



Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for Nova Scotia

Best Password Practices

DO's

- Do include uppercase letters, digits and/or symbols in the middle of the password instead of at the beginning and end.
- Do make your password at least 12 characters long; the longer the password is, the stronger it is.
- Do shield your password from potential onlookers ("shoulder surfers").
- Do use a secure password manager to help manage your password or write it down in a safe place if you can't remember it.

DON'Ts

- Don't use variations of your existing passwords; previous passwords may be used to guess your current password.
- Don't base your password on the names of people, pets, things you like (i.e. favourite songs, cars), sports or birthdates.
- Don't use keyboard patterns.
- Don't use *common* names or phrases (i.e. "iloveyou").
- Don't use the same password on multiple accounts.

These guidelines were adapted from a password research presentation by Carnegie Mellon University Professor Dr. Lorrie Cranor.

Notice

These guidelines are for information only and do not constitute a decision or finding by the Information and Privacy Commissioner for Nova Scotia with respect to any matter within her jurisdiction. These guidelines do not affect the powers, duties or functions of the Commissioner regarding any complaint, investigation or other matter under or connected with the Commissioner's jurisdiction, respecting which the Commissioner will keep an open mind.