CONTEGIX®

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P@$SW*RD STRATEGY CHEAT SHEET

Passwords are your first line of defense against hackers and malicious software. It is up to you to develop a strong one to thwart such attacks. The best way to do this is to understand the characteristics of a good password, and be a good password owner. Consider this cheat sheet basic training for the ongoing battle against hackers.

DO's & DON'Ts

DON'T write your password down

When formulating a password, it's more important to come up with a unique code than a complicated code. Yes, complicated alphanumeric codes are difficult to hack, but the problem is that they are easily forgettable. In fact, they are so hard to remember that the owner is compelled to write them down – either on a piece of paper or in a text file – and that is a bad idea.

DO commit your password to memory

Memorizing and consistently remembering your password is the best course of action.

DON'T make it too simple

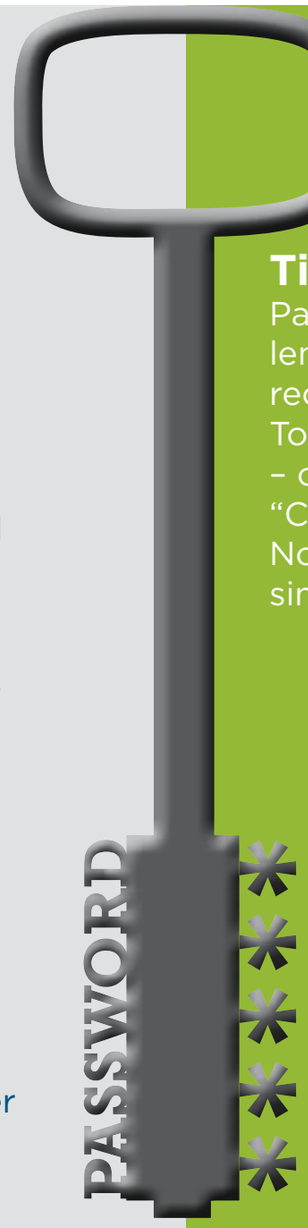
Though your password should be something you can memorize, make it a bit random. For example, text that contains a family member's name, address, or the word "password" will not suffice for a secure password. Some phrase related to the make or model of that rental car you drove around Tallahassee one weekend back in 1997 may be harder for a stranger to guess.

DO create complexity creatively

Access codes will be tough to hack into if you are sure to include unique and unpredictable characters such as sporadic capitalization, numbers, punctuation, and symbols. Sprinkling a period, exclamation point, ampersand, or number will undoubtedly fortify your password in a much easier to remember way.

DON'T take the easy way out

It's a bad idea to base your password on keypad letters that are quick and convenient to press. Many people use "qwerty12345" as their login because running their fingers from left to right on the keypad gives them quick access to their account. Even worse, many people use the same password for multiple accounts. This is a dangerous method of operation.

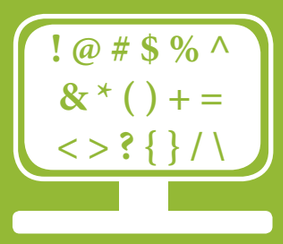


Tips for Creating a Strong Password

Tip #1: There's Safety in Numbers

Password strength is determined by a password's length and complexity. Thirteen characters is the recommended complexity level for a solid password. To achieve this length, make it a group of words – or passphrase – that you will remember, such as "ContegixIsAFederallyCompliantSolutionsProvider2017!" Not only is this phrase hard to crack, but it is true. Also, since it's true, it is especially easy to remember.

Tip #2: Use Characters to Create Altered Passwords



As mentioned above, the best way to create a strong password is length and complexity. Another great way is to incorporate special characters throughout your password to integrate them into the actual text by replacing certain letters with symbols. For example, "c0nT3g1xCL()ud#o$tinG".

Tip #3: Mnemonics Are Your Friend

If you've selected a phrase you want to use as a password, but think it may be too easy to crack, try using mnemonic techniques. By taking the first letter of each word in the phrase (and then adding special characters), you can easily come up with a unique code that no one can crack.

Phrase	Mnemonic Password
Contegix is a government authorized cloud services provider 7102!	Ciagacsp7102!

Tip #4: Change it up

It's best to change your password at least every forty-five to sixty days. Each time you do, pick a different sentence or phrase (known to only you, of course). A way to make this easy is to keep four or five password sentences or phrases in rotation, but change the numbering or character symbols within them each rotation.

Tip #5: Get a Manager

Since you you likely have many passwords for various sites and services, a password manager app is a good option. They can securely keep all your passwords in one place.

Your password is your primary line of protection against the bad guys. By following these rules and tricks for maintaining a secure password, you'll be taking the necessary measures to keep your personal and professional information safe and secure. Contact Contegix for expert security solutions.

Questioning cloud security? Download our ebook to learn how to overcome security challenges in the cloud?

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