



COST ACTION CA22104
Behavioral Next Generation in Wireless
Networks for Cyber Security
(BEING-WISE)

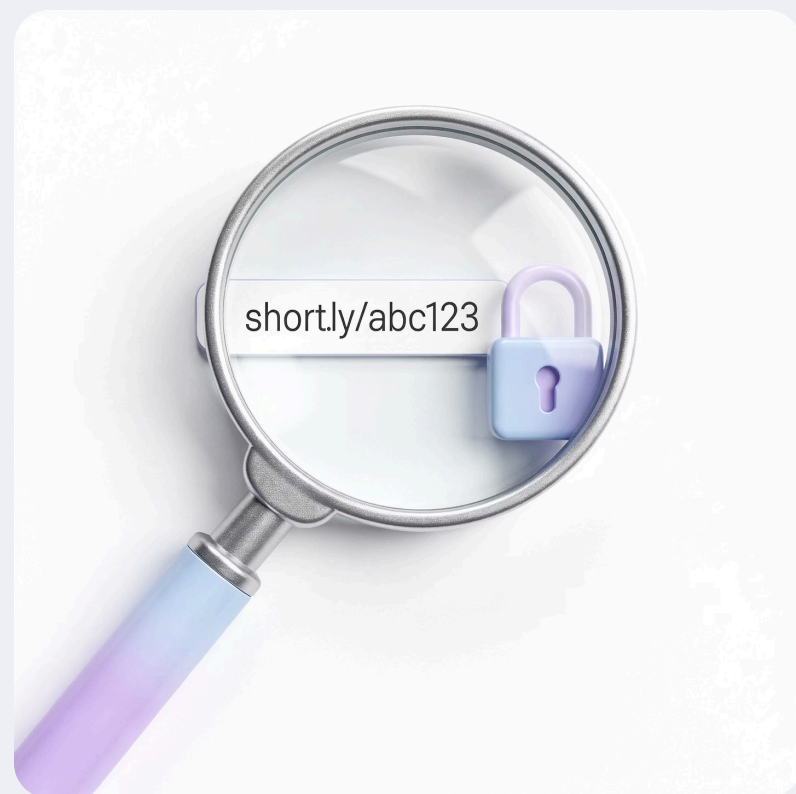


This educational material is based upon work from COST Action BEING-WISE CA22104, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology). COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation.

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You click the link. But do you know where it really goes?

Short URLs are everywhere and most of us click without thinking twice.



WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

By the end of this carousel, you'll know how to pause, look, and decide more wisely.

01

What short URLs are

And how they work behind the scenes

02

Why they reduce transparency

The destination is hidden until you click

03

How to verify before trusting

Simple habits that protect your digital judgment



FAMILIAR TERRITORY

You've seen short links everywhere.

Social Media

Posts, bios, and stories

Messages

Texts and direct messages

Newsletters

Event invites and campaigns

QR Codes

Flyers, menus, and signage

They feel routine because they *are* routine. That familiarity matters.

THE CONCEPT

A short URL is a redirect in disguise.

A short URL is a condensed web address. When you click it, a server instantly redirects you to the real -often much longer- destination.

1

What You See

bit.ly/event24

2

What Happens

Instant server redirect

3

Where You Land

A destination you never saw



WHY IT MATTERS

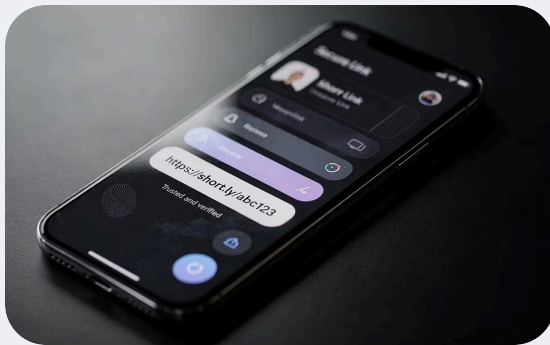
Short URLs are useful. But they hide information that helps you decide.

The destination -the most important piece of information- is invisible until after you click. That gap between **what you see** and **where you land** is where trust decisions get harder.

- ❏ Short URLs are not automatically dangerous. But they reduce the information available to you before you act.

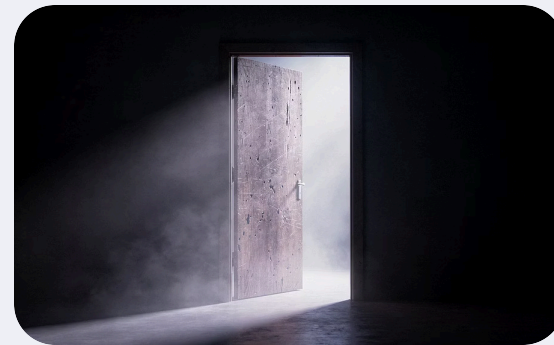
THE TRUST TRAP

Looks safe.
Feels familiar.
Destination unknown.



It looks clean

A neat, branded link from a contact you recognize



But it hides the path

The full destination stays hidden until you've already clicked

Familiarity and appearance are not the same as verified safety.

PAUSE AND CONSIDER

**A trusted contact just sent you a short link you weren't expecting.
Would you click it right away?**

Option A

Click immediately, it's from someone I know

Option B

Pause, I wasn't expecting this and I can't see the destination

Your first instinct reveals how much trust you place in appearance over verification.

Before you click, ask four quick questions.

1

Who sent it?

Is the sender verified and expected?

2

Were you expecting it?

Unsolicited links deserve more scrutiny

3

Can you preview it?

Tools like CheckShortURL or hover previews reveal the real destination

4

Does the context make sense?

Would you still trust it if the destination stayed hidden?

If you can't see where it leads, don't trust it too fast.

Short URLs are a normal part of digital life. But invisible destinations require more careful judgment, not blind trust.

What's your first reaction when you see a shortened link in a message?

Follow **BEiNG-WISER** series for more digital awareness content. Share this with someone who clicks first and thinks later.

