

Tips for Password Security

- ✓ Keep your passwords private—never share a password with anyone else.
- ✓ Do not write down your passwords.
- ✓ Use passwords of at least 12 characters or more (longer is better).
- ✓ Use a combination of uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters (for example, !, @, &, %, +) in all passwords.
- ✓ Avoid using people’s or pets’ names or words found in the dictionary. It’s also best to avoid using key dates (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.).
- ✓ Substituting look-alike characters for letters or numbers is no longer sufficient (for example, “Password” and “P@ssw0rd”).
- ✓ A strong password should look like a series of random characters.
- ✓ On the web, if you think your password may have been compromised, change it at once and then check your website accounts for misuse.

Password Management Software

There are some good password manager software products on the market today (i.e. LastPass, 1Password, etc.). Some are free; none are very expensive. With one of these products, you can create truly random, very long and unique passwords for each site, and because the software will remember them for you, you never have to worry about what your password is. Your password manager will store and encrypt the passwords for you and log you in automatically. You will have improved security with only one master password to remember.

How to Create a Strong, Complex Password

Follow these Steps	Example
1. Think of a phrase or sentence with at least 12 words. It should be something easy for you to remember but hard for someone who knows you to guess. It could be from a favorite poem, story, movie, song lyric, or quotation that you like.	I like to eat chocolate chip mint ice cream in the summer
2. Remove all but the first letter of each word in your phrase.	ILTECCMICITS
3. Replace several of the uppercase letters with lowercase ones at random	lIteccmICitS
4. Now substitute a number for at least one of the letters. (Here we’ve replaced the “t” with the number “2”)	lI2eccmICitS
5. Finally, use special characters (!,@,#,\$,%,&,*) to replace a letter or two—preferably a letter that is repeated in the phrase. You can also add an extra character in the mix. (Here we’ve replaced the first “I” with “!” and the “S” with “\$”	!!2eccmICit\$