

**RHC**

# **Red Flags**

Protect Yourself

**RockHardChic.com**

Premium Fashion Industry Resources



# Red Flags Checklist

## Protect Yourself From Scams, Predators, and Bad Deals

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### Why This Matters

The modeling industry attracts predators, scammers, and people who will take advantage of you.

This checklist will help you:

- Spot scams before you waste time or money
- Identify predatory behavior
- Avoid bad contracts and unfair deals
- Protect yourself physically and financially
- Know when to walk away

Your safety and career are TOO important to ignore these warnings.

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### ■ RED FLAGS: Photographers & Shoots

#### MAJOR RED FLAGS (Walk Away Immediately)

##### ■ Refuses to shoot in public or professional studio

- Wants to shoot at their home/apartment

- Insists on private, secluded locations
- Won't allow you to bring a friend/chaperone

#### ■ Asks you to come alone

- Says "no chaperones" or "no friends"
- Claims it's "more comfortable" or "less distracting"
- Gets defensive when you mention bringing someone

#### ■ Pushes for nude/lingerie shoots for "portfolio building"

- Says "everyone does it" to start
- Promises it'll lead to paid work
- Pressures you when you're uncomfortable
- Insists nude shots are "necessary" for your career

#### ■ Has no online presence or portfolio

- Can't show you previous work
- No website, Instagram, or portfolio
- Claims to be "new" but acts experienced
- Uses stock photos or stolen images

#### ■ Asks for money upfront for "portfolio shots"

- Charges hundreds for "professional photos"
- Promises modeling career after you pay
- Requires payment before showing portfolio
- High-pressure sales tactics

#### ■ Inappropriate comments or behavior

- Sexual comments about your body
- Asks personal questions (relationship status, sexual history)
- Touches you unnecessarily
- Makes you feel uncomfortable

#### ■ No signed contract or model release

- Refuses to put agreement in writing
- Says "we don't need contracts between friends"
- Avoids discussing usage rights
- Wants to start shooting without paperwork

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## YELLOW FLAGS (Proceed with Caution)

#### ■■ Vague about shoot concept or compensation

- Won't give clear details about the shoot
- Dodges questions about payment or usage
- Says "we'll figure it out later"

#### ■■ Pressures you to decide immediately

- "This offer won't last long"
- "Other models are interested"
- Doesn't give you time to review contract

#### ■■ Can't provide references or past models' contacts

- Claims previous models are "too busy"

- Gets defensive when asked for references
- No testimonials or reviews anywhere

### ■■ Alcohol or drugs involved

- Offers drinks before/during shoot
- Suggests "loosening up" with substances
- Shoot location is a bar or party

### ■■ Constantly rescheduling or flaking

- Cancels last minute repeatedly
- Changes location/time frequently
- Wastes your time with no follow-through

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## ■ RED FLAGS: Modeling Agencies

### MAJOR RED FLAGS (Scam Alert!)

#### ■ Requires upfront fees to join

- Asks for "registration fees" or "agency fees"
- Requires payment for "promotional materials"
- Charges for headshots, comp cards before signing
- **Legitimate agencies make money when YOU make money**

#### ■ Guarantees you'll get work

- Promises X amount of jobs per month

- Says "everyone gets booked"
- Makes unrealistic income promises
- **No one can guarantee bookings**

#### ■ **Requires you to use their photographer/school**

- Forces you to pay their "in-house" photographer
- Requires expensive modeling classes
- Won't accept outside photos
- High-pressure sales on services

#### ■ **No legitimate clients or past bookings**

- Can't name brands they work with
- No social media presence
- No models on their website actually working
- Can't provide proof of placements

#### ■ **Poor online reputation**

- Bad reviews on Google/Yelp
- Scam warnings on forums
- Models complaining online
- BBB complaints

#### ■ **Pressure tactics and manipulation**

- "You'll never make it without us"
- "This is your only chance"
- Makes you feel desperate or inferior

- Creates false urgency

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## **YELLOW FLAGS (Do More Research)**

### **■■ Small or new agency**

- May be legitimate but unproven
- Ask for client list and past placements
- Check if they're licensed (required in some states)

### **■■ Only takes models of one type**

- Only specific body types, heights, or looks
- Might be targeting a niche (could be okay)
- OR might be a front for something else

### **■■ Unclear commission structure**

- Won't clearly explain how they get paid
- Vague about their cut (industry standard: 15-20%)
- Hidden fees or deductions

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## **■ RED FLAGS: Contracts & Deals**

