# Guidelines and Best Practices for Passwords

**Introduction:**

Passwords are the keys used to protect access to your online information - your username and password are not to be shared with anyone!

**Best Practices:**

In order to make it difficult for *unauthorized individuals* to guess your passwords and break into your accounts, passwords must be hard to guess and reasonably complex.

See Steps 1-3 for helping choose a strong password with reasonable complexity.
Choosing a strong password that is easy to remember, but hard for someone else to guess can be difficult. Follow these simple steps to create hard to guess passwords that you can remember without having to write them down.

The technique described here is to create your password from a phrase - the pass-phrase - or a favourite word using complexity.

**Step 1:** Think about things you remember easily
- The idea in this step is to think of the types of things that you remember easily. For example, sayings, a line from a song, poem, movie or book, movie titles, places or events. Or, even a favourite word…
- If you base your pass-phrase on a subject that is memorable to you, it will be easier to remember.

**Step 2:** Think of a pass-phrase or favourite word
- Now, think of a pass-phrase. Choose a phrase that has several words, and is easily remembered. For example: *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*.
- Alternately, think of a favourite word. For example: *complexity* or *homemade*

**Step 3:** Make up the password from the pass-phrase or favourite word
- For the pass-phrase: Take the first one or two letters from each word in the phrase - this is the base part of the password - remember, it must be at least <u>10 characters long.</u> For example: *bi an te ex ad*.
- Now, make one or two of the letters UPPERCASE *BI an Te ex ad*.
- Now, add numbers and/or punctuation marks to the beginning or middle of the password *5BI an Te ex ad*.

- For the favourite word: Remember it must be 10 characters long. Take one of the vowels and change to a number, then take one of the consonants and make it an uppercase letter. For example: *c0mplexitY* or *Homemad3*

That's it! Congratulations - you now have a complex password. The next step is remembering it without writing it down.

**Step 4:** More memory tricks for passwords
- Check to make sure you can type the password easily - you will need to type it in frequently, so make it easy on yourself. Adjust the password if needed.
- Repetition is the key to memory. After changing your password, practice typing in your new password several times on the day that you change it.

**The rules for MyHealthPortal account passwords**
1. Must contain a minimum of 10 characters (more is always better).
2. Must contain at least 1 characters from each of the following categories:
   a. English upper case characters (A-Z).
   b. English lower case characters (a-z).
   c. Base 10 digits (0-9).
3. Should not contain all or part of the user name (the name or initials used to log in).
4. Avoid passwords that contain words without complexity, e.g. firetruck

*Are there other ways of securing my passwords in case I can't memorize them?*

It's best to try to keep your passwords in your head:
- Do not write your passwords down on notes on or near your computer.
- Do not store your passwords on your computer unless they're encrypted.
- Do not use automatic or scripted logon processes.
- Do not keep a hard copy file folder of your passwords.
- Do not give your passwords to others; not anyone – you are accountable!. Be smart and don't share your passwords with anyone.

*What does phishing have to do with passwords?*

*Hackers try to trick people into giving away their passwords and other personal information by sending fake e-mail* messages that appear to be from familiar Web sites such as eBay or a local bank. Because the e-mails look official, some people provide the requested information. Keep in mind that no one from Interior Health will ever ask you to reveal your password.

*What should I do if I think someone has obtained my password?*

If you suspect your MyHealthPortal account or password has been compromised, change your password immediately and report the incident to MyHealthPortal support, toll free 1-844-870-4756