6 security threats Android users will face in 2023

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These days, amazing Android devices allow us to do so many things - work, play, create, communicate and more.

However, the growing number of security threats could jeopardize your data, privacy, and even the safety of your Android device, even in 2023. So the main threat What do you need to worry about?

1. Malware

According to a report by Securelist, Kaspersky blocked more than 5.7 million malware, adware, and dangerousware attacks on Android devices in the second quarter of 2023 alone.

One of the most common problems is potentially unwanted programs (PUPs) disguised as useful tools. More than 30% of detected threats were labeled RiskTool PUPs that could attack devices with advertising, collect personal data or allow snooping.

Even more alarming were the more than 370,000 malicious application packages discovered during the quarter. Nearly 60,000 mobile banking trojans are designed to steal financial information. More than 1,300 others are mobile ransomware, which locks devices until a ransom is paid. This number will likely increase as attackers

become more advanced. Securelist also reports that Kaspersky has discovered new types of ransomware and banking Trojans that have never been seen before. A fake cryptocurrency mining app was even found on the Google Play Store, masquerading as a movie streaming service.

Adware also remains widespread, accounting for more than 20% of threats. Stealthy lines of adware like MobiDash and HiddenAd run hidden processes to overwhelm users with unwanted ads. They top the charts for unwanted software detection.

To stay safe as an Android user, you should visit the Play Store, review licensing requirements, update security software, and use trusted mobile security tools.

2. Fraud

Phishing is another major security risk for Android users in 2023. These attacks use social engineering and fake interfaces to trick users into providing sensitive information. Straittimes reported that a police report revealed at least 113 Android users in Singapore alone have lost around $445,000 to phishing schemes since March 2023.

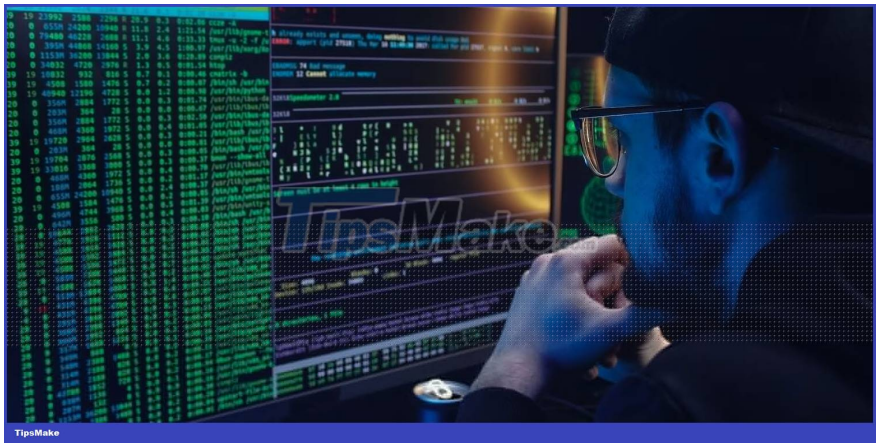
The most common tactics involve apps or links that redirect to fake bank login pages to steal logins and one-time passwords. The fraudsters then access the real banking app to make unauthorized transactions. Some fraudulent apps even contain malware that captures passwords or other data in the background.

Attackers often pose as legitimate businesses on social networks or messaging apps to deploy phishing links. They will claim that the link is necessary to purchase goods or services. Currently, we can see many scams tied to streaming, gaming, crowdfunding, and other popular digital services.

Phishing uses targeted content, making attacks harder to detect. Scammers exploit current events and hot topics like COVID-19 to trick users into clicking. Artificial intelligence (AI) models, like ChatGPT, also give them an advantage by easily creating convincing phishing websites and content.

So be wary of embedded social media ads, avoid unknown apps and developers, and keep a close eye on permissions.

3. Unpatched vulnerabilities



Google announces several security updates for Android, showing that unpatched bugs are still a big problem for Android users in 2023. According to Google, one of the most serious new vulnerabilities is CVE-2023 -21273, a nasty remote code execution bug in a system component that allows hackers to take full control of your device without you doing anything.

