

# Something You Know: Password

## Password is the most common way to prove who you are

- ▶ Adopted by various networking websites and applications
- ▶ The security of the password-based authentication mechanism depends on the strength of the selected password, i.e., the chance attacker can guess the password.
- ▶ The trade-off between the password security and convenience:
  - Weak password is easy to memorize, but also easy to be guessed.
  - Complex password is strong but results in frustrated users



Nanyang Technological University

Sign in with your organizational account

Sign in

Sign in using your network account e.g

- username@staff.main.ntu.edu.sg
- username@student.main.ntu.edu.sg
- username@assoc.main.ntu.edu.sg
- username@niestaff.cluster.nie.edu.sg
- username@niestudent.cluster.nie.edu.sg

# Weak Password

A weak password is a character combination that is easy for friends, bad actors or password-hacking software to guess

- ▶ Short passwords: a single word (e.g., password) or numerical phrase (e.g., 12345).
- ▶ Recognizable keystroke patterns: take a look at your keyboard and find QWERTY
- ▶ Personal information in passwords: e.g., date of birth, address, name
- ▶ Repeated letters or numbers: e.g., 55555, aaaa

Password Popularity – Top 20

Rank	Password	Number of Users with Password (absolute)
1	123456	290731
2	12345	79078
3	123456789	76790
4	Password	61958
5	iloveyou	51622
6	princess	35231
7	rockyou	22588
8	1234567	21726
9	12345678	20553
10	abc123	17542

Rank	Password	Number of Users with Password (absolute)
11	Nicole	17168
12	Daniel	16409
13	babygirl	16094
14	monkey	15294
15	Jessica	15162
16	Lovely	14950
17	michael	14898
18	Ashley	14329
19	654321	13984
20	Qwerty	13856

# Strong Password

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A strong password is a long combination of unique characters that is difficult for other people to guess or technology to crack

- ▶ Lengthy combinations: long passwords with various character types, such as numbers, letters and symbols, e.g., N0r+Hc^R0|in^99
- ▶ Mnemonic: create passwords inspired by events only notable to you, e.g., a string of first letters of a meaningful sentence
- ▶ Non-dictionary words: dictionary words — formal or slang — are publicly known combinations of characters stored in a database that cybercriminals access using software to input thousands of passwords per second

A strong authentication system requires users to change their password periodically (e.g., every six months), and the new passwords must be different from the used ones.

# Something You Have

## Different types of possessions for authentication

- ▶ Tokens
- ▶ Smartcards: a physical card + a smart card reader



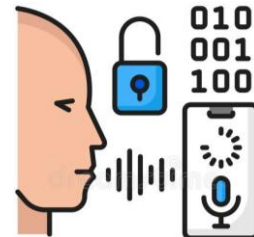
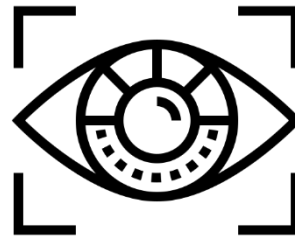
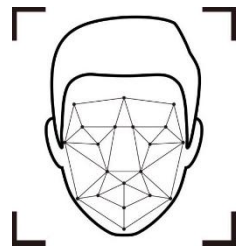
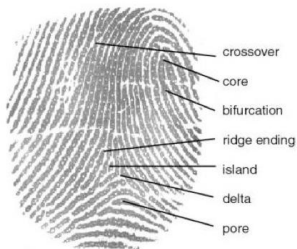
## Limitations of physical belongings

- ▶ Easy to get lost. Therefore, it is safer to combine users' knowledge with physical belongings. This is referred to as **two-factor authentication**
- ▶ High cost (e.g., \$15-\$25, banks with million customers).
- ▶ Possible to get damaged (e.g., card in the washing machine, battery death)
- ▶ Non-standard algorithms.

# Something You Are

## Biometrics measure some physical characteristic

- ▶ Fingerprint, face recognition, retina scanners, voice, etc.
- ▶ Can be extremely accurate and fast



## Limitations of biometrics

- ▶ Private, but not secret. Maybe encoded on your glass, door handle
- ▶ Revocation is difficult: Sorry, your iris has been compromised, please create a new one...

