WEBSITE SCAM CHECK

Fake Antivirus Popup — Scam Check

Print this. Stick it on the fridge. Or save it to your phone.

Quick Risk Checklist — Tick Any That Apply

- [ ] The alert appears in your browser, not as a system notification.
- [ ] It has a loud audio voiceover or system-error sound.
- [ ] It claims to be from Microsoft, Apple, Norton, or McAfee.
- [ ] It tells you to call a phone number to "remove the virus."
- [ ] It says don't close the page or restart — that would "damage the system."
- [ ] It pretends to scan your computer with a fake progress bar.

What To Do Right Now

- [ ] Close the tab or quit the browser. On Mac: Cmd+Q force-quit. On Windows: Ctrl+Shift+Esc → end browser process. On iPhone/Android: close the browser app from the app switcher.
- [ ] Do not call the number. That phone number is the scam.
- [ ] Restart your computer or phone. The popup will not return unless you revisit the same website.
- [ ] Run a real antivirus scan from your OS-bundled tool (Windows Defender on PC, Apple's built-in XProtect on Mac) — or a real third-party AV you actually installed.

How To Verify Safely

- [ ] Real OS alerts come from your operating system — they're not inside a browser tab. Windows Defender shows in the system tray; macOS uses native dialogs.
- [ ] Real antivirus apps don't dial out for phone support. Norton, McAfee, and Microsoft route you to in-app help, not phone calls.
- [ ] Browsers cannot scan your computer. Any "in-browser scan" is theater.
- [ ] If you're worried after closing the tab, run a full scan with Windows Defender (Settings → Privacy & Security → Windows Security → Virus & Threat Protection → Quick Scan).

Where To Report It

- [ ] Microsoft Tech Support Scam Report — microsoft.com/en-us/concern/scam ■
- [ ] FTC Consumer Fraud — reportfraud.ftc.gov ■
- [ ] FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center — ic3.gov ■
- [ ] Google Safe Browsing — safebrowsing.google.com/report ■

If You Already…

- [ ] Called The Number — see /recovery/called-a-scam-number/
- [ ] Installed Their Software — see /recovery/installed-remote-access/
- [ ] Gave Them Card Info — see /recovery/shared-bank-info/
- [ ] Gave Remote Access — see /recovery/installed-remote-access/
- [ ] Shared A Code — see /recovery/shared-a-code/
- [ ] Sent Money — see /recovery/sent-money/

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