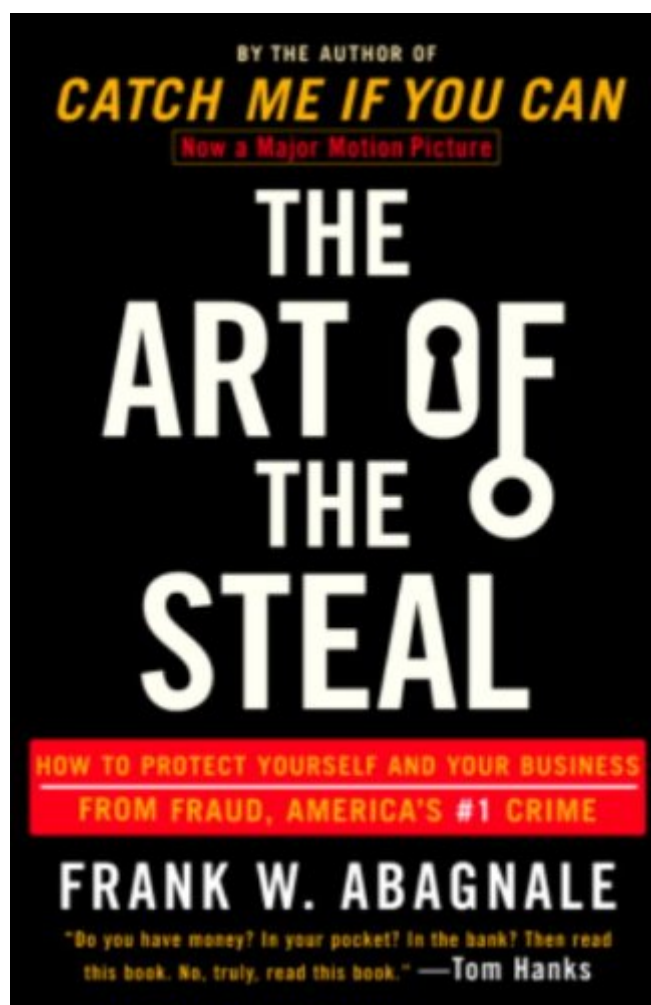


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# The Art Of The Steal: How To Protect Yourself And Your Business From Fraud, America's #1 Crime



## Synopsis

The world--famous former con artist and bestselling author of *Catch Me if You Can* now reveals the mind--boggling tricks of the scam trade--with advice that has made him one of America's most sought--after fraud--prevention experts. "I had as much knowledge as any man alive concerning the mechanics of forgery, check swindling, counterfeiting, and other similar crimes. Ever since I'd been released from prison, I'd often felt that if I directed this knowledge into the right channels, I could help people a great deal. Every time I went to the store and wrote a check, I would see two or three mistakes made on the part of the clerk or cashier, mistakes that a flimflam artist would take advantage of. . . . In a certain sense, I'm still a con artist. I'm just putting down a positive con these days, as opposed to the negative con I used in the past. I've merely redirected the talents I've always possessed. I've applied the same relentless attention to working on stopping fraud that I once applied to perpetuating fraud." In *Catch Me if You Can*, Frank W. Abagnale recounted his youthful career as a master imposter and forger. In *The Art of the Steal*, Abagnale tells the remarkable story of how he parlayed his knowledge of cons and scams into a successful career as a consultant on preventing financial foul play--while showing you how to identify and outsmart perpetrators of fraud. Technology may have made it easier to track down criminals, but cyberspace has spawned a skyrocketing number of ways to commit crime--much of it untraceable. Businesses are estimated to lose an unprecedented \$400 billion a year from fraud of one sort or another. If we were able to do away with fraud for just two years, we'd erase the national debt and pay Social Security for the next one hundred years. However, Abagnale has discovered that punishment for committing fraud, much less recovery of stolen funds, seldom happens: Once you're a victim, you won't get your money back. Prevention is the best form of protection. Drawn from his twenty-five years of experience as an ingenious con artist (whose check scams alone mounted to more than \$2 million in stolen funds), Abagnale's *The Art of the Steal* provides eye-opening stories of true scams, with tips on how they can be prevented. Abagnale takes you deep inside the world and mind of the con artist, showing you just how he pulled off his scams and what you can do to avoid becoming the next victim. You'll hear the stories of notorious swindles, like the mustard squirter trick and the "rock in the box" ploy, and meet the criminals like the famous Vickers Gang who perpetrated them. You'll find out why crooks wash checks and iron credit cards and why a thief brings glue with him to the ATM. And finally, you'll learn how to recognize a bogus check or a counterfeit bill, and why you shouldn't write your grocery list on a deposit slip. A revealing look inside the predatory criminal mind from a former master of the con, *The Art of the Steal* is the ultimate defense against even the craftiest crook. From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The author's first book, *Catch Me If you Can*, was a fun, exciting romp through the life of a very successful con man. This book is totally different. It is a book of practical tips on how to avoid being the victim of a scam. If you read the first book and you're looking for more of the same fun, this isn't it. This is more like a textbook. Some of the information is useful, but frankly, I found most of it too abstract. It's probably more useful to business owners than to the average person. Like there's most of a chapter devoted to how to design checks that are hard for forgers to manipulate. That kind of thing. Maybe I'm being unfair to this book because I bought it expecting the same light-hearted fun of *Catch Me If You Can*. It's not the same kind of book at all.

