TELUS Wise

How safe are your passwords?

From social media platforms and messaging apps to games and music streaming apps, passwords are critical gatekeepers to our private information and digital lives – and it's never been more important to keep them safe.

There are many hacker attacks that focus on obtaining passwords, but the two most common types that can affect the integrity of your passwords are brute-force and dictionary.

1. A brute-force attack is where hackers use software to automatically try different combinations of a targeted password to gain access to an account. One example of possible key combinations is: cats, CATs, Cats, KaTS. Shorter passwords are the easiest to crack with this method.

2. A dictionary attack uses a list of common words, phrases, or frequently-used passwords, including variations, like when the letter "O" is substituted with the number "0". These words are not limited to words in the dictionary but can also include celebrity names or movie characters. An example of common passwords include things like: passw0rd, 12345678, or il0vecats. Common passwords are easiest to crack with this method.

Good password management may seem tedious, but the extra effort you put into keeping your passwords safe is well worth it.

Fill in the blanks password safety tips

Using the word bank below, fill in the blanks to complete the password safety tip sheet.

Email	**Reuse**	**Code**	**Text**	**Long**	**Phrase**	**MFA**	**Hacker**	**Compromised**	**Encryption**	**Password**

- Use tools such as **Google Password Checkup** to see if any of your passwords have been (1) _____ . You can also check the strength of your current passwords by using a password checker like **Kaspersky** or **Security.org**.

- Use multi-factor authentication (2) (_____), otherwise known as two-factor authentication. This provides an added layer of protection. You will need either a (3) _____ sent via text message or email, a token or a biometric scan of your fingerprint or face to gain access to your accounts.

- Use a (4) _____ manager instead of saving your passwords to your desktop or as a note in your phone (or, go old-fashioned and write down your passwords in a safe place). Password managers rely on (5) _____ , meaning your saved passwords are encrypted before they leave your device. Choosing a secure master password to access your vault is the key to effective use.

- Never send your password via text, messenger or in an (6) _____ . In many instances, passwords sent online are stored in plain (7) _____ or other unencrypted formats, which makes them easy for hackers to access.

- Don't (8) _____ the same password, even with variations like symbols or numbers in place of letters. If a (9) _____ has successfully gained access to one account, they will attempt to hack all other accounts you have online, including email, banking or social media.

- Make your passwords (10) _____ . It's recommended to use passwords between 16 and 25 characters in length. To help remember a long password, use a (11) _____ inspired by your favourite song or movie.

Common password word search

Do you use a common password?

Solve the common password word search to find out. Within the puzzle there are 15 of the most common passwords used in 2020, including phrases and single words. Can you find them all?

Q	P	Q	S	B	G	N	W	O	N	K	N	U
E	U	O	E	A	D	R	O	W	S	S	A	P
C	R	P	K	S	S	T	O	L	D	I	U	R
A	P	I	Y	E	I	T	V	E	D	P	O	I
D	L	D	E	B	M	A	F	T	E	U	Y	N
L	E	R	K	A	T	O	N	G	F	O	E	C
R	L	M	N	L	E	S	N	T	A	P	V	E
E	A	O	O	L	Q	K	O	L	U	T	O	S
C	D	A	M	T	R	L	G	O	L	E	L	S
C	S	U	P	E	R	M	A	N	T	F	I	D
O	O	M	T	Q	W	E	R	T	Y	X	H	H
S	P	A	R	T	Y	O	D	S	L	R	T	O

Answers

Fill in the blanks password safety tips:

1. Compromised
2. MFA
3. Code
4. Password
5. Encryption
6. Email
7. Text
8. Reuse
9. Hacker
10. Long
11. Phrase

Common password word search:

Soccer, Unknown, Pokemon, Party
I love you, Princess, Monkey, Superman
Password, Evite, Default, Purple
Qwerty, Dragon, Baseball

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