

# CYBER SECURITY TIPS



In today's highly connected world it is easy to forget how technology connects us all. Most times this is a good thing! But it is also important to make sure that you are keeping you and your information safe.

## General Best Practices

- Follow password best practices – change your password regularly and use strong passwords. There is more information on passwords below.
- Be aware of your online profile – be careful about what you post on social media. Don't share information that would help answer the security questions on your accounts.
- Always use anti-virus and malware protection.
- Keep track of your mobile devices and make sure they are secured with passcodes.
- Keep your computers and mobile devices up to date on any updates or patches.
- Don't click on pop-up windows.
- Only open attachments from people you know

## Passwords

Passwords...many of us consider them a necessary, but annoying fact of life. Let's do a quick password quiz:

1. Do you use websites that you use that require a password (online banking, shopping, credit cards, etc.) where you have not changed your password in more than 3 months?
2. Do you use the same password for any of your logins?
3. Do any of your passwords include family members' names, pet names, or favorite activities?
4. Do you use basic number or symbol substitution such as using @ to represent "a" or 1 to represent "l" or "I"?
5. Do you write your passwords down and carry them with you?

If you answered yes to any of the questions above you are not alone, but you are also not alone in having an opportunity to improve your passwords. Let's face it, no one likes to change passwords and all of the complexity rules that are becoming more common make it more difficult. Here are some tips to make things easier.

- Don't just substitute numbers or symbols to meet the complexity requirements. Combine phrases with numbers that you might remember. For example, take a few word from a song or poem and combine them with the last four digits of the first phone number you remember having and then add a symbol in there for good measure. This will create a longer password that meets complexity requirements but is not likely to be guessed.
- Don't use the same password for multiple logins. Of course, that can make it difficult to remember them all. To help keep track of them (without carrying them on a piece of paper in

your wallet) use a password management tool. These tools securely store your passwords and most of them have a mobile app for your phone. Many of them can fill in your password for you so you do not even need to type in that crazy thing you just created!

- ☑ Change your passwords on a regular basis. It is recommended that you change them at least every three months.

## Mobile Device Security

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Mobile devices keep us connected and entertained. They also need to be kept secure. Here are some quick tips on keeping your mobile devices secure:

- Always secure your mobile device with a lock code.
- Keep the operating system up to date. Android and Apple both provide periodic updates. If there is one available, it is always a good idea to install it. You can check for an update by:
  - Apple – go to Settings -> General -> Software update
  - Android – go to Settings -> About -> System update
- Use built in security features such as Find my Phone
- Regularly review what information is being shared with your apps
- Be selective about what apps you share location data with.
- Avoid connecting to unsecured wifi networks.

## Securing your Home Network

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Everybody loves convenience, and no one wants to spend a lot of time thinking about security when they are setting up their new Internet connected...well...anything (after all, you can get wifi connected stoves!) What's the big deal about that? Well take a look below.

- An article published in June 2018, estimated that the average US household has an average of 9.1 wifi connected devices.
- All of those wifi devices connect to the wireless router given to you by your broadband provider or that you purchased.
- According to a recent study, 82% of households never changed the default password on that router, which means that your network is pretty much open to anyone who knows how to use Google.

So how do you keep your home network secure?

- Change your router's default password. If you don't know what it is, Google the make and model number. The user guides are all online and contain the default password.
- Set up a guest wireless and only make it available when you have guests. You can refer to your user guide on how to set this up.

- Use WPA2 wireless encryption (or if your router is newer, use WPA3). You can refer to your user guide on how to set this up.
- Change your router admin password and wifi passwords on a regular basis.
- Disable WAN (external) administration
- Disable wireless administration – this means if do not use wired connections in your home, you will need to connect your computer directly to your router to made administrative changes.

Nearly every home router will have the features mentioned above and should be configurable.

Most router manufacturers have instructions on how to administer your device on their websites.

Taking a few minutes to secure your router will go a long way in protecting your network.