



Information Security for Seniors

More and more of the world is becoming connected through computers and the internet, and email is making it even easier to keep in touch with distance family members.

It can be difficult to keep up with technology later in life, but many seniors are taking the plunge and learning how to use computers in their daily life. An important part of learning these technologies is making sure that you and your families stay secure.

If you aren't sure how to protect your information in any of the following ways, ask for help from a family member or trusted computer technician.

Watch out for Scams

Email, social media, and mobile phones give so many ways to keep in touch, but they also mean that malicious people can contact you as well. Many seniors are targeted by criminals pretending they are someone else: they could pretend to be a police officer, an old friend, or even a family member. You don't always know who is on the other side of a call or an email, so make sure to verify.

These scams are usually meant to get access to money, bank accounts, or even personal information that can be used to steal an identity for criminal purposes. If someone online or over the phone is asking or demanding payment or personal information, it is likely part of a scam. Make sure to only connect with people you trust and make sure to verify their identity in-person.

Email

Typical emails scams will try to convince you that there is something appealing or dangerous going on. These emails will try to get you to send money or banking information, click on a link in an email, or open a file that is attached to an email. If you get something you don't expect or if something doesn't look right, then close the email and delete the message.





Calls

There are many scams where a caller pretends to be a police, government official or even a senior home. During the call they often claim that you or a family member owes them money. Alternatively, people might pretend to be a distance relative and claim that they are desperately in need of money. In both scenarios, they are just looking for money. Make sure to verify by calling the person back at an officially listed phone number.

Keep Computers Secure

Computers do a lot to protect you behind the scenes, but online criminals can still break into them if they don't have enough protection. Make sure that your computer has an anti-virus program and is connected to a firewall. These will make it much harder for anyone to access your personal information. If you don't know how to secure your computer in this way, enlist the help of a younger family member or a computer professional.

The world of computers is always changing, so you need to keep up this security too. Make sure that the software and antivirus is regularly updated to keep system safe from new threats.

Passwords Protection

Most devices today can be protected by using passwords. Make sure to add passwords to your computer to make sure that only you have access to your accounts.

Make sure to log off when you aren't using your computer, otherwise someone else will be able to access it when you aren't around.

To make passwords even more secure, you can set up something called **Two-Step Authentication**. This adds another layer of protection that someone needs to pass in order to access your account.

Resources

Get Cyber Safe - Seniors Online

<https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/cnt/prtct-yrslf/prtctn-fml/snrs-nln-en.aspx>

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

<http://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/index-eng.htm>

