



Sports Streaming Scams: Stay Safe and Enjoy the Game!

Hey sports fans, we all love the thrill of watching our favorite athletes compete, especially when we can't make it to the game in person. During the COVID-19 pandemic, restrictions led many local schools to begin streaming games online. While most attendance restrictions have been lifted, schools are still streaming games because of the convenience it provides to fans. Streaming online is an amazing option, but unfortunately scammers have learned how to exploit these services and use them to collect your personal and financial information.

Here's how it works:

Imagine your favorite athlete has a game out of town and due to other obligations, you just can't make it in person. You search on social media to find a link that appears to have been added by another fan, and the post says you can watch for free! Eager to catch the game and not miss any excitement, you click the link. The next screen might ask you to sign up for their services, or to create an account, so you provide your name and email address. After entering this information, they'll ask you for a credit or debit card number and potentially even more sensitive information. You're initially concerned because it was advertised as free, but again, the post was added by another fan and may even have the school tagged. It must be legitimate, right? Wrong. The link never takes you to the stream. You end up missing the game and all the information you entered is now compromised.

Here's how to stay safe:

- **Stick to Legitimate Sources:** When it comes to streaming local games, it's tempting to click on any link that promises free access. But beware! Scammers often create fake social media links that might look legitimate but are simply designed to capture all your sensitive information. To stay safe, only use trusted and reputable streaming platforms or official school/team websites. If a deal seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- **Double-Check URLs:** Before you click on any link, give it a good once-over. Scammers love to create URLs that mimic the real deal, but upon closer inspection, you might spot a typo or subtle difference. Make sure the web address is correct, and if you're not sure, visit the official website directly rather than relying on any link from an email or social media post. If you aren't able to find the information you're looking for online, call the school to confirm.
- **Use Secure Payment Methods:** If you're asked to provide payment information to access a stream, make sure you're using a secure payment method. Avoid sharing your card details directly on unfamiliar websites. Consider using a reputable payment platform that could add an extra layer of security between your sensitive information and potential scammers.
- **Update Your Devices:** Always keep your devices, whether it's your smartphone, tablet, or computer, updated with the latest security patches and antivirus software. These updates often include fixes for known vulnerabilities that scammers might exploit to access your information.
- **Trust Your Instincts:** Sometimes, your gut feeling can be your best defense. If something feels off about a streaming link or website, don't hesitate to back away. It's better to miss a game than to fall victim to a scam.

Remember, the excitement of the game should never come at the cost of your personal information and financial security. By following these steps, you can protect yourself from sports streaming scams and enjoy the action with peace of mind. Stay vigilant, safe, and keep cheering for your favorite athletes without the worry of your information being compromised.