## **MAJOR RED FLAGS (Don't Sign!)**



### ■ "All rights" or "exclusive rights" for free/cheap

- Wants unlimited usage of your images for minimal pay
- Claims ownership of your photos
- Prevents you from using images in YOUR portfolio
- No time limit on usage rights

### ■ No payment terms or timeline

- Contract doesn't specify when/how you'll be paid
- Vague about compensation amount
- Says "we'll pay you later"
- "Payment upon usage/sales"

### ■ Non-compete or exclusivity clauses

- Prevents you from working with other clients
- Locks you into long-term exclusive agreement
- Restricts your ability to work elsewhere
- No compensation for exclusivity

### ■ Liability waivers that protect dangerous behavior

- Makes you waive rights to sue for assault
- Excessive liability coverage
- Protects them from negligence or harm

### ■ No cancellation or termination clause

- Locks you in with no way out
- Doesn't specify how to end agreement

- Penalties for leaving

### ■ Written in confusing legal jargon

- Deliberately hard to understand
- Hides unfair terms in complex language
- Won't explain terms clearly

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## YELLOW FLAGS (Get Legal Advice)

### ■■ Very long contract (10+ pages)

- May be legitimate but complex
- Have a lawyer review it
- Don't sign until you understand EVERYTHING

### ■■ Usage rights aren't clearly defined

- Vague about where images can be used
- Doesn't specify platforms, duration, geography

### ■■ Payment dependent on future conditions

- "Payment if images are used"
- "Payment after client pays us"
- "Payment if campaign is successful"

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## ■ RED FLAGS: Online Casting Calls

### MAJOR RED FLAGS (Likely a Scam)

#### ■ Asks for money to "apply"

- Charges application or audition fees
- Requires payment to be considered
- **Legitimate castings are FREE to attend**

#### ■ Requests nude photos in initial submission

- No legitimate commercial casting requires nudity
- Asks for "body shots" in underwear
- Requests "private photos"

#### ■ No verifiable company or contact info

- Can't find the company online
- Generic Gmail address
- No phone number or location

#### ■ Too good to be true

- "Make \$5,000/day as a beginner!"
- "No experience necessary, everyone accepted!"
- "Guaranteed to be on TV/magazine covers!"

#### ■ Poor grammar and spelling

- Unprofessional communication
- Typos, broken English

- Generic copy-paste messages

### ■ Requests personal information immediately

- Asks for SSN before even meeting
- Wants bank account info
- Requests copies of ID/passport

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## YELLOW FLAGS (Verify Before Responding)

### ■■ Posted on Craigslist or sketchy websites

- May be legit but higher scam rate
- Always verify company separately
- Never go to meetings alone

### ■■ Very brief or vague job description

- Doesn't specify what the job is
- No details on client, usage, or pay
- "Model needed for project"

### ■■ Unprofessional email/communication

- Informal tone
- Lacks details
- Feels rushed or pushy

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## ■ RED FLAGS: Social Media "Opportunities"

### MAJOR RED FLAGS

#### ■ DMs from "agencies" or "scouts"

- Unsolicited messages claiming to discover you
- Asks you to click suspicious links
- Requests money to join their agency
- **Real scouts contact you professionally, not via DM**

#### ■ "Photographer" with no actual portfolio

- Account has no real photos
- Only follows models
- Profile is new or suspicious
- Uses stock photos

#### ■ Asks you to travel alone

- Wants you to fly to them for "opportunity"
- Offers to pay for travel but requires advance
- Location is private residence

#### ■ Offers "exposure" or "collaboration" with sexual undertones

- Makes inappropriate comments
- Suggests "private shoots"
- Pushes boundaries

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## ■ RED FLAGS: On Set

### MAJOR RED FLAGS (Leave Immediately)

#### ■ Setup doesn't match what was discussed

- Expected studio, it's a private home
- Expected others present, you're alone
- Different shoot concept than agreed
- **If it doesn't match, leave immediately**

#### ■ Photographer/client is intoxicated or high

- Slurred speech, impaired judgment
- Offers you drugs or alcohol
- Unsafe environment

#### ■ Touches you inappropriately

- Any unwanted physical contact
- Claims it's "necessary for posing"
- Makes you uncomfortable
- **NO ONE should touch you without permission**

#### ■ Pushes you beyond your boundaries

- Asks you to remove more clothing than agreed
- Wants "just one more shot" that makes you uncomfortable

- Pressures you when you say no

#### ■ No one else is present

- You expected a team, you're alone
- No assistant, makeup artist, or stylist
- Photographer isolated you from your chaperone

