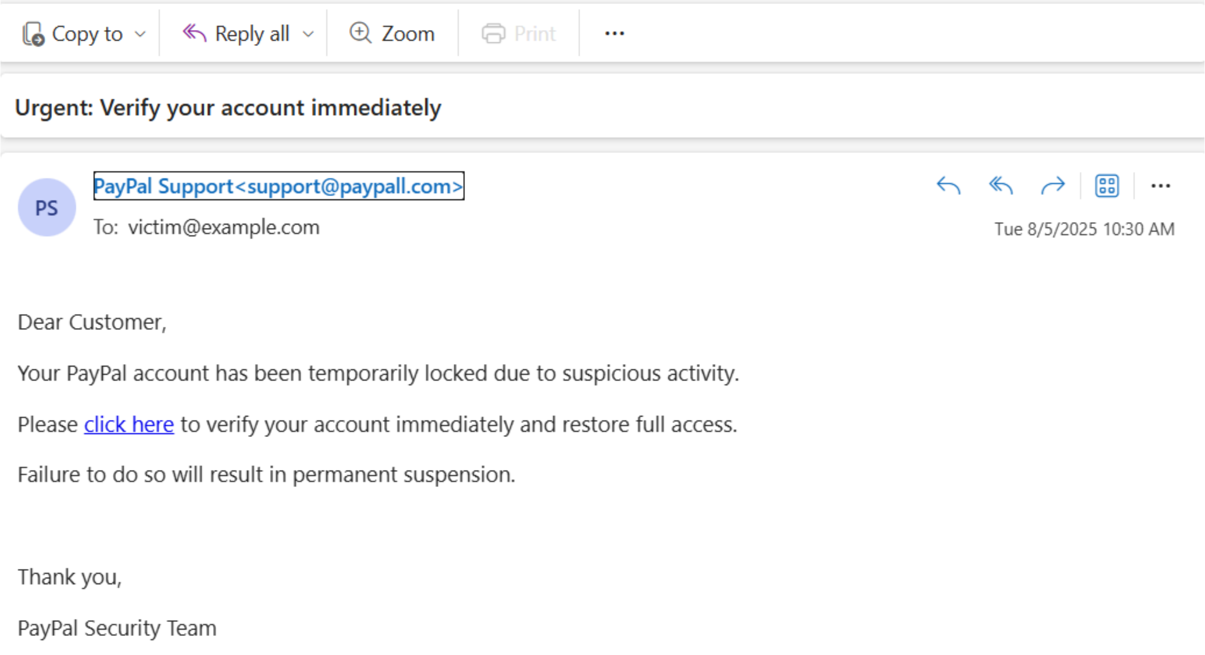
Step-by-Step Phishing Email Analysis

Step 1: Open and Read the Email

- **Tool**: Any text editor (Notepad, VS Code) or **Thunderbird**
- **How**:
    1. Open sample_phishing_email.eml using a text editor.
    2. Read the **email headers** (top) and **body** (below HTML content).



