

Recognize, Refuse, Report!

On TV or in publications some products advertise free trial offers that claim to be “risk free.” However, some “free” trial offers end up being traps that lock consumers into plans that charge recurring fees that happen automatically.

Often a free trial offer will require you to provide your credit card information for a nominal shipping fee. However, once you accept the offer and the company has your payment information, you may be charged for products you never intended to order. Here are some ways you can protect yourself from these frustrating free trial offers:

Understand the terms and conditions: If you can’t find the terms and conditions for the offer, or they are not explicitly clear, don’t agree to the offer.

Do your research: If you are not familiar with the company, look them up via the Better Business Bureau or other consumer review site. Note their address and contact information in case you need to get a hold of them.

Keep track of time: Mark your calendar to make sure you cancel before the end of the free trial period so you don’t get stuck with unwanted products and/or recurring charges.

Monitor your financial statements: If you see charges you didn’t agree to, contact the company directly to cancel future charges. You can also work with your financial institution to dispute future charges.

Be wary of signing up to receive random products or services that claim to be “free.” If you are considering an offer, read and understand the fine print before making a decision. If you have questions about a free trial offer, contact an AARP Foundation ElderWatch volunteer specialist at 800-222-4444, option 2, to talk you through the situation.

**Call us
Monday–Friday,
9 a.m.–4 p.m.**

**800-222-4444
Option 2**



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