#### ■ You feel unsafe or uncomfortable

- Trust your gut ALWAYS
- If something feels wrong, it probably is
- Leave immediately, make an excuse if needed

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## How to Protect Yourself

### BEFORE the Shoot

#### ■ Research the photographer/client

- Google their name + "scam" or "review"
- Check social media for legitimacy
- Look for past models' experiences
- Verify their portfolio is real

#### ■ Get everything in writing

- Signed contract or model release
- Clear usage rights and compensation

- Shoot concept, location, and duration
- Wardrobe requirements

### ■ Tell someone where you'll be

- Share location with friend or family
- Check in before and after
- Set up a "safety call" mid-shoot

### ■ Bring a chaperone

- Friend, parent, or partner
- Don't let anyone talk you out of it
- Legitimate professionals welcome chaperones

### ■ Meet in public first (if new client)

- Coffee shop meet-and-greet
- Discuss shoot details in person
- Trust your instincts

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## DURING the Shoot

### ■ Stay aware of your surroundings

- Note exits and escape routes
- Keep your phone accessible
- Don't accept drinks you didn't see poured



### ■ Speak up if uncomfortable

- "I'm not comfortable with that"
- "That wasn't in our agreement"
- "I need to take a break"

### ■ Document everything

- Keep texts/emails as proof
- Take photos of location/people
- Keep your contract handy

### ■ Leave if anything feels wrong

- You can leave at ANY time
- Make an excuse if you feel unsafe
- Your safety > being polite

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## AFTER the Shoot

### ■ Follow up on payment

- Send invoice if applicable
- Track payment timeline
- Follow up if payment is late

### ■ Request your images

- Get promised photos within agreed timeline
- Follow up if photographer ghosts

- You have rights to images for your portfolio

#### ■ **Leave a review**

- Help other models avoid scams
- Post on Model Mayhem, Google, etc.
- Share your experience (good or bad)

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## **Red Flags Checklist: Quick Reference**

### **Before Saying YES to a Shoot:**

- Verified photographer/client is legitimate
- Reviewed their portfolio and past work
- Contract or agreement signed
- Shoot location is public or professional studio
- Someone knows where I'll be
- Bringing a chaperone (or photographer approved it)
- Comfortable with shoot concept
- Payment and usage rights are clear
- No upfront fees required
- Gut feeling says it's safe

**If ANY of these are NO → reconsider or get more info**

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## What to Do If Something Goes Wrong

### If You're In Danger:

1. **Leave immediately** - Make an excuse, call for help
2. **Call 911** - If you feel threatened or unsafe
3. **Tell someone** - Friend, family, authorities

### If You've Been Scammed:

1. **Document everything** - Screenshots, emails, contracts
2. **Report to authorities** - File police report if money was stolen
3. **Warn others** - Post reviews, report to BBB, share on social media
4. **Join the RHC community** - Get support and advice

### If You've Signed a Bad Contract:

1. **Don't panic** - Many contracts can be voided
2. **Get legal advice** - Consult a lawyer (many offer free consultations)
3. **Document violations** - If they breach contract, you may be released
4. **Report to modeling organizations** - Help others avoid same situation

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## Resources & Support

### If You Need Help:

- **National Human Trafficking Hotline:** 1-888-373-7888
- **RAINN Sexual Assault Hotline:** 1-800-656-4673
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text HOME to 741741
- **RHC Community:** Connect with other models for support

## **Legal Resources:**

- **Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts:** Free legal help for creatives
- **LegalZoom:** Affordable contract review
- **Local Bar Association:** Free legal consultations

## **Reporting Scams:**

- **Better Business Bureau (BBB):** File complaints
- **Federal Trade Commission (FTC):** Report scams
- **State Attorney General:** File consumer complaints
- **Google Reviews:** Warn others publicly

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## **Trust Your Gut**

**The most important rule:**

**> If something feels wrong, it probably is.**

- Don't ignore red flags because you're excited about an opportunity
- Don't let anyone pressure you into something uncomfortable

- Don't be afraid to say no or walk away

**Your safety and well-being are MORE important than any modeling job.**

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## **Final Thoughts**

### **Remember:**

- Legitimate professionals respect your boundaries
- Real opportunities don't require upfront payment
- Your portfolio can be built safely and professionally
- It's okay to say no
- It's okay to walk away
- It's okay to ask questions

**You deserve to work in a safe, professional environment. Don't settle for less.**

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**Experienced something sketchy?** Share it in the RHC community to warn other models. Together we can keep each other safe.

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**Created by RockHardChic (RHC)**

*Protecting Models, Building Careers*

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