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**Picking a Secure Password**

**Do Don’t**

**Use a mix of characters and numbers Use your name or your spouse’s name**

**Use upper and lower case Use the obvious like- Password**

**Use phonetics and deliberate misspellings Use your phone number or birthday**

**Use a symbol to space words Use part of your userid**

**Easy to remember but not easy to guess Use all numbers or all letters**

**Incorporate the website name into the password Use names of kids, relatives, or pets**

**Use a phrase or an acronym Use less than 8 characters**

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**Use a mix of characters and numbers**   
For example instead of using an **S** always use either **$**, **&** or **5**. Make this a constant in all your passwords.

**Use upper and lower case**   
Vary the placement of uppercase letters; do not always choose the first letter of the password.

**Use phonetics or deliberate misspellings**   
Try to purposefully and consistently misspell something or use the phonetic spelling. For example:

* Instead of raise use raize
* Instead of text use txt

**Use a phrase or acronym**  
Pick a phrase you will remember, but no one will guess. Consider using the first letter of each word and using the character substitute above. For example using the phrase starwarsismyfavoritemovieofalltime:

* **5t@rW@r5i5myf@voritemovieof@lltime**

Or use the first letters of words from the phrase. Using the above phrase would give us the password:

* **5Wimfmo@t**

**Easy to remember but not easy to guess**  
Be mindful of information that is readily available to would be hackers. If you have kids, grandkids, or pets - chances are you have posted their names on your social media somewhere, so avoid those.

**Create a strong password**  
A hacking program can crack a strictly numeric password in under a minute. Using a password of more than 8 characters with a mix of upper and lower case, characters, and numbers will help you create a password that will make it more difficult for criminals and encourage them to move on to an easier target.

**Consider a password manager**  
This is simply software that helps store passwords and PINS using a local database or file, so you really only need to remember one password. However, if you decide to utilize a password manager be sure that the password you use to access the manager is very strong as it is “the key” to unlocking all of your other passwords.