Urgent: Verify your account immediately

PayPal Support<support@paypall.com>

To: victim@example.com

Tue 8/5/2025 10:30 AM

Dear Customer,

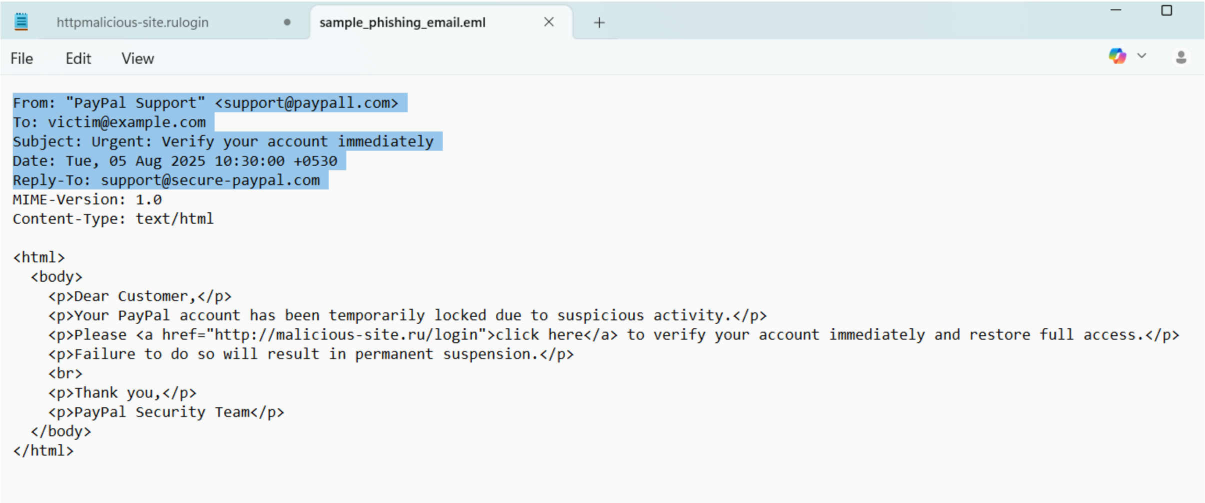
Your PayPal account has been temporarily locked due to suspicious activity.

Please click here to verify your account immediately and restore full access.

Failure to do so will result in permanent suspension.

Thank you,

PayPal Security Team



```
From: "PayPal Support" <support@paypall.com>
To: victim@example.com
Subject: Urgent: Verify your account immediately
Date: Tue, 05 Aug 2025 10:30:00 +0530
Reply-To: support@secure-paypal.com
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/html

<html>
  <body>
    <p>Dear Customer,</p>
    <p>Your PayPal account has been temporarily locked due to suspicious activity.</p>
    <p>Please <a href="http://malicious-site.ru/login">click here</a> to verify your account immediately and restore full access.</p>
    <p>Failure to do so will result in permanent suspension.</p>
    <br>
    <p>Thank you,</p>
    <p>PayPal Security Team</p>
  </body>
</html>
```

Step 2: Check the Sender's Email Address (Spoofing)

- **What to look for**:
  - Mismatched domain (e.g., @paypall.com vs @paypal.com)
  - Unusual characters (extra letters, numbers)

In the sample:

From: "PayPal Support" <support@paypall.com>

Spoofed domain: paypall.com is not PayPal.

