CYBERSECURITY FOR
SMALL BUSINESS

CYBERSECURITY BASICS

Cyber criminals target companies of all sizes.

Knowing some cybersecurity basics and putting them in practice will help you protect your business and reduce the risk of a cyber attack.

PROTECT
YOUR FILES & DEVICES

Update your software

This includes your apps, web browsers, and operating systems. Set updates to happen automatically.

Secure your files

Back up important files offline, on an external hard drive, or in the cloud. Make sure you store your paper files securely, too.

Require passwords

Use passwords for all laptops, tablets, and smartphones. Don't leave these devices unattended in public places.

Encrypt devices

Encrypt devices and other media that contain sensitive personal information. This includes laptops, tablets, smartphones, removable drives, backup tapes, and cloud storage solutions.

Use multi-factor authentication

Require multi-factor authentication to access areas of your network with sensitive information. This requires additional steps beyond logging in with a password — like a temporary code on a smartphone or a key that's inserted into a computer.

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PROTECT YOUR WIRELESS NETWORK

Secure your router

Change the default name and password, turn off remote management, and log out as the administrator once the router is set up.

Use at least WPA2 encryption

Make sure your router offers WPA2 or WPA3 encryption, and that it's turned on. Encryption protects information sent over your network so it can't be read by outsiders.

MAKE SMART SECURITY YOUR BUSINESS AS USUAL

Require strong passwords

A strong password is at least 12 characters that are a mix of numbers, symbols, and capital lowercase letters.

Never reuse passwords and don't share them on the phone, in texts, or by email.

Limit the number of unsuccessful log-in attempts to limit password-guessing attacks.

Train all staff

Create a culture of security by implementing a regular schedule of employee training. Update employees as you find out about new risks and vulnerabilities. If employees don't attend, consider blocking their access to the network.

Have a plan

Have a plan for saving data, running the business, and notifying customers if you experience a breach. The FTC's *Data Breach Response: A Guide for Business* gives steps you can take. You can find it at FTC.gov/DataBreach.

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Understanding THE NIST CYBERSECURITY FRAMEWORK

You may have heard about the NIST Cybersecurity Framework, but what exactly is it?

And does it apply to you?

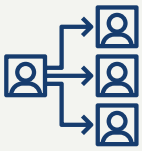
NIST is the National Institute of Standards and Technology at the U.S. Department of Commerce. The NIST Cybersecurity Framework helps businesses of all sizes better understand, manage, and reduce their cybersecurity risk and protect their networks and data. The Framework is voluntary. It gives your business an outline of best practices to help you decide where to focus your time and money for cybersecurity protection.

You can put the NIST Cybersecurity Framework to work in your business in these five areas: Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover.

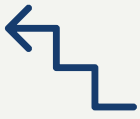
1. IDENTIFY

Make a list of all equipment, software, and data you use, including laptops, smartphones, tablets, and point-of-sale devices.

Create and share a company cybersecurity policy that covers:



Roles and responsibilities for employees, vendors, and anyone else with access to sensitive data.



Steps to take to protect against an attack and limit the damage if one occurs.

2. PROTECT

- Control who logs on to your network and uses your computers and other devices.
- Use security software to protect data.
- Encrypt sensitive data, at rest and in transit.
- Conduct regular backups of data.
- Update security software regularly, automating those updates if possible.
- Have formal policies for safely disposing of electronic files and old devices.
- Train everyone who uses your computers, devices, and network about cybersecurity. You can help employees understand their personal risk in addition to their crucial role in the workplace.

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3. DETECT

Monitor your computers for unauthorized personnel access, devices (like USB drives), and software.

Check your network for unauthorized users or connections.

Investigate any unusual activities on your network or by your staff.

4. RESPOND

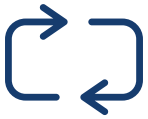
Have a plan for:

- Notifying customers, employees, and others whose data may be at risk.
- Keeping business operations up and running.
- Reporting the attack to law enforcement and other authorities.
- Investigating and containing an attack.
- Updating your cybersecurity policy and plan with lessons learned.
- Preparing for inadvertent events (like weather emergencies) that may put data at risk.

Test your plan regularly.

5. RECOVER

After an attack:



Repair and restore the equipment and parts of your network that were affected.

Keep employees and customers informed of your response and recovery activities.

For more information on the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and resources for small businesses, go to NIST.gov/CyberFramework and NIST.gov/Programs-Projects/Small-Business-Corner-SBC.

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PHYSICAL SECURITY

Cybersecurity begins with strong physical security.

Lapses in physical security can expose sensitive company data to identity theft, with potentially serious consequences. For example:

An employee accidentally leaves a flash drive on a coffeehouse table. When he returns hours later to get it, the drive — with hundreds of Social Security numbers saved on it — is gone.

Another employee throws stacks of old company bank records into a trash can, where a criminal finds them after business hours.

A burglar steals files and computers from your office after entering through an unlocked window.

HOW TO PROTECT EQUIPMENT & PAPER FILES

Here are some tips for protecting information in paper files and on hard drives, flash drives, laptops, point-of-sale devices, and other equipment.

Store securely

When paper files or electronic devices contain sensitive information, store them in a locked cabinet or room.

Limit physical access

When records or devices contain sensitive data, allow access only to those who need it.

Send reminders

Remind employees to put paper files in locked file cabinets, log out of your network and applications, and never leave files or devices with sensitive data unattended.

Keep stock

Keep track of and secure any devices that collect sensitive customer information. Only keep files and data you need and know who has access to them.

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