

## Online Scammers Take Advantage of Desperate Renters

Money and need do funny things to the human mind. What is far too good to be true from an objective perspective can start looking pretty darn realistic after you've spent months awkwardly crashing on friends' couches while you look for a place to live. There were pioneers who traveled west and struck gold during the California gold rush faster than some people can get an apartment in this city.

And even in this new buyer's market, quality [NYC apartments](#) can be about as rare and valuable as gold. Just like gold, there's a whole lot of fake &ndash; fool's &ndash; versions out there.

Enter the online scammers, who take advantage of the gullible. Recently, on Craigslist, there have been frequent posts in the NY apartments section that sound a little too good to be true. Usually there is some plausible scenario that explains why the rent is so cheap... someone just got a job and has to move with less than a week's notice, or something like that. Of course, since time's an issue, they just ask that you mail them a security deposit, and you'll get a package with the apartment keys with your name on it in just a few days.

The keys never come in the mail.

Of course, online fraud like this exists everywhere, but cons like to target Craigslist, which is used disproportionately by those prone to procrastination. Those that have to find NY apartment in the very near future are like the thirsty in the desert, who willfully think mirage is really an oasis.

The scammers are just using a more modern version of fool's gold... Instead of California, it's [Craigslist](#), and instead of gold itself they are using the modern day equivalent: quality, cheap NY apartments.

And just like back in the day, when the typical pioneer or gold-searcher wouldn't trade his savings for some gold that a random stranger insures is legit, most people today have the basic common sense not to send money to someone they've never met for an apartment that sounds like an incredible deal.

Indeed, many people would argue that if you trusted some random person on Craigslist with your money, you probably deserved to lose every last cent.

Regardless of that, though, these scams have always been based on someone's ability to fool themselves, not on one person's ability to fool another. That's why they don't call it "mildly imprudent gold," but "fool's gold." Because it takes a true fool to pay good money for it. Nine times out of ten, that person is a fool because money, needs or wants drive them into a foolish state.

In this case, months spent searching for [NY apartments](#) is, apparently, enough to frustrate some people into fooldom.

About the Author

Nicholas Adams Judge is a freelance writer specializing in business, politics and economics. He holds a B.A. in political science and will begin his PhD studies in political economy and public opinion next fall. He has studied economics and political science at a number of different institutions, both here and in the U.K.

[NYC Apartments](#)

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