

How to create a password system that's secure and memorable

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To help prevent unauthorized access to personal information, many websites now require a password that consists of six or more characters, numbers and letters, and uppercase and lowercase letters. Creating a password that meets the requirements and being something you can remember doesn't have to be a challenge.

I have created a password system that you can use or modify for your own use to create memorable passwords. The system divides the password into 3 memorable parts that create a secure 8-character password when put together:

Part 1 – First 3 letters of my name **[Mar]**

Part 2 – First 3 letters of the website – Yahoo would be **[Yah]**

Part 3 – Last 2 numbers of my birth year **[68]**

To summarize, my Yahoo password under this system would be **[Mar]+[Yah]+[68]** or MarYah68. Notice that I use uppercase letters as the first letter of each part for added security.

Benefits of this system are that a different password is used on each website. This is important because if hackers were able to access your password on a particular website, that password wouldn't work to access your data on other websites.

You should use your own variation of this system. Here's some suggestions:

- Capitalize the MIDDLE or LAST letter in each part
- Use the first 3 letters of your MIDDLE or LAST name, the name of someone special, or your initials.
- For the numbers part of the system, use a 2 or 4-digit number from your birth year, graduation year, SS#, phone number or street number. For added security you could use a different number based on the type of website – for example you could use part of your SS# for financial websites, your graduation year for social networking websites, and birth year for everything else.
- Add a special character such as ! ? # at the beginning, end or memorable location in the system.

You may also want to visit the following websites for ideas on creating a memorable password system:

<http://corvusconsulting.ca/2007/10/building-strong-and-memorable-passwords-part-4-of-4/>

<http://www.f-secure.com/weblog/archives/00001691.html>