

Why it's not rude to ignore "hi, how are you?" text messages from strangers

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A text message from an unknown number that simply says: hi, how are you? seems harmless. Your first instinct might be to respond to see if it's someone you know. Or maybe tell them they made a mistake. But it's best to ignore these type of text messages. Scammers are using this tactic as a conversation starter, so don't text back. If you do, here's what happens next.

The person (a scammer) on the other end of the text will probably apologize...and find a way to keep the conversation going to befriend you. Then, once they have your trust, they'll try to offer you advice on investing in cryptocurrency or claim they can teach you the secrets to making big money in the crypto markets. For a fee, of course. But it's all a scam and they'll just steal your money.

Even if you just reply to the text but don't engage in conversation, you've still confirmed they reached a working telephone number. Which could lead to more calls and texts from scammers.

What's the best way to avoid scams if you're getting messages from numbers you don't recognize?

- **Don't reply to text messages from unknown numbers.** It could lead to a scam. Delete and report them using your phone's "report junk" option or forwarding unwanted texts to [7726 \(SPAM\)](tel:7726) and unwanted emails to your [email provider](#).
- **Never click links in an unexpected message.** Some links might steal your information, or install [malware](#) that gives scammers access to your device.
- **Don't trust anyone who says you can quickly and easily make money.** Every investment has risks. Only scammers guarantee you'll make lots of money in a short time with zero risk.

Have you lost money to a scam like this? Tell the FTC at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/whocomplaint).



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Seems like an
innocent text, but
it leads to a scam.

Ignore and block
unwanted texts.

