

My project aims to raise awareness about phishing and other scams, highlighting the importance of protecting personal information. It depicts a lock standing resiliently in a puddle of water, with a hook nearby symbolizing a phishing attempt—a play on the word “fishing.” Despite the threat, the lock, representing private information, remains strong and secure.

The inspiration for this project came from a recent incident where I had to prevent my grandfather from giving out personal details during a phishing call. This incident made me reflect on who the target audience for my project would be; while it's often assumed that the elderly are the primary victims of such scams, the truth is that anyone who has access to technology, particularly the internet, is vulnerable. As an avid tech user myself, I have witnessed a fair share of fraudulent tactics. Therefore, this poster is meant for anyone who has personal information to protect, regardless of their age and level of internet use.

I faced a few challenges with bringing this project to life. I knew I wanted to incorporate fishing elements like a hook and then a lock or something indicating privacy. My original concept involved a hook grabbing onto a lock underwater, with a slogan or catchline at the bottom and fish swimming around. However, I found recreating an underwater scene to be very difficult, and this led me to pivot towards a "post-fishing" scenario, with the lock on the hook and dead fish flopping around. However, when I encountered difficulty finding PNGs of dead or flopping fish, I thought of using unlocked locks lying around to symbolize other people's data being fished and "baited," while a single lock in the center remained “standing strong.” I liked this idea, but struggled to find an unlocked lock that matched the style of the one I already had.

During this process, I realized I was drawn to the doodly style of the image of the lock I had found, and this led me to switch the hook to a more cartoonish version. Ultimately, I favored the simplicity of a single lock and the cartoony aesthetic for the entire image. This necessity for stylistic cohesion prompted me to transition from my more complex ideas to a simpler one. While I found it initially frustrating, this shift aligned well with my preference for simple designs, which I often gravitate towards and appreciate in my work.

Technique-wise, I specifically chose images with transparent backgrounds to avoid the hassle of removing them manually. Working with layers, I placed the puddle behind the lock, creating the illusion that the lock is sitting in a puddle, as if freshly plucked from the water. I used the rotate and perspective tools to position the hook slightly behind the lock, giving the impression of a failed phishing attempt. To lean into the fishing aspect, I used the draw tool to squiggle a fishing line attached to the hook. For the message, I wanted "Protect your privacy" to stand out, so I used a bold, larger font for emphasis. Below it, I placed the smaller message, "Beware of phishing and other scams," using a formal font for both lines to impart a sense of importance.