

RHC

Red Flags

Protect Yourself

RockHardChic.com

Premium Fashion Industry Resources

Red Flags Checklist

Protect Yourself From Scams, Predators, and Bad Deals

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.

■ 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

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

■ 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

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

■ 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

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"

■ **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

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

■ 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

■ **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

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

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

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)

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

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

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

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.

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.

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

Created by RockHardChic (RHC)

Protecting Models, Building Careers

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