PASSWORDS
HOW TO PICK AND PROTECT THEM

**DO**
- Use at least 8 characters and a mixture of character types (letters, numbers, symbols)
  This makes it harder for an automated password-cracking program to try all of the possible combinations.
- Change your important passwords regularly
  If someone has discovered a password without your knowledge, this will stop them getting any further access.
- Use different passwords on different systems
  If your password is discovered on one system, the others won’t be at risk.

**DON’T**
- Don’t give your password to someone else
  Your password is meant to be a secret. If someone else knows it then they can pretend to be you.
- Don’t use a word that you would find in the dictionary or any personal details about yourself
  Because these can be more easily guessed by cracking programs or people that know you.
- Don’t write your password down somewhere that it could be found
  Because someone could find it!
- Don’t allow the computer to remember your password on a shared or public system
  An impostor would only need to know your username in order to get access, as the system would automatically provide the password for them.

**TIPS**
- A good way to remember a complex-locking password is to remember the first letters of a phrase:
  10G8otw
  CdViac101D1
  10 Green Bottles standing on the wall,
  Cruella de Vi [is a character in 101 Dalmations]
- Use something that is meaningless, but still pronounceable (e.g. ClemPoggl341!!!). Being able to say the word can help you to remember it more easily. Another method is to substitute letters for numbers. For example: S5t0ngP@55w0rd!
- Don’t worry about remembering passwords for sites that you won’t use very often (you could just use the ‘forgotten password’ link when you want to log in).
- Remember to sign out once you have finished, or the next user won’t need a password because you’re still logged in.

Put your password to the test
www.cscan.org/passwordstrength

DID YOU KNOW?

A study of password usage conducted by Plymouth University found that more than a third of users choose weak passwords based on personal information or dictionary words.

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