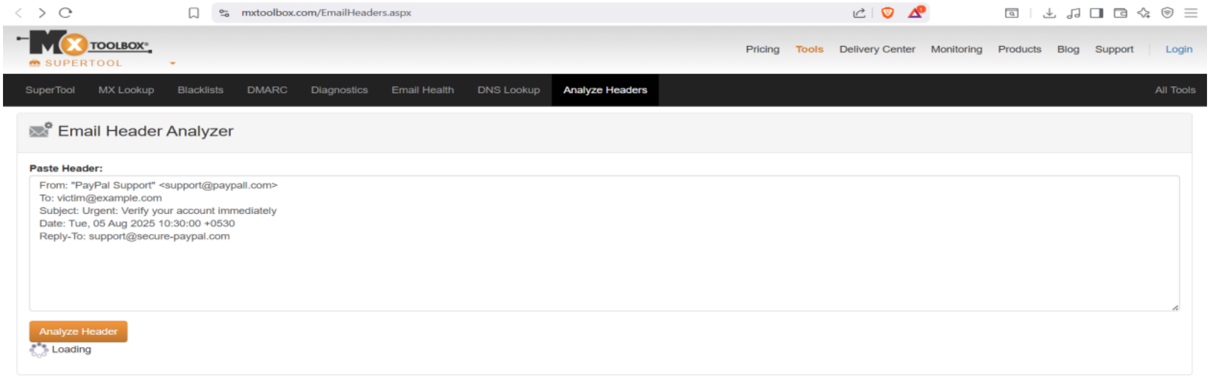
Step 3: Analyze Email Headers

Tool: MXToolbox Email Header Analyzer

1. Copy just the headers
2. Paste into MXToolbox tool
3. Look for:

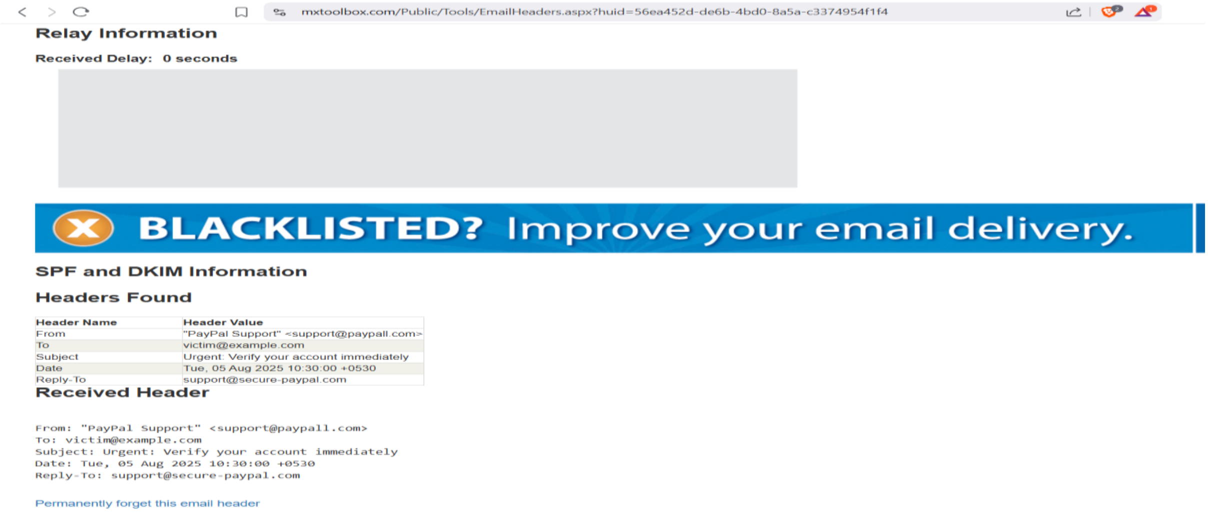
   Differences in Return-Path or Reply-To

   Signs of **spoofing** or **SPF/DKIM/DMARC** failures



Paste Header:

```
From: "PayPal Support" <support@paypall.com>
To: victim@example.com
Subject: Urgent: Verify your account immediately
Date: Tue, 05 Aug 2025 10:30:00 +0530
Reply-To: support@secure-paypal.com
```



mxtoolbox.com/Public/Tools/EmailHeaders.aspx?huid=56ea452d-de6b-4bd0-8a5a-c3374954f1f4

Relay Information

Received Delay: 0 seconds

SPF and DKIM Information

Headers Found

Header Name	Header Value
From	"PayPal Support" <support@paypall.com>
To	victim@example.com
Subject	Urgent: Verify your account immediately
Date	Tue, 05 Aug 2025 10:30:00 +0530
Reply-To	support@secure-paypal.com

Received Header

```
From: "PayPal Support" <support@paypall.com>
To: victim@example.com
Subject: Urgent: Verify your account immediately
Date: Tue, 05 Aug 2025 10:30:00 +0530
Reply-To: support@secure-paypal.com
```

