



YOUR PASSWORD IS

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Stephanie Thero, SALC Conference, 2021

Five Tips for Strong Passwords

1. Longer is better

It's actually better than better, it's the best. Aim for your passwords to be between 15 to 25 characters. Some sites won't let you make them that long (i.e., banks, but they have other security features in place).

2. Be impersonal

Don't use birthdays, SIDs, phone numbers, addresses, pet names or *any* other personally identifiable information in your passwords. Think twice before sharing personal information as part of online quizzes or surveys that would reveal answers to password hint questions.

3. Mix it up

While not as important as length, it does add to make the password complex. Use a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and special characters. To make remembering them a little easier, think of the special characters as actions or symbols (i.e., # is a window; * is a snowflake) or combine them with numbers for emojis. Don't just use a common word and replace the a with @ or E with 3 (e.g., P@\$\$wOrd). Basic password breaking software will crack that in seconds.

4. Use two-factor authentication (2FA)

When 2FA or multi-factor authentication is an option from a site or service, **use it**. 2FA combines something you know (i.e., password), something you have (i.e., phone) and something you are (i.e., fingerprint). Some services will use Google Authenticator or Microsoft Authenticator. These are great tools.

5. One password for every account

It seems like a lot of work (and it is), but it is necessary to have a different password for each account you have. Never use the same passwords you have on your personal accounts on your work accounts. Use a reputable password manager to make it easy on yourself.

Passwords

The Best Free Password Managers of 2019

<https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-free-password-managers>

PCMag lists a few others to check out.

The Best Password Managers of 2021

<https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-password-managers>

If you have a little money to put behind your security, you'll get more features.

Tips for Better Passwords

<https://www.consumerreports.org/digital-security/tips-for-better-passwords/>

How Secure is your Passwords

<https://www.security.org/how-secure-is-my-password/>

This will tell you how strong it is and how long it would take a bruteforce attack to crack it. It will also tell you whether the password you entered appears in the top most used password lists.

The Psychology of a Password

<https://blog.lastpass.com/2016/09/infographic-introducing-the-psychology-of-passwords.html>

Does the description of Type A vs. Type B fit you? An interesting read.

Tools

Have I Been Pwned?

<https://haveibeenpwned.com/>

Enter your email address to see if it's been compromised in one of the hundreds of data breaches indexed by the site.

Online Safety Resources

ABC Internet Matters

<https://abclifeliteracy.ca/all-programs/internet-matters/>

Aimed at adult and senior Canadians, ABC Internet Matters consists of a workbook and downloadable resources to help new internet users understand what the internet is, how to access it and how to stay safe. Includes lesson plans that could be used for programming as well as numerous informational articles.

Be Internet Awesome

https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/en_us

This Google program teaches the fundamentals of digital citizenship and online safety. The resources are designed for families, educators and kids. Interland, a web-based game focusing on online safety is aimed at kids ages 7-12, but any age group could have fun with it -- even adults!

CyPurr Collective Cryptoparty resources

<https://github.com/CyPurr-Collective/Cypurr-Prezes>

[CyPurr Collective](#) is a small cryptoparty collective that works in New York City to educate the public on cybersecurity in “accessible and holistic way with fun cats.” They make their presentation materials available on github.

Future Learn: Introduction to Cyber Security

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/introduction-to-cyber-security>

An eight week course, guided by Doctorow, covers a wide range of online safety topics. It is for anyone who wants to learn how to improve their security. There are upgrades such as for a fee, but are not at all necessary.

Government of Alberta Cybersecurity eCourses

<https://www.alberta.ca/cyber-security-ecourses.aspx>

Five, 10-minute online courses covering working offsite best practices, social engineering, malware, document handling and passwords.

Media Smarts

<https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/cyber-security>

Media Smarts is a Canadian organization that develops digital and media literacy programs and resources. Check out their cybersecurity section for guides, tip sheets and games for a variety of audiences.

Protect Seniors Online

<https://www.protectseniorsonline.ca/>

A public education program from Home Instead Senior Care, this site has numerous resources, including articles, videos and a spot-the-scam quiz.

SANS Ouch! Newsletter: Digital Spring Cleaning

<https://www.sans.org/security-awareness-training/resources/digital-spring-cleaning>

General Information Websites

Canadian Centre for Cyber Security

<https://cyber.gc.ca/en/>

Cyber Centre is Canada's authority on cyber security. On their website, you will find information through blogs, alerts, reports, infographics, interactive content and more. There is also information on how to report cyber incidents.

Get Cyber Safe

www.getcybersafe.ca

This Government of Canada site raises awareness on common threats, scams, digital citizenship (cyberbullying) and a toolkit for Cyber Security Awareness Month in October.

Stay Safe Online

www.staysafeonline.org

American-based public/private partnership endeavouring to educate public and businesses on using the internet safely.

Follow

Canadian Centre for Cyber Security

https://twitter.com/cybercentre_ca

Cyber Collective

<https://twitter.com/getcyco>

<https://www.instagram.com/cybercollectiveorg/>

Get Cyber Safe

<https://twitter.com/GetCyberSafe>

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