That's not the only serious flaw. There are several other types of bugs, like CVE-2023-21282 in Media Framework and CVE-2023-21264 in kernel, that attackers can exploit to execute malicious code on your phone or tablet. In addition, there are more than 30 other high-severity vulnerabilities that can give hackers unauthorized access, damage your device or steal your personal information.

Sadly, many Android devices do not receive these important security patches immediately. Unless you own a recent high-end phone, chances are your device is still susceptible to some bugs that Google patched months or even years ago. And in reality, only a handful of us can afford to upgrade to a new high-end phone every year or two.

So at least update your Android device software when available. And if your device is no longer receiving updates, it may be time to upgrade to a newer used model that still receives security patches.

4. Hack public WiFi

Free public WiFi can seem like a dream come true when your data plan is limited or depleted. But think twice before accessing the open network at a coffee shop, airport, or hotel. Hackers are increasingly targeting public WiFi to steal data and credentials from unsuspecting Android users.

For bad actors, setting up sketchy access points or monitoring traffic from nearby devices is an easy task. A lot of sensitive information can be stolen on public networks, from passwords and login information to bank accounts and credit cards.

Tactics like Man-in-the-middle attacks will help hackers get between your device and the WiFi router. This allows them to eavesdrop or even change network data. Other schemes spread malware by tricking users into connecting to impersonated networks.

Android devices often automatically connect to previously used WiFi, meaning you could join a hacked public network without realizing it. The best policy is to avoid using public WiFi when possible, but use a reliable VPN if you need to connect. Turn off auto-join features, watch for "unsecured network" warnings, and be wary of shoulder surfing when accessing sensitive apps or websites.

You must be extremely careful when connecting while on the move. Think before clicking, entering data, or even opening your email over public WiFi. The convenience is simply not worth the huge risk of data, identity, and account hacking.

5. Risks of USB charging

Finding a way to charge your phone when the battery is low is a regular task. But be careful when plugging into any convenient USB port to charge your Android device. Hackers can use public USB chargers to compromise victims' phones.

This tactic, called juice jacking, allows attackers to install malware, steal data, and access your device using a charging cable that contains malware. Airports, malls, restaurants - any public USB station can be compromised, luring you in with promises of quick charging.

Once plugged in, a malicious cable or charger can infect your phone in seconds without you even having to unlock the device. The malware can then transmit your personal information and data to the attacker while your phone quietly charges in the background.

The article strongly recommends that you avoid public USB charging ports completely. But if you must use them, bring your own cable and AC adapter. Lock your phone while charging, disallow file transfers, and check your device afterward for suspicious activity.

You can also buy USB data blocking dongles that only allow power to pass through, preventing data transfer. Finally, it is safest to bring your own backup charger to avoid potential risks.

6. Theft of physical devices

Our mobile devices contain vast amounts of personal data, from passwords and accounts to photos, messages, etc. That makes them prime targets for thieves looking to steal and exploit them. that sensitive information. Physical theft of Android devices continues to pose a real security risk in 2023. According to the BBC, police reported more than 90,000 mobile phones were stolen in London in 2022. Locations The most common thefts of mobile devices occur in public places such as restaurants, bars, airports, and public transportation.

Sophisticated thieves use tactics like shoulder surfing to peek at passwords or even snatch phones out of unwary users' hands. Once they get their hands on your device, they can bypass locked screens, Android security features, and install malware to scrape data.

You can deter many thieves by setting your lock screen to activate when your phone immediately goes to sleep. Avoid using obvious passwords like birthdays. Also, enable Android features like Find My Device in advance.

But in reality, your sensitive information can still be compromised if your phone is stolen. The only sure way to secure your data is to use a mobile security suite that allows remote locking, wiping, and recovery in the event of physical theft. Keeping backups on external sources provides another layer of protection.

Ultimately, physical possession of your unlocked device gives thieves the keys to your digital kingdom. Take precautions in public and protect your phone like a real data warehouse.