

Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is one of the world's leading sources of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector initiative which has been helping to make the internet a safer place since 2006.

Get Safe Online Global24

Back-to-basics advice



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October 15th 2020



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Back-to-basics advice

This year, most people and businesses around the world have relied on the internet far more than ever before. Unfortunately, at the same time, the level of online crime and other harms has also substantially increased.

This leaflet, produced for our Global24 worldwide cyber event, is intended to cover the most basic practices that we all need to follow in order to protect ourselves from the most common online threats. As well as safeguarding yourself, your family, your finances and your devices in your personal life, we hope you will also pick up some good practice to help protect your workplace.



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Here's a back-to-basics list of the most important good habits you need to get into and maintain.



Your top tips for keeping safe online

- Choose, use and protect **passwords** carefully, and use a **different one** for every online account in case one or more get hacked. Try using three random words and strengthening them with numbers, symbols and combinations of upper and lower case letters.
- Ensure you always have **internet security software** (often called anti-virus/anti-spyware) loaded on computers and a similar app on your mobile devices, and that this is kept updated and switched on. Remember that **smartphones and tablets can get infected** in a similar way to computers.
- Always apply **updates to operating systems and software** on your computer and apps on your mobile devices. Many include vital security updates to avoid hacking or malware.
- Never assume that **Wi-Fi hotspots** in places like cafés, bars and hotel rooms are secure, so don't use them when you're doing anything confidential online. Instead, use your data, a mobile broadband modem (dongle) or if it's for work, a VPN (virtual private network).
- Always consider that online or on the phone, **people aren't always who they claim to be**. Fake emails, texts and phone calls are a favourite way for fraudsters to approach their victims.
- **Don't click on links** in emails, posts, tweets or texts – and **don't open attachments** – if the source isn't 100% known and trustworthy, or it seems strange that you'd be receiving them.
- **Never pay for anything by direct bank transfer** – including goods, services, tickets, travel and holidays – unless it's to someone you know personally and is reputable.



- Never reveal too much **personal or financial information** in emails, on social networking and dating sites and in person. You never know who might see it, or use it.
- **Always report** fraud or abuse to the appropriate authorities.

There are also two other golden rules you should remember: **think twice**, because everything may not be as it seems, **and if it seems too good to be true, it probably is**.



Get comprehensive online safety information and advice from your local Get Safe Online website.