

The Google PlayStore Payment Scam

January 25, 2026 - Over the past couple of months we've run several unflattering stories on Google. This one isn't much different. It has become very apparent that when Google has access to your credit card information, that's a real problem. And if you try to get the money back by calling your bank and reporting fraudulent charges on your account, they will just cancel it.

Reddit is full of complaints about getting refunds from Google. I also wrote about my personal experience with fraudulent charges on my PlayStore account a couple of months ago. Unfortunately, I didn't take my own advice to check subscriptions regularly. In December, I got hit with another fraudulent purchase on my account which showed up on my Bank statement this month. When I disputed it with Google, my refund request was denied. That's a real issue for a variety of reasons.

First of all, I setup an approval process for purchases on my account. In my case, that's a biometric verification requirement. That never happened. Secondly, the so-called software merchant that charged my credit card provides absolutely no contact information on their website. And they refer users to Google for any payment issues. That's something that actually should be illegal and it places consumers who have fraudulent charges from this company in a catch 22 situation. You can't go to the merchant directly, and you can't talk to anyone at Google. If you call their customer service line, you just get a recording that says they no longer take customer service phone calls. Your only option is to file an online refund request; something which they apparently almost always deny according to the Reddit posts that I've read.

That pretty well limits victims to filing a complaint with their bank or credit card company for a refund. And while that may work for getting your money back, it can create even bigger issues for victims. Again, going back to the Reddit posts, if Google gets a chargeback on your account, they simply cancel the entire account. Think about that. IF you use Gmail, you lose access to it. Google messages? You lose access to that too. Your address book, calendar, YouTube, YouTube TV and even your browser bookmarks if you use Chrome. All of that could go away simply for disputing a fraudulent charge. For a company which had a motto of Do No Evil, it's completely hypocritical. They certainly don't live up to that.

Google just signed off on \$700 Million settlement for PlayStore violations. The company makes as much as 30% for purchase made there. They have no incentive to do the right thing because of that. They have far too much control over the consumer internet. No company should be able to shut you out of your digital life simply because you refuse to be ripped off as a consumer. It is time to break up Google.

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