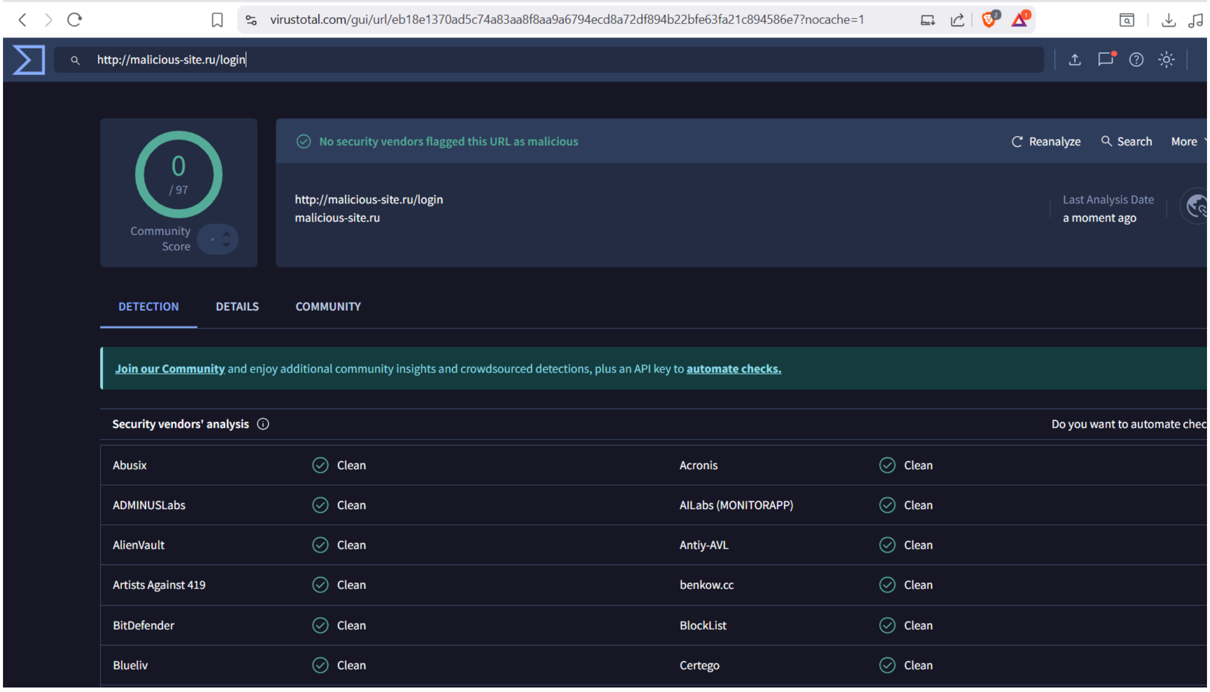
Permanently forget this email header

Step 4: Check for Suspicious Links

1. Look in the email body:

<a href="http://malicious-site.ru/login">click here</a>

2. Hovering would show the real URL: malicious-site.ru
3. Use VirusTotal to scan the link.



virustotal.com/gui/url/eb18e1370ad5c74a83aa8f8aa9a6794ecd8a72df894b22bfe63fa21c894586e7?nocache=1

http://malicious-site.ru/login

No security vendors flagged this URL as malicious

http://malicious-site.ru/login
malicious-site.ru

Last Analysis Date a moment ago

Join our Community and enjoy additional community insights and crowdsourced detections, plus an API key to automate checks.

Security vendors' analysis ⓘ

Do you want to automate chec

Abusix	✓ Clean	Acronis	✓ Clean
ADMINUSLabs	✓ Clean	AILabs (MONITORAPP)	✓ Clean
AlienVault	✓ Clean	Antiy-AVL	✓ Clean
Artists Against 419	✓ Clean	benkow.cc	✓ Clean
BitDefender	✓ Clean	BlockList	✓ Clean
Blueliv	✓ Clean	Certego	✓ Clean

Step 5: Look for Urgent/Threatening Language

- **Examples in sample**:

"Your PayPal account has been temporarily locked due to suspicious activity."
"Failure to do so will result in permanent suspension."

- Common phishing tactic: induce panic to make you act fast.

Step 6: Grammar and Spelling Errors

- **Scan for**:
    - Awkward phrasing
    - Typos
- Our sample is fairly clean — but real phishing often includes:

“Dear customer your account is danger click now to unlock fastly.”

Step 7: Mismatched Display Text and URL

- **In our sample**:

html

CopyEdit

```
<a href="http://malicious-site.ru/login">click here</a>
```

-
    - Text says “click here” — but links to a sketchy site.
    - Always hover to reveal the actual link!

Conclusion

The email shows multiple phishing indicators including spoofed sender, malicious links, urgency, and mismatched addresses. It is confirmed to be a phishing attempt.