

# Social engineering (computing)

In the context of computing, social engineering is the psychological manipulation of people into performing actions or divulging confidential information. A type of confidence trick for the purpose of information gathering, fraud, or system access, it differs from a traditional "con" in that it is often one of many steps in a more complex fraud scheme ([Anderson, 2008](#)). It has also been defined as "any act that influences a person to take an action that may or may not be in their best interests" ([Security Through Education, 2023](#)).

## Phishing

Phishing is a form of social engineering and scam where attackers deceive people into revealing sensitive information ([Pickle & Christensson, 2023](#)) or installing [malware](#).

## References

Anderson, R. J., & Anderson, R. J. (2008). Chapter 2. In *Security engineering: A guide to building dependable distributed systems* (2nd ed., p. 17). essay, John Wiley & Sons. ISBN: 0470068523. <https://books.google.dk/books?id=ILaY4jBWXfcC>

Pickle, B., & Christensson, P. (2023, November 9). *Phishing*. Definition - What is a phishing attack? <https://techterms.com/definition/phishing> - [Archived](#)

Security Through Education. (2023, March 15). *Social Engineering defined*. <https://www.social-engineer.org/framework/general-discussion/social-engineering-defined/> - [Archived](#)