

Lancaster Senior Citizen Center

Computer Tip No. 15

Password Protection by Encryption

Given enough time with the correct tools, any hacker can break into a computer and access the files. That's why it is to your benefit to use a correct type of password. To prevent hackers from breaking your password is very simple, but first let's talk about the passwords that you should not use.

Don't use a password that is in the dictionary. Password cracking software will take about 10 seconds to crack any word that is in the dictionary. The software uses a dictionary file that contains every word in the dictionary.

How about a birthday? Bad news, that would be cracked even quicker.

So what would be the best type of password to use? Look at the following.

Length of Time to Crack a Password

<u>Password length</u>	<u>Lower Case</u>	<u>Upper/Lower & Numbers</u>
3	2 seconds	1 minute
4	1 minute	2.5 hours
5	20 minutes	9 days
6	8.7 hours	2 years

So the best password that you can create is by mixing upper and lower case letters with numbers. Using that combination and 7 digits "7J3mX5s" would take over 230 years to crack. It's hard to remember, but it sure is safe.