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Dark Patterns: When Design Manipulates the Consumer



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Dark patterns are intentionally deceptive design techniques used by websites and apps to manipulate user decisions.

How Do They Work?

Dark patterns exploit how we think under pressure, urgency, or confusion.

They hide information, use manipulative language, or make it difficult to choose the honest or fair option.

Common Examples

● Hidden Costs

Fees or charges that appear only at checkout.

● Hard to Unsubscribe

One-click to join, but many confusing steps to leave.

● Sneaky Add-ons

Extra items automatically added to your cart without asking.





How do they affect consumers?

- Lead to unwanted decisions
- Increase impulse purchases
- Violate the right to informed consent
- Create distrust toward digital platforms

How to protect yourself?

- ✓ Read carefully before clicking anything
- ✓ Don't rush — check terms and conditions
- ✓ Choose platforms that are transparent and user-friendly
- ✓ Report manipulative practices — some dark patterns are illegal in the EU



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Don't let design decide for you!

Make choices with awareness, not manipulation.

