SECURE PASSWORDS

Passwords are the key to unlocking the treasure trove of your private and work data. The more sophisticated the key, the harder it is and the longer it takes for cyber criminals to crack the lock.

Cyber criminals use special software that, in the blink of an eye, automatically try out millions of possible character combinations, known words or passwords that have appeared online.

How do you make your password key secure— and make life difficult for the cyber criminals? Top tips overleaf.

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Tips and tricks:

- **Avoid** simple passwords like "123456", "Test" or "qwerty".
- Dates of birth and names—of your family members, pets or favorite singer for example—are also **unsuitable** as passwords.
- **Do not** use the same password for more than one account.

How to make your password secure:

- The longer the password, the harder it is to crack. So, choose a password that has at least 10 characters.
- Make your password complex by combining letters, numbers and special characters (e.g., "$", "#", "_", "&").

No doubt you're asking yourself: "And just how am I supposed to remember such a long and complicated password?"

Quite simply, by coming up with a sentence that is easy for you to remember, e.g., "My dog Buster has four paws and is a happy canine!". The initial letters of each word form the basis for the password. You then use meaningful special characters and numbers to replace certain words, e.g., "four" becomes "4", "and" becomes "+" and "canine" becomes "K9". The result is a strong password "**MdBh4p+iahK9!**" that you can recall quickly—with a little practice—and poses a considerable challenge for cyber criminals.

Password managers also act as a safe for all your passwords. You only have to remember one strong password, the "master password", for access.

Well-known password managers are:

- KeePassXC
- LastPass
- 1Password

Secure passwords should be used to protect your sensitive information at work and also, at home to help you keep control of your personal data. You wouldn't want a hacker, posing as you, to spread lies through your social media accounts or to make online purchases at your expense, would you?

Stay vigilant!