

Your selfie could cost your seat at the big game

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It used to be that the only rip-off you had to worry about from ticket scalpers was paying way more than the face value of the seats you bought. But it's becoming more common for tech savvy scammers to sell fake tickets – and you could become a victim even if the tickets you bought are real.

Buyer beware – counterfeits abound

The easiest way to ensure your tickets are legit is to buy them directly from the event venue or from a recognized ticket agency, such as Ticketmaster or Live Nation. If you are not sure whether a ticket agency is authentic, check the seller's [Better Business Bureau](#) score. Even if you are buying through a recognized vendor like Ticketmaster, make sure you are on their real web page before making your purchase – many [counterfeit websites](#) are designed to resemble real ones.

If you are really desperate for those [Hamilton](#) tickets, though, the secondary market may be your only choice, but proceed with caution. While StubHub has a [buyer guarantee](#), which provides a refund for fake tickets if you report the problem promptly, most of the secondary market offers few if any [consumer protections](#) for ticket buyers. Craigslist, for instance, maintains a [cheat sheet](#) for identifying scams, but the company offers no guarantees to ticket purchasers.

Owner beware – digital theft

When you score those elusive tickets, it's tempting to celebrate your success on social media. That can be a mistake. In the latest [development](#) in ticket [fraud](#), scammers are using high-quality printers to duplicate barcodes of legitimate tickets. They steal the barcode pattern from pictures of real tickets posted on social media or in ads from individuals who are reselling their tickets. Bar-code scanners at the venue can't tell the difference between the original tickets and the "reprints." Whichever ticketholder arrives first is admitted – whether the ticket was issued by the venue or duplicated from a social media image. When the other ticketholder arrives at the event, the scanner rejects their ticket as already used. The original purchaser could be barred

from entry because someone else has already checked in to those seats.

This scam has gotten so common in the secondary market for college sports tickets that universities in Ohio started a social media [campaign](#) to educate fans, equating the barcode information on your ticket to your social security or bank account number. If you must gloat on social media, #CoverTheCode.