

Guidelines for how to set strong and secure passwords for using school systems.

When setting your passwords, keep these following points in mind:

Strong Passwords have:

- At least 8 characters—the more characters, the better
- A mixture of both uppercase and lowercase letters
- A mixture of letters and numbers
- Inclusion of at least one special character, e.g., ! @ # ?]

A strong password is hard to guess, but it should be easy for you to remember—a password that has to be written down is not strong, no matter how many of the above characteristics are employed.

Weak or unsecure passwords may be:

- Any word that can be found in a dictionary, in any language (e.g., airplane or aeroplano).
- A dictionary word with some letters simply replaced by numbers (e.g., a1rplan3 or aer0plan0).
- A repeated character or a series of characters (e.g., AAAAA or 12345).
- A keyboard series of characters (e.g., qwerty or poiuy).
- Personal information (e.g., birthdays, names of pets or friends, Social Security number, addresses).
- Anything that's written down and stored somewhere near your computer.

Tips for keeping your password secure

- Change it regularly—once every six months.
- Change it if you have the slightest suspicion that the password has become known by a human or a machine.
- Never use it for other websites.
- Avoid typing it on computers that you do not trust
- Never save it for a web form on a computer that you do not control or that is used by more than one person.
- Never tell it to anyone.
- Never write it down.