

HOME CYBER DEFENSE

ARE YOU SAFE FROM CYBER CRIME?

WEEKLY

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This is a weekly publication dedicated to your personal cyber security. Our newsletter is designed to help the public recognize and avoid cyber threats while they are online. If you are not a subscriber, please go to HomeCyberDefense.net to sign up.

Confessions of a Former Hacker



Consumers are daily targets of email and phone scams, not to mention the frequent cyberattacks on big data. So it's never been more important to protect your online security as best as you can. "The scams are changing every day and consumers aren't knowledgeable about the new scams that are going to be used against them," says Kevin Mitnick, top cybersecurity expert and author of several hacking books. Formerly on the US government's "Most Wanted" list in the 1990s for hacking into cellphone

companies, Mitnick served five years in prison for computer fraud. Since his release in 2000, he's built a career as a "white hat" hacker, working as a security consultant for companies around the world. His top 5 tips to protect yourself:

1) Use a password manager: People are extremely lazy when it comes to setting up their passwords. Over 80% of respondents in a recent survey said they reused the same passwords, according to KeeperSecurity.com. Password managers are difficult to crack because they automatically create and store long randomized passwords for each of your online accounts. Apps like Dashlane and LastPass are highly recommended and both offer free and paid versions. The only thing you need to remember is one master password that Mitnick recommends to be a sentence or phrase of 25+ characters.

2) Connect with a VPN service: Your hotel, airport lounge, or coffeeshop's public wifi network is not to be trusted. The only thing you can do safely on a public network is browse the internet. Whenever you're connecting to an open wireless network, go through a virtual private network, or VPN. For about \$60 a year, VPNs encrypt your internet activity so that it's secure over the public network, making it very difficult for a hacker to get access to that information.

3) Install HTTPS Everywhere: While a VPN creates a secure internet connection, he recommends one more layer of protection with a browser extension called "HTTPS Everywhere" that switches insecure "HTTP" sites to secure "HTTPS" and guards against surveillance and account hijacking. This step helps mitigate your risk if you're planning on logging into your bank or financial institution.

4) Use a separate device for your finances: When logging into his own bank accounts online, Mitnick uses a dedicated device: his iPad Pro. This decreases the chances of anyone hacking into his banking and credit information. You can also use this dedicated device when logging into

medical sites or any other site that hosts sensitive, private personal information.

5) Set up bank alerts: The earlier you detect fraudulent activity on your accounts, the easier it is to remedy. Log in to your bank and credit card accounts and set up alerts for either every single transaction, or transactions over a certain dollar amount. This way you'll get an immediate notification via email or text if someone has used your card to purchase something without your permission.

It is impossible to live off the grid in today's world, so knowing how to protect yourself is essential. Just stay aware and follow a few common sense rules and you should be fine while in the digital world.

This Week's Cyber Alerts:

Alert Issued 1/18/18: [iPhone Owners will be able to Disable Power Management Feature](#)

Alert Issued 1/18/18: [Google Chrome Extensions with 500,000 Downloads Found to be Malicious](#)

Alert Issued 1/17/18: [iPhones Significantly Slowed Down by Spectre Security Update](#)

Alert Issued 1/16/18: [Car Hacking a Very Real Threat as Autos become ever more Loaded with Tech](#)

Alert Issued 1/16/18: [Windows Users Targeted by Fake Meltdown and Spectre Update](#)

Alert Issued 1/15/18: [Outgoing DISA Chief Warns of Looming Cyber Threat](#)

Alert Issued 1/11/18: [Microsoft Says Security Fixes will Noticeably Slow Older PCs](#)

Alert Issued 1/10/18: [Apple Releases iOS and macOS Updates with a Mitigation for Spectre](#)

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