Let's Talk About Passwords

You've heard the same advice over and over. Don't write passwords down. Use strong passwords. Change your passwords frequently. Use different strong passwords for every website.

For most people, this is a recipe for disaster! Forgetting your password is super irritating, and makes you spend an annoying amount of time fixing it before you can do whatever you went online to do in the first place. Sure, you can let your computer, your browser, or your mobile device remember the password for you, but if you have to log in on a different device – like here at the library – you still have to be able to come up with that password.

Strong passwords, by definition, are almost impossible to remember. Any password you can remember – one that's short enough, or made up of familiar characters or easy patterns to type on the keyboard – isn't strong enough to actually protect your data. And if you do create a really strong password (long, full of $p3ci@1 ch@r@cters, etc.) and memorize it by brute force, you for sure aren't going to want to change it often!

Studies report that most people use flat-out terrible passwords for most of their accounts. SplashData, a company that markets password-management apps, analyzed millions of leaked passwords from 2018 and determined that the most popular ten passwords chosen were 123456, password, 123456789, 12345678, 12345, 111111, 1234567, sunshine, qwerty, and iloveyou. Hackers wouldn't even need a computer to break into an account like this.

To make it worse, lots of us use the same password for more than one account. The problem with this is all those data breaches we hear about in the news. When the bad guys hack a website, one of the things they often steal is the list of its members' email-and-password combinations. These lists eventually get sold to other bad guys, who use them in a kind of attack called "credential stuffing," a form of identity theft.

To see how credential stuffing works, let's pretend that MadeUpEmail@example.com is your email address. Back in 2005, you signed up for MySpace using your email address as your username (most online sites require this) and Fabulous42 as your password. That's not a great password, but at least it's not on that 'worst passwords' list. It turned out that you didn't like using MySpace, and you abandoned the account shortly after creating it. But you used the same email and password combo when you created your Amazon.com account and subscribed to the New York Times online, among many other things.

Fast forward to somewhere around 2008, when MySpace suffered a data breach that exposed the email addresses and passwords of nearly 360 million accounts. Nobody really heard about this breach until 2016, when the data came up for sale on a shady website. (This really happened.) Let's suppose your data was included.

The buyers of data packages like this then go to sites all over the web – banks, online stores, etc. – and try the email address and password combinations they've obtained. If they can still log in, they've just stolen your account.

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Friends of the Library
Book Sale
Sept. 24* - 28, 2019
at the Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library

Free to the Public:
- Wed. 1 - 8 PM
- Thurs. 10 AM - 8 PM
- Fri. 10 AM - 5 PM
- Sat. 10 AM - 2 PM**

* PATRONS’ NIGHT:
Tues., Sept. 24, 5 - 8 PM
Entrance donation: $10 per person
(Friends’ members donation: $5)
Memberships may be purchased at the door.

FRIENDS’ PRESALE:
Wed., Sept. 25, 10 AM - 1 PM ONLY
Membership required. Just $5 to join!

** SATURDAY IS BAG DAY—$5/bag
Sat. 2 - 3 PM—All books free to Teachers
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Passwords

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social media – everything – and just try logging in with millions of email-password pairs. Using a computer, the process goes pretty fast. So they find out they can get into your Amazon account and possibly your New York Times account, both of which have credit cards associated with them, and now you have a REAL problem. This is why everyone tells you to use a different password for every website.

So how can you figure out a good password? One that’s actually secure? Current wisdom says the most important factor to making a password secure is its length. (Actually, the most important factor is how securely each website stores its members’ email addresses and passwords, but you have no control over that. The most important thing you control is the password’s length.) Many websites require you to use all different kinds of characters, but you actually get a lot more mileage out of just adding a few more regular letters. Industry experts say that a nine-character password can be cracked in around two hours these days, but go up by just one more character and the bad guys need a week’s worth of work to crack it by brute force. They recommend that you use a minimum of twelve.

The second important factor is randomness. If I make up a long password that consists of the names of my children or pets, or dates like birthdays or anniversaries, anyone who knows me can guess my password pretty easily. So however we pick our passwords, they can’t be made up out of personally relevant data. There’s a lot of different methods out there, but here are a couple that I like.

The first method to generate a good password (or more accurately, a passphrase) that’s humanly possible to memorize is to use the Diceware method, invented way back in the 90s by a fellow named Arnold Reinhold. All you need is one or more ordinary six-sided dice and a word list (available, with detailed instructions, at http://world.std.com/~reinhold/diceware.html).

