Cyber Security Basics For Everyone

Created by Michaela Watkins | www.mwatkins.net
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For most of us, when we stop to think about cyber security we do so for a few seconds and often wish we understood it more, and because we don't understand it too much we just forget about it for a while.

It does not need to be complicated and as long as you follow a few basic principles you will suddenly find you are way ahead of many others and you will have made it far harder for anyone to hack into your accounts.

Hackers will always look for the easy way in. Facebook is an example because it is so easy to create an account using someone else's name and then get their friends to become friends. It's easy to assume a friend has created a new account as the existing one just got too messy or too much. This is just one place where it all starts. The important thing is to protect what you have already got.

The only thing I am going to cover here is email and social media security. These are fundamentally the two most important areas that we all should know about and implement as standard.

TWO-STEP-VERIFICATION

A mobile phone is useful

Why? Because it is your first line of defence in keeping safe. Secondly it is important to know that you do not need a smartphone - any mobile phone will do as long as it can receive a text message. If you have a smartphone then you can also use an authenticator app.

Mobile phones are the one thing that most of us do not share, they are purely individual devices and this makes them perfect in ensuring that you are indeed you.

So, what has a text message got to do with Facebook or email? The answer is simple.

If you purchase a new computer, tablet or phone and then sign into your Facebook or email etc then you will be sent a text message or get a similar warning on your phone. A notification usually asks you to confirm it is you by pressing a button. A text message will contain a unique one time code that you can type into the app or website to confirm. There is no need to write these codes down as they expire once used.

Setting up is simple, just follow the links below for more information.

For your Microsoft account / Email / OneDrive / Office365 ;
https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/help/12408/microsoft-account-how-to-use-two-step-verification

For Google / Gmail etc;
https://www.google.com/landing/2step/

Yahoo Mail;
https://help.yahoo.com/kb/SLN5013.html

Facebook;
https://www.facebook.com/help/148233965247823

For any other online account please check your account security settings or ask your provider.

A quick note about passwords

Please do not use the same password for everything. It is a great idea to:

- Have a separate email address just for social media accounts like Facebook
- Use a password manager like Keepass / Lastpass / Lockbox

A password manager is better than storing your passwords in your web browser. A password manager uses a master password to access all your stored passwords.

Stay safe out there.