



## Creating secure passwords

**Creating a secure password is not as easy as using the name of your first goldfish. Password crackers are getting more and more powerful and the best way to protect yourself is to understand how password crackers work. In this article, we teach you how to invent yourself a more secure password than “Martha” the goldfish.**

### How do password crackers work?

If someone wants to crack your password unfortunately they are not going to sit in front of your computer and try to guess it one word at a time (unless they already have a pretty good idea of what it might be). It is likely that they will use a piece of password cracking software to look at millions of possible combinations a second. Password cracking software usually starts by going through every word in the dictionary and after that will try different combinations of words, numbers, letters and symbols until they find your password.

### How do I make my password secure?

Simple maths dictates that the longer and more random the combinations of letters, numbers and symbols you use, the longer it will take to crack and unless your criminal has until the end of the universe to wait, chances are they will get bored and move on. So next time you are asked to dream up a password, try and make it something the gods of mathematics would be proud of. Remember though that your password is only useful if you can remember it - writing it down on a piece of paper is not an option!

### Creating a secure password

There are a few easy tips to make a secure password. Your password should contain 8 or more characters, at least one digit (0-9), one capital letter and one symbol. It should not contain any dictionary words. An example of a good password would be:

**TrStMa1\***

To help remember this password, it is constructed out of things which I would remember. **(Tr)**ain **(St)**ation **(Ma)**lvern is the **(1)**first station I get onto in the **(\*)**morning.

Have a play with your own passwords and see what you can come up with.



**Above:** A good password is an essential component of a secure computer

This article applies to:



Windows Vista