The dice are to make sure your choices are random; left to ourselves, we humans are very bad at random choices. You roll the dice to create five-digit numbers, then look up the numbers in the word list to make up a nonsense sentence with four to six words. Additional dice rolls tell you where to insert capital letters, numerals and/or special characters. Using this method, I got this password “climb> Spear magi choir note”. Since words are easier to remember than strings of characters, I could probably figure out a mnemonic (Hmmm, a guy climbing over a spear, then a Christmas choir singing to the Three Kings…) to remember it.

Another way to compile a passphrase might be to pick a fat book (the dictionary, War and Peace, anything by Ken Follett). Use three dice to pick a page (of course, it won’t be randomly chosen from the whole book; it’ll be a page between 111 and 666, but that’s still a lot), two to pick a line, and one to pick a word in that line. Choose enough words this way to get near the maximum length the website will let you use, and add caps and special characters using the Diceware method. Using a paperback copy of Game of Thrones, I rolled up this one: “had high Maester6 wings Grace”. The important things are it’s long (29 characters including spaces) and it’s random – not crackable by somebody who knows the names of my dogs, for example.

If this method is just too annoying, here’s another: I would have zero trouble remembering this 19-character password: “Rr,tot,Wglomt,Wtd?” because I’d just sing the first bit of Pink’s Raise Your Glass in my head. You just choose any poem, song or quotation that you can easily remember, then use the first letters of the words, keeping capitals and punctuation. Keep going until it’s long enough to satisfy you. This is a lot less random than the dice option, but it’s still much better than “querty” or “password”!

None of this really fixes the heart of the problem, though. It’s not enough to create and remember one good password; you probably have somewhere between a dozen and a hundred password-protected accounts that all ought to have unique passwords. (A quick check of my browser showed that I currently have over 150 saved.) There’s no way on earth to remember 150 separate complicated passwords or long passphrases, much less which service each one goes with.

The ultimate solution is to use a password manager. Password managers are services that keep track of the credentials you use to log in to various websites, and simply supply them when needed. They also generate complicated, random passwords for you when you sign up for a new web service, encrypt them for security and store them in a vault, either on your device or in the cloud. There are many different password managers available, at various costs and offering various features.

If you use Google’s Chrome web browser, it comes with a very nice password manager built in. It’s the thing that offers to remember your password whenever you sign into a new website. It got a major upgrade late last year and now has the ability to generate strong passwords; it even blocks users from setting passwords like “password”! And if you create a login for Google Chrome itself, then enable syncing, you can bring your passwords onto a different PC by just logging in to that computer’s copy of Chrome.

If you use a tablet or smartphone, you may want a password manager app that supports your device in addition to your web browser. Every year, sources like Cnet.com, PC Magazine and TomsGuide publish lists of recommended password managers that can help you compare costs and features. For the purpose of this article, I decided to try out the free version of LastPass, which gets good ratings from multiple sources. I set up an account, put the LastPass app on my iPhone and iPad, and then added the Chrome browser extension on all of the computers that I usually work on.

There were a few hiccups during setup. For one thing, my original master password was just a little bit too strong – I couldn’t type it the same way twice in a row. Thank goodness, unlike many password managers, LastPass lets you reset the master password by sending a text to your phone! But once I fixed that, it’s working pretty easily. It’s learning my passwords as I log into various sites and services, and it alerts me if I’ve used the same password for more than one site. This gives me the opportunity to update it to a strong, random password that I don’t have to know or remember. The only password I’ll need to remember from here out is the master password to LastPass itself, which I chose using all the strategies I’ve covered to make sure it’s (practically) uncrackable!
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Let’s Talk
—by Lisa Maruna,
Marketing & PR Coordinator

Books have always been an essential part of my life. Growing up, our home was always filled with books, and I have vivid memories of my parents reading to me. I even remember the funny voices my dad would make while reading *The Teeny Tiny Woman*, or how I would beg my mom to read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* just one more time.

These memories are wonderful, but studies show reading to children is even more important than forming warm & cozy memories – reading to babies and young children is one of the most effective ways to foster early literacy skills.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that doctors encourage parents to read aloud to their children every day as early as birth! Early, consistent parent-child reading is a key factor responsible for reading success.

I started reading to my daughters shortly after their births, and I’ve found it has made a huge impact on our family. Amidst the chaos of everyday life, we’ve established this peaceful moment at the end of the day where we curl up together on the couch (TV remotes hidden away!) and read. Not only do my husband and I want our girls to experience joy and relaxation, but we also want them to exercise their brains and develop their imaginations.

We keep their books on a low shelf so that they’re easy to reach. We also teach our toddler how to take care of her books and put them back on the shelf when she’s finished reading them. We believe these tactics will help them develop a healthy relationship with reading and learning. It’s never too early for that!


“When parents talk, read, and sing with their babies and toddlers, connections are formed in their young brains. These connections build language, literacy, and social-emotional skills at an important time in a young child’s development. These activities strengthen the bond between parent and child.”

