

# Spotting Suspicious Text Messages

A 15-minute, self-paced Tech Tutor microcourse for older adults.

An independent learning-design project informed by my experience teaching digital literacy to older adults. Learners practise a repeatable response to unexpected texts: pause, check independently, respond safely.

## DESIGN AT A GLANCE

Audience: Older adults building confidence with everyday technology and online safety.

Learning goal: Recognize warning signs, verify a claim without using message links, and choose a safe response.

Structure: Three short lesson pages, a delivery-text practice scenario, a three-question quiz, and a takeaway.

## WELCOME AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### Welcome: Spotting Suspicious Text Messages

**Welcome!** Suspicious text messages can look convincing. In this short course, you'll practice how to pause, check a message safely, and decide what to do next.

**By the end, you'll be able to:**

1. Recognize common warning signs in a text message.
2. Check a claim without using a link or phone number in the message.
3. Choose a safe response to a suspicious text.

**Think about it:** You receive a text saying a package cannot be delivered until you pay a small fee. What would you do first? Keep your answer in mind as you go through the course.

The opening page states what learners will do and introduces a familiar package-delivery prompt that returns in the practice activity.

# A simple action learners can remember

Short, plain-language guidance leads directly into a realistic decision.

Pause: Leave links and contact details alone while deciding what to do.

Check independently: Open a known app or website, or use a trusted phone number.

Respond safely: Report suspicious messages when the phone offers the option, then delete them.

## COURSE PAGE / WHAT TO DO

### What to Do With a Suspicious Text

Use three steps: **Pause, Check, Respond**

**1. Pause.** Treat urgent requests for payment, passwords, or personal information with caution. Don't tap a link or reply while you're deciding what to do.

**2. Check independently.** If the text claims to be from a delivery company, bank, or other organization, open its app or type its known website address yourself. You can also call a number from a statement or the organization's official website. Don't use the contact details in the text.

**3. Respond safely.** If the message is suspicious, don't pay or share information. Use your phone's "Report junk" option if available, then delete the message. If you already entered payment or account information, contact the relevant company promptly through its official channel.

**Remember:** You can take your time. A real problem can be checked without following the text's instructions.

## PRACTICE / DELIVERY TEXT

### Practice: The Delivery Text

**A text arrives:** "Your package is on hold. Pay a \$1.95 redelivery fee today to avoid its return." It includes a link.

**Pause and decide:** What would you do first?

- A. Tap the link to see which package it is.
- B. Reply and ask whether the text is genuine.
- C. Leave the link alone and check the delivery company through its official app or website.

**Answer: C.** The small fee and deadline are reasons to slow down. Check independently, even if you're expecting a package. Don't use the link or reply to the message.

The learner compares possible responses to a small redelivery fee and a deadline. The feedback explains why checking the delivery company independently is safer.

# Check choices, then take the steps away

Three scenario-based questions reinforce verification and safe response.

## NATIVE TALENTLMS QUIZ / THREE QUESTIONS

### Check Your Choices

Answer three short questions about recognizing and responding to suspicious texts. You can use the earlier lessons to review.

3 questions in total

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A text says your bank account will be frozen in 10 minutes and asks you to...

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📄

Which detail, by itself, proves that a text message really came from the...

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▼

📄

You check through a trusted source and confirm that a text message is...

⋮

▼

The questions cover an urgent bank warning, a familiar company name or logo, and what to do after confirming a text is suspicious. Each choice includes corrective feedback.

## CLOSING PAGE / YOUR TAKEAWAY

### Your Takeaway

You've finished the microcourse. When an unexpected text asks you to act quickly, remember three steps:

**Pause.** Leave its link and contact details alone.

**Check independently.** Use an app, website, or phone number you already trust.

**Respond safely.** If the message is suspicious, report it using your phone's option, if available, and delete it.

The next time a message makes you feel rushed, take a moment and use these steps.

My role: Learning design, content writing, scenario design, quiz development, and implementation in TalentLMS.  
Project status: Independent portfolio sample, published in my TalentLMS workspace. The screenshots show the authoring interface.