

## Tips for Creating a Strong Password

Most people don't put a lot of thought into creating a password. It's usually easiest just to create a short, easy-to-remember password, or even just use the same password for every account you have. After all, the average person probably won't be able to guess your password. However, hackers often use password-cracking software that can keep testing many different passwords until they find the correct one, and they can easily crack weak passwords. By creating strong passwords, you can greatly reduce the chance that your personal or financial information will be stolen.

- ❖ **Never use personal information** such as your name, birthday, or spouse's name. Personal information is often publicly available, which makes it much easier for someone to guess your password.
- ❖ **Use a longer password.** Your password should be at least six characters long, and for extra security it should ideally be at least twelve characters (if the site allows it).
- ❖ If you need to write down your passwords, **keep them in a secure place.** It's even better if you "encrypt" your passwords or just write down hints for them that others won't be able to understand.
- ❖ **Don't use the same password for each account.** If someone does discover your password for one account, all of your other accounts will be vulnerable.
- ❖ **Try to include numbers, symbols and both uppercase and lowercase letters** (if the site allows it).
- ❖ **Random passwords are the strongest.**