— American Academy of Pediatrics

Nora, Lisa & Lucy (L to R)
Do you ever take home a book from the library only to discover you’ve already read it? Do you like to read books in series, but can’t recall which volume was the last one you read? For many avid readers, it can be hard to keep track of all of the books we read; no one’s memory is perfect! Well, rather than write down all those books (and then possibly misplace your list!), Goodreads.com is a website and app that is perfect for keeping track of books. By creating a free account using your email address and a password, you have access at your fingertips to thousands of book titles, descriptions, and reviews. The app is free in both the App Store (iPhones) and Google Play (Android). Select a book you’ve read on Goodreads and add it to your virtual “shelf,” and Goodreads will keep those lists for you. There are a few default shelves (“Read,” “Currently Reading,” “Want To Read”), but you can create as many shelves as you wish in order to organize your books. Name your shelves for genres (“Historical Fiction,” “Fantasy”), ages or grade levels (“Picture Books,” “Teen”), or anything you want (“Favorites,” “Gift Ideas For Mom,” “Great Audiobook Narrators,” “Books I Own” etc.). You can also write a review of a book for others to see, and read reviews by your friends. Much of the fun of using Goodreads is the social aspect, as you connect to other readers who may be “real life” friends or just other book lovers from around the country. How much you connect on the site is entirely up to you. Users can recommend books to each other, join private or public book discussion groups and participate in the annual Goodreads Choice Awards, where users vote for their favorite books of the year in many categories. There are even giveaways of free books, mailed directly to you from Goodreads! Use the Browse function on Goodreads to sign up for giveaways, to peruse reading lists, and see new releases and recommendations. Check out the Community section of the website to ask a question directly to an author or “follow” the author to be informed of their upcoming works, find book discussion groups and book-related events, or maybe try your hand at a book trivia quiz. Several of our library staff members have accounts where they recommend books they have read lately. As teen librarian, I read and recommend a lot of young adult titles on my Goodreads page. For a demonstration of Goodreads or technical help, ask a librarian. Join the Goodreads reading community and share your love of books!
New & Popular—Children’s

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The Baking Librarians

Summer is a celebratory time so it’s only fitting that National Cookie Dough Day coincides with the very first day of summer! In honor of this event, we’d like to share two recently discovered cookie recipes with you. Maybe this isn’t a question that we often get at the Information Desk, but I’ll bet you’ve always wondered if librarians are good bakers. We’ve officially tested our skills and happily report that we most certainly are! To prove our culinary expertise, we recently had a Staff Cookie Bake-Off and the competition was fierce. Apparently working with children somehow gave the competitive edge as Amy Thomas’s Peanut Butter Cup Cookies won 1st Place and Lydia Gamble’s Chocolate Crinkle Cookies won 2nd Place. Amy is the Assistant Head of Children’s Services and Lydia is the Head of Children’s Services.

We all have our personal favorites when it comes to homemade cookies, and we invite you to try either of these recipes for that special picnic in your backyard this summer. Want more ideas? Our eMagazines are a great resource for culinary tips and recipes. Click here to browse Allrecipes, Bon Appetit, Clean Eating, Food Network Magazine, Martha Stewart Living, Taste of Home, Eating Well, Cooking Light, Paleo Magazine and Southern Living. We also have an extensive collection of cookbooks in print and electronic formats to spark your culinary creativity.

Peanut Butter Cup Cookies

Baked by Amy Thomas

1/2 c butter
1/2 c white sugar
1/2 c packed brown sugar
1/2 c peanut butter
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/4 c flour
2/3 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
15 mini chocolate covered peanut butter cups, unwrapped

1. Cream the butter, white sugar, brown sugar, and peanut butter together. Stir in the egg and vanilla. Sift together the flour, baking soda and salt; stir into the creamed mixture.
2. Drop by tablespoonfuls into the cups of a muffin tin. Cups should be about 1/4 full. Bake at 350 degrees for 8 - 10 minutes, until lightly browned. Remove from oven and immediately press a peanut butter cup into the center of each cookie. Allow the cookies to cool completely before removing from their pan.