This is a great book for an honest person to read. It really opens your eyes up to how easily it is for a conartist to take your hard earned money. Not everyone out there plays by the rules. This books shows you how they think and operate through many examples. It also talks about how little risk

there is for embezzlers. This book should be mandatory reading for any small business owner. Although I don't condone what the author did to gain his knowledge to write this book, his willingness to share how the mind of a financial criminal works is very useful. The focus of the books is more on paper money and checks, but much of the criminal thought process still applies to modern electronic security was well, so do the counter measures.

I've always loved the movie "Catch Me If You Can", and was thrilled to have the opportunity to hear Frank Abagnale speak recently. I read this book just before I went to hear him - through his book AND in person you'll find a guy genuinely concerned about the safety of all of us, and in particular the tragedy of identity theft run rampant. In the book you'll find many real-life anecdotes, some funny and some frightening, but all very educational and informative. You'll get excellent advice on how to protect yourself, your identity, your money, your credit scores, and your electronic records and documents. Really a great read, outstanding!

This is a must read for everyone. Great and current info on how fraud happens and what you can do to prevent it from happening to you or your company. I'm a former supervisor at a major bank and did not know many of the check fraud tactics until I read this book!

Wow, if you don't get paranoid about your security after reading this book, then you didn't understand it well enough. Frank Abagnale, the anti-hero of the movie "Catch Me if You Can," lays it all out on the table. He tells how to recognize counterfeit money, how scams operate, how to protect your credit cards, how thieves can get into your home, where they look for valuables, and much more. I've always been security-aware, but this explained things I hadn't even thought about -- like not having your home alarm panel visible from outside the house. (Thieves can tell if it's turned on or not.) He tells how to protect your bank checks and why you should avoid the types with cute puppies or flowers on them. He tells how sales receipts have been used to rip off stores. Having been a counterfeiter and a thief himself, he reveals all the tricks of the trade. The book will give you many "aha!" moments, it will make you slap your hand to your forehead, and it will motivate you to do simple things that can stop thieves in their tracks. It will even make you laugh out loud at the cleverness of some shysters. Armed with Frank's knowledge, you can outsmart many of the people who are looking for an easy way to rip off your home or business. If you make it more difficult, they'll go where the pickings are easier. Plus, the book is like sitting with Frank and listening to him retell his "war stories." It's an easy read... and entertaining as well.

The things that can be done with receipts, credit cards and cheques is amazing. I have to admit I'm astonished after reading this that in 2008 cheques are still so widely used everyday in the USA and that they are cashed in so many places (like corner stores and supermarkets etc) - its something you'd never see in Australia where cheques are dying in use only cashed in a few places like banks under restricted circumstances. Its no wonder there's so much fraud with them in the states. Knowledge can be a two edged sword as the author of this book readily acknowledges. On the one hand it can help people who don't know any better avoid scams on the other hand this book is a good primer for people who want to learn some basics of the con for themselves. Some of the techniques in this book are very American-centric based on weaknesses in the financial system there but other such as short change artist getting you at the till are much more international. All said this is a fascinating read on how the best intentions can be turned on their head and how a willingness to believe the best in everyone will probably only get you ripped off eventually by those who do not have the same principles. The methods of the con may change over the years (hence the move to on-line fraud these days) but this book can give you a valuable insight into some of the ingenious methods of fraud, both simple and complex.

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