

World Password Day: The dos and don'ts of passwords

By [Niel van Rooyen](#)

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6 May is observed internationally as World Password Day. This day is seen as an opportunity to promote better password habits while highlighting the critical need for improved cybersecurity. World Password Day originates from the security researcher Mark Burnett as he realised that the passwords most people were using were hopelessly inadequate.



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Cybercrime has become prevalent in South Africa, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. According to research revealed last year, South Africa has the third most cybercrime victims in the world, losing R2.2bn a year.

Password Day is an opportunity to remind people of what constitutes a robust password and how to safely store them. Password protection remains a vital component to protecting yourself against identity theft and is our first opportunity as a defence against potential threats.

Password dos and don'ts:

- Use a different password for every online account.
- Do not reuse a password.
- Passwords must be hard-to-guess.
- Consider using a password manager application by a reputable vendor, this is a solution to providing encrypted passwords to get into each of your online accounts.
- Change your passwords regularly.
- Do not store your passwords on your phone or computer.
- Use long, unique and complex passwords with several different combinations of characters.
- Consider opting for two-factor authentication if the service allows for it, this is in the form of an SMS to your phone providing a one-time password (OTP) as an example.
- Never click on any link that cannot be verified, received via email or social media.
- Avoid emails from unfamiliar senders, especially those that ask you to confirm your details.

- Make sure that your router is password secured.
- Periodically remove temporary internet files.

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