

Beware Of Fake Coupons When Online



A special occasion such as Mother's Day always drives consumers to shop around for the perfect gift. Better Business Bureau Serving Southeast Florida and the Caribbean (BBB) warns consumers to exercise caution when shopping for a Mother's Day gift to avoid falling victims to scams.

During these special occasions scammers like to circulate fake coupons on social media. The scammers mimic a legitimate looking website and promise the coupon at the end of a short survey. The purpose of the survey is for scammers to obtain personal information.

"Mother's Day is a time to shower our beloved moms with gifts that show how much we love and appreciate everything they do for us." says Michele Mason, Vice President of the BBB. Regarding Mother's day scams Mason adds "The last thing someone would want to do is give a gift that has no value, and even more concerning - could create the risk of identity theft."

The BBB recommends the following when shopping for Mother's Day gifts in-store or online:

- Do your research. When ordering flowers, jewelry or any other gifts for Mother's Day, do business with companies you trust. Find trustworthy businesses by searching [BBB.org/south-east-florida](https://www.bbb.org/south-east-florida) for a company's profile or to find an accredited business.
- Beware of Instagram stores. Many fake stores are setup on Instagram during this time of year promising beautiful and appealing gifts for a low cost, these stores sometimes take your money and never send item or send something very different to what is pictured.
- Keep records of your order. When you've completed the online order process, there may be a final confirmation page and/or you might receive confirmation by email. Print or save that information and keep it handy in case you need it later. If you shop in person, hold on to your receipts.
- It's best to use a credit card when ordering online, because you can dispute charges if the vendor doesn't come fulfill the order.
- Allow time for shipping and delivery. Check with the retailer or website to be certain that you have allowed enough time for delivery. Make sure that this date is specified clearly and guaranteed.
- Never enter your personal information in a pop-up screen. When you visit a company's website, an unauthorized pop-up screen created by an identity thief could appear, with blanks for you to provide your personal information. Install pop-up blocking software to avoid this type of scam.
- Online coupons can be fake offers which are really phishing attempts to steal your private information. Legitimate businesses do not ask for credit card numbers or banking information on customer surveys. Watch out for a reward that's too good to be true, few businesses can afford to give away \$50 gift cards or coupons.