SECURE YOUR HOME NETWORK

Public health guidelines regarding social distancing have suddenly made staying at home the new normal for tens of millions of Americans. Kids are home from school, parents are teleworking full-time, and everyone needs internet access. It is important to optimize the performance of your home network and make sure your network is secure with these simple steps:

1. OPEN YOUR ROUTER CONSOLE

While connected to Wi-Fi, enter your router's IP address into the address bar on your internet browser.
Don't know your IP? Router IP addresses aren't unique. A quick web search of your router's brand should give you the info you need.

2. LOG IN

Enter your username and password. If you've never changed these, there's a good chance they're printed on the back of your router or found on the manufacturer's website.

3. FIND THE SECURITY SETTINGS

Your router might call this section something like Wireless Security.

4. RENAME YOUR ROUTER

If you haven't already, give your network a new name or SSID. This name can be as simple or silly as you want, but don't include any personal information.

5. USE A PASSPHRASE

Use a passphrase for your router's password. This is especially important if you've never changed it before!
   A passphrase:
   • is a sequence of mixed words, with or without spaces
   • does not use common expressions like song titles or lyrics
   • is at least 4 words and 15 characters long
   • doesn't need any special characters or capitals
If your router puts restrictions on your password, try to use at least 8–12 characters, upper- and lower-case letters, numbers and symbols, with no dictionary words or personal info.

6. CHANGE YOUR ENCRYPTION

Under the Network Authentication setting, choose WPA2-PSK or WPA2-Personal. If you don't see a WPA2-PSK or WPA2-Personal option, you may need to upgrade your router to stay as secure as possible.

7. CREATE A GUEST NETWORK

Keep your personal network protected. Create a separate guest network to allow your smart devices and visitors access to the Internet, but not your sensitive personal information!

Many routers have a checkbox in the settings to turn on a guest network. Make sure to give your guest network a unique name and password.

8. SAVE YOUR SETTINGS

Click Save or Apply to save the changes. (You may need to reboot your router.)

9. CONNECT

Connect your personal devices to your personal network and your smart devices (and your visitors!) to your guest network.

Securing your Wi-Fi networks is an important step to having a cyber safe home!

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