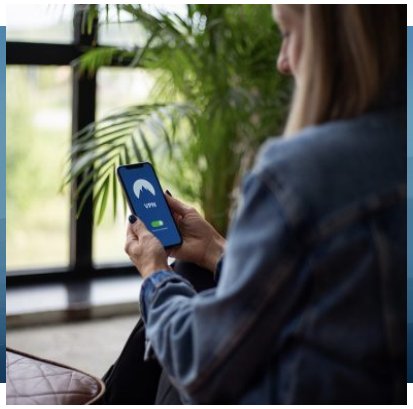

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Another New Year's Resolution

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The dawn of the New Year, for many people, is a time to make resolutions. Many of the common are familiar and may be on your list: lose weight, exercise more, eat better, read more books, spend less time on social media, floss more, etc. No matter the length of your list, we would humbly suggest an important addition as we work with you to protect you from identify theft. For 2022, please resolve to lengthen and strengthen your passwords.

We found the table below very informative on the topic. It highlights the ease with which simple passwords can be cracked.

How Safe Is Your Password?

Time it would take a computer to crack a password with the following parameters

Number of characters	Lowercase letters only	At least one uppercase letter	At least one uppercase letter +number	At least one uppercase letter +number+symbol
1	Instantly	Instantly	-	-
2	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	-
3	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
4	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
5	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
6	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly	Instantly
7	Instantly	Instantly	1 min	6 min
8	Instantly	22 min	1 hrs	8 hrs
9	2 min	19 hrs	3 days	3 wks
10	1 hrs	1 mths	7 mths	5 yrs
11	1 day	5 yrs	41 yrs	400 yrs
12	3 wks	300 yrs	2,000 yrs	34,000 yrs

Source: Security.org

statista

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The challenge we all face is creating passwords that can thwart identify theft yet be remembered and useful. Changing passwords frequently is a good idea (and what better time to do it than at the start of the year) but favor longer passwords or phrases. For instance, instead of using your pet's name and 123, consider a phrase like "My dog is n@med $pike". That may not get you out to the realm of 34,000 years to decrypt but it is s step in the right direction.

Beyond good password practices, we remind you to be cautious in opening email attachments, even if the sender appears familiar as "spoofing" of email addresses and websites becomes a larger problem by the day. It also remains critical that you not send via email any critical identifying information. If you can't encrypt a document, please upload it to us via our secure document portal. If you need any assistance with that the process, please phone the office and we will be happy to walk you through the process.

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