

The internet has become an important part of our daily life. We use it for everything from work to recreation. Nowadays, it seems that, with mobile devices, we are constantly online with near instant access to pretty much anything. We tend to forget that being online all the time increases the risk of losing our personal data. Here are some tips to help you stay safe while online:

Password Guidelines:

- For your laptop/PC and websites, use a password that is a minimum of 8 characters.
 - Mix it up and make it complex: Capital and lowercase letters, numbers and special characters.
 - Avoid dictionary words, names or ties to any personal information.
 - The longer your password the better, consider using a passphrase such as “Beauty is not only skin deep”. Then add in the complexity.

For example:

B3auty is only Skin deep!

Or

Beauty 1s only skiN de3p.

Or

1 Four the Money!

Or

1 4 the Money.

- Never share passwords.
- Each password should be unique. This requirement causes the most problems for folks. Use a password manager so you don't have to remember each one. Google “best password manager” for recommendations.

Email Tips:

Tired of getting spam emails? Consider getting another email account, let's call it a slop account. This slop account can be used to register on websites and with businesses for “business” purposes or for things not important. Your primary address can then be for the important ones in your life. If you already get a ton of spam in your primary email account, consider it your slop account and only give out the second email account to the important ones in your life. See the Security Center, Phishing, for more email protection tips.

Website Tips:

- Follow the password guidance from above; make all passwords complex and unique.
- Watch out for someone looking over your shoulder when entering a password in public.
- Only enter personal information on a website where you feel safe and confident that the site is valid. Here are a couple of ways to boost your confidence:
 - You typed in the web site address as opposed to using a provided link.
 - You see a lock icon in your browser.
 - The address begins with https.

Own your online presence. Follow these tips to help stay safe online.