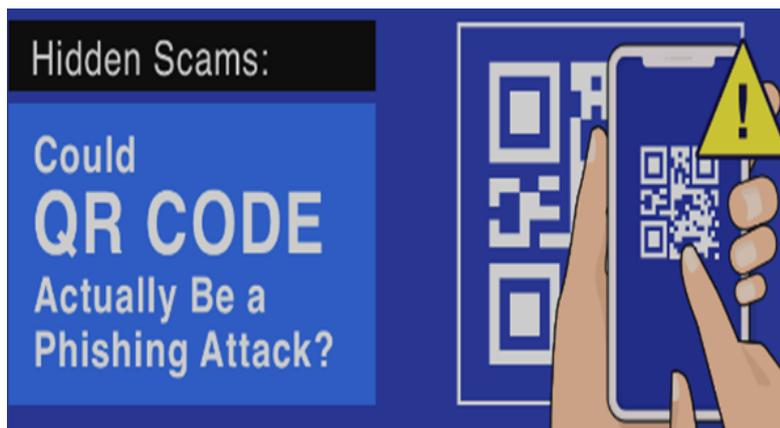
A QR code scam involves the use of Quick Response (QR) codes to deceive individuals into scanning a code that leads to a fraudulent website or transaction. QR codes are everywhere and are really handy for things like **making payments** or **getting information quickly**. Scammers use this to con people into scanning a code that will take them to a fake website or make them part of a scam without realizing it or replace legitimate

QR codes with malicious ones that redirect to phishing sites are designed to steal personal information and financial details. QR codes may be sent via email or text, claiming it's for a legitimate purpose.



### *Sign of QR CODE Scams*

Recognizing the signs of a QR code scam is crucial in protecting oneself from potential fraud. When scanned, they may redirect to a payment site or a login page that exhibits clear signs of being fraudulent, such as **poor design**, **bad grammar**, or **an unusual URL**.



In India, there has been a rise in QR code scam cases, with fraudsters tricking victims into scanning QR codes under the guise of receiving payments, only to have money deducted from their accounts instead.

### *Here are some indicators to be wary of:*

- The QR code is placed in a public area where tampering is possible.
- The website you're directed to after scanning has poor design, bad grammar, or an unusual URL.
- There's a sense of urgency or pressure to scan the code quickly.
- The QR code is advertised to provide an offer that seems too good to be true.
- You receive fake QR codes via email or messages from unknown sources.
- Observe any peeling edges, weird bumps, or any off looks.



### *How to protect yourself from QR Code Scam?*

To protect yourself from QR Code scams, consider the following tips:

- **Verify the source:** Only scan QR codes from known and trusted entities.
- **Use secure QR scanner apps:** Download a reputable QR code scanner that offers security features.
- **Avoid sharing sensitive information:** Never input personal data unless you're certain the site is legitimate.
- **Keep your device secure:** Ensure your Smartphone has the latest security updates and patches.
- **Avoid QR codes received in email:** If you receive a QR code unexpectedly, it's best to avoid scanning it.



Fig 1. Tips to avoid QR Code Scam



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## *Remedial Steps*

Some basic steps can reduce the damage from the scam of QR Code. They are given in the following:

- **Immediate Reporting:** Contact your bank or financial institution immediately to report the unauthorized transaction. This can help in preventing further losses.
- **Gather Evidence:** Collect all possible evidence related to the scam, such as emails, messages, transaction records, and any communication with the fraudster.
- **Monitor Accounts:** Keep a close watch on your bank statements and accounts for any unusual activity following the scam.
- **File a Complaint:** Register a complaint with the [cybercrime.gov.in](https://cybercrime.gov.in) or call the helpline number **1930**.
- **Local Police:** You may also report the scam to your local police station, especially if it involves a significant amount of money or serious fraud.
- **Awareness:** Stay informed about common scams and educate others to prevent such incidents in the future.

Remember, the quicker you act, the better your chances of mitigating the damage and possibly recovering your losses. Always keep your personal and financial information secure and be cautious of suspicious communications.

## *Recent Trends!*

*QR code scans reached 26.95 million in 2023—a 433% increase over the past two years. India holds 2<sup>nd</sup> position in scanning Activity after USA. 40% of Indian Population use QR-Code in their day today life.*

## **References:**

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