Chocolate Crinkle Cookies

Baked by Lydia Gamble

4 oz. unsweetened chocolate, chopped
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 4 pieces
5 oz (1 c plus 2 tablespoons) Measure for Measure gluten-free flour
1 1/2 oz (1/2 c) Dutch-processed cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon xanthan gum (if using other flour)
10 1/2 oz (1 1/2 c packed) brown sugar
3 large eggs
2 tablespoons water
4 teaspoons instant espresso powder (optional)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 1/2 oz (1/2 c) granulated sugar
2 oz (1/2 c) confectioners’ sugar

1. Microwave chocolate and butter in bowl at 50% power, stirring occasionally, until melted, 2-4 minutes; let cool slightly. In separate bowl, whisk flour, cocoa, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and xanthan gum together.
2. In large bowl, whisk brown sugar, eggs, water, expresso powder (if using), and vanilla together. Whisk in cooled chocolate mixture until well combined. Stir in flour with rubber spatula until dough is completely homogeneous. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let dough rest for 30 minutes. (Dough will be very soft and sticky.)
3. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Place granulated sugar and confectioners’ in separate shallow dishes. Working in batches, use 2 soup spoons to portion out 2-tablespoon-size pieces of dough and drop into granulated sugar. Coat each piece of dough with sugar, then roll into rough balls. Transfer balls to confectioners’ sugar, roll to coat evenly, and space 2 inches apart on the prepared sheets.
4. Bake cookies, 1 sheet at a time, until puffed and cracked and edges have begun to set but centers are still soft (cookies will look raw between cracks and seem underdone), about 12 minutes, rotating sheets halfway through baking.
5. Let cookies cool completely on sheet before serving. (Cookies can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days).
**August/September Gallery Exhibit featuring Karen Koch:**
Karen Koch relies on her love of nature and memories of days gone by for inspiration for her art. Believing that being grounded in our past helps us grow toward our future, her recent work explores the universal questions of where have we been and where are we going.
Karen majored in Studio Art and English Literature at Denison University. After graduating, she worked at art galleries and continued painting for several years. When she eventually took a job in another field, she stopped painting for more than a decade. In 2005, she began painting again, first in acrylics then adding elements of collage. Recent work incorporates stitching as a way to add line detail. Thread, yarn, and stitching are also a nod to both her evenings spent embroidering with her mother and days as a seamstress in college. Found objects, grandmother’s buttons, plastic wrappers, maps, and old book pages all find their way into her work. Maps especially are loaded with associations of childhood road trips and the promise of grand adventures. The results are colorful artworks rich in surface texture and personal associations.
Today, Karen is a full-time, professional artist with a studio and gallery on historic Main Street in Hudson. As part of her mission to foster art in the community, she teaches art classes, is active in local arts organizations, and is a board member of a Hudson business group. She is also a co-founder of the Hudson Gallery Hop, a collaborative event designed to promote the arts in Hudson and encourage creativity in all. For more information about Karen, visit [www.lifeneedsart.com](http://www.lifeneedsart.com).

**Scheduling Exhibits**
Artists interested in exhibiting their artwork should submit five electronic files to cnelson@smfpl.org. Anyone wishing to display will be given consideration; however, the Marketing and Public Relations Department will make final decisions based on variety and quality. Click on the [Art Gallery Guidelines](#) for details.
Our beloved turtle Spike turned 35 this summer!

The turtle was purchased 35 years ago by a children’s librarian. There was a naming contest and the winning name was “Spike”. Years later, a local veterinarian who was judging the library’s pet show examined Spike and declared that he was, in fact, a she. However, the masculine name stuck.

Spike has been a fixture at the library for so long, parents who brought their children to see Spike years ago are now bringing their grandchildren.

Noreen Ritchie says, “I could not imagine this library without Spike. It’s the coolest thing about the library. I tell my granddaughter all the time that I used to bring her mommy here to see Spike, and she always gets so excited to visit.” Noreen’s daughter, Justine Urban, says, “I remember bee-lining it to Spike’s tank as a little girl. I always got so excited to see if she’d be on her rock or swimming. There have been a lot of changes to the library since then, but I love that Spike is still here. It brings me back.”

Amy Thomas—Childrens Librarian, Spike the Turtle, Justine Urban, and Autumn Urban (L to R)

Hazel Urban, Noreen Ritchie, Amy Thomas—Childrens Librarian, Justine Urban, and Autumn Urban (L to R)

Hazel Urban, Noreen Ritchie, Spike the turtle, and Amy Thomas—Childrens Librarian (L to R)
Read for the Stars
at the Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library

We broke a record this year with over 2,837 participating readers! Thank you for helping make Summer Reading 2019 such a huge success. Thank you to our generous sponsors, The Rotary Club of Stow-Munroe Falls and the Friends of the Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library for providing exciting prizes for our readers.

Annika (L) was excited to win her Read for the Stars Bag, provided by the Rotary Club of Stow and Munroe Falls, and proudly shows off her prize book. Sisters Aveni and Reese (R) were also excited to win their book bags.

The Summer Reading program is a good way to prevent the “summer slide” which is a decline in reading ability and other academic skills that can occur over the summer months when school isn’t in session. Studies show that children who don’t read during summer vacation slip in reading ability by the time school rolls around again.

See you next year!