

Cybersecurity 101: Protecting Your Digital Identity and Personal Information

By [Jennifer Thomas](#) June 8, 2021

You can't be too cautious about protecting your assets and identity online. Over [30,000 websites are hacked daily](#), and there were over 19 million breached records in March 2021. Use these tips to help you protect your digital identity and personal information when you're online.

Steps to Take to Safeguard Your Identity and Personal Information

Change Your Online Passwords Every Six Months

It may seem like a major inconvenience, but changing your password regularly it's worth the frustration. Changing your password prevents hackers from discovering your password on various online platforms, such as banking, work, credit card, and similar online platforms. Changing your password often limits security breaches and prevents hackers from having continuous access to your accounts.

Use Biometric Security on Your Cell Phone

Biometric security is a great feature to use on your phone if you have it. This type of [security for mobile devices](#) includes fingerprint and face ID, and it prevents unauthorized use of your account. To access any account with the biometric security feature, use your fingerprint or face to access the account, providing more safety than using a password.

Use Strong Passwords

If biometric security is not available or you're using a laptop or desktop, this security feature may not be available. Your next best step is using a strong password that is easy for you to remember but difficult for other people to decode or guess. Strong passwords include different factors, such as uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, special characters, and symbols, including exclamation points and similar symbols.

Don't Save Passwords

The idea of not having to type in your password each time you visit a particular site may seem convenient. However, it's also convenient for hackers to retrieve your password and access your account.

Use Sites That Are Encrypted

Before you make a financial transaction online, make sure the website is secured by being encrypted. Sites that are encrypted will have the trusted security lock at the end of the web address bar. You will also notice the "HTTP" in the address bar change to "HTTPS" when the site is encrypted.

Use Security Programs

Online security programs, such as Norton, McAfee, and similar programs, help keep your information secure while you're browsing the internet by preventing various cybersecurity threats and attacks. Once you install one of these security platforms on your computer, they continuously monitor the sites you visit and scan your hard drive for viruses.

Avoid Phishing Scams

Phishing scams can be challenging to spot. These scams use different methods to gain access to your personal information and possibly steal your identity. To avoid phishing scams, never open emails from strange email addresses and don't click on any unsecured links.

Use Private Data Protection

Using private [data protection](#) is another great way to keep your sensitive information and online identity safe. Private data protection provides a suite of security tools that protect your private data, including social media sites, email, private messenger programs, and similar programs.

Use a Password on Your Wireless Router

Having home internet has become more of a necessity over the years, becoming a typical household expense. Make sure you use a password on your wireless router to prevent other people from abusing the network and accessing your personal information. An experienced hacker can commit various cybercrimes, such as stealing information from your computer by having access to your wireless router.

This type of unauthorized use is one situation where you should practice using a strong password on your wireless router to protect your information.

Enables Cookies Only When Necessary

Most sites require you to enable cookies, but you should only do so when necessary. Cookies are various details that websites store on your personal computer, such as the sites you visit and your activity on these sites. Most websites will keep the information they collect private, but there's no foolproof way to prevent someone from accessing sensitive data. Most hackers go to extreme lengths to access data.

Be Mindful

One of the most important things you can do is to be mindful and pay attention, especially on social media platforms that allow you to send money to people. Many people have become victims of scams because they aren't paying attention to emails or instant messages they are sent online. Make sure you use secure financial apps, such as Zelle, CashApp, or other secure apps if you want to send money to people you know.

Using the internet makes completing specific tasks easy and convenient, but it also opens a world of opportunity for cybercrime. Give yourself peace of mind by learning about different cybercrime techniques and protecting your identity online.