

# Google suspends Chinese shopping app amid security concerns

March 21 2023, by Zen Soo

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A woman walks past the reception desk at the headquarters of Pinduoduo with the logo displayed in the background in Shanghai, on July 25, 2018. Google on Tuesday, March 21, 2023 has suspended the Chinese shopping app Pinduoduo on its app store after malware was discovered in versions of the app from other sources. Credit: Chinatopix via AP

Google has suspended the Chinese shopping app Pinduoduo on its app store after malware was discovered in versions of the app from other sources.

Google said in a statement Tuesday that it suspended the Pinduoduo app on the Google Play app store out of "security concerns" and that it was investigating the matter.

The suspension of the Pinduoduo app—mainly used in China—comes amid heightened U.S.-China tensions over Chinese-owned apps such as TikTok, which some U.S. lawmakers say could be a [national security threat](#). They allege that such apps could be used to spy on American users.

Pinduoduo is a popular e-commerce app in China which often offers discounts if users team up to buy multiples of an item. Google warned users Tuesday to uninstall any Pinduoduo app not downloaded from its own Play Store. Downloads of Android and even iOS apps can often be found on websites that allow people to download apps without going through official app stores.

"Google Play Protect enforcement has been set to block installation attempts of these identified malicious apps," Google said in its statement. "Users that have malicious versions of the app downloaded to their devices are warned and prompted to uninstall the app."



Workers sit on duty at the headquarters of Pinduoduo, an e-commerce platform, in Shanghai on July 25, 2018. Google has suspended the Chinese shopping app Pinduoduo on its app store after malware was discovered in versions of the app from other sources. Google said in a statement Tuesday, March 21, 2023, that it suspended the Pinduoduo app on the Google Play app store out of “security concerns” and that it was investigating the matter. Credit: Chinatopix via AP, File

It was unclear if there are similar security concerns around the Pinduoduo app for Apple users, and Pinduoduo was still available to download from Apple's iOS store Tuesday.

In a statement, Pinduoduo said that Google had not shared more details with the company beyond informing it that the current version of its app

was "not compliant with Google's policy."

"We strongly reject the speculation and accusation that Pinduoduo app is malicious just from a generic and non-conclusive response from Google," Pinduoduo said in the statement.

Hong Kong-traded shares in the company tumbled 14.2% on Tuesday.

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Citation: Google suspends Chinese shopping app amid security concerns (2023, March 21)  
retrieved 21 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2023-03-google-chinese-app.html>

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