

# What is the smartest and safest way to store passwords?

Passwords keep valuable data safe from malicious actors, so it's important to make their safe storage an absolute priority.

These days, we all have so many digital accounts that it's almost impossible to remember the login details for each one. But without these important bits of data, we can't get where we need to go online. So how should you store your passwords so they are kept safe, not lost or stolen?

## 1. Software Password Manager

Picture 1 of What is the smartest and safest way to store passwords?

Password management software is one of the most popular methods of storing passwords today. In the US alone, 45 million Americans use a password manager to keep their logins secure. So what can these programs offer?

Password managers are applications that you can install to store passwords, codes, usernames, and other important information that you want to keep safe. These apps are usually free to download, although many offer additional features for a flat fee or subscription, such as biometric login.

Take a look at DashLane, a popular password manager, to better understand how these products work.

The DashLane app uses a freemium model where you can use the basic version for free or the premium version for a fee. The app is extremely easy to use and allows you to personalize your experience by choosing different features, such as hack alerts and password autofill for your daily logins.

DashLane uses a variety of security features to keep users' data safe, including two-factor authentication, strong password requirements, AES-256 encryption, and a Zero-knowledge system. Dashlane can also provide users with strong passwords to protect their accounts and provide instant security alerts about breaches.

Some trusted antivirus programs, such as McAfee and Norton, also offer users a password manager as part of their plans. So, before you pay for a password manager, check that you already have access to a password manager through your chosen antivirus provider.

Many reputable password managers use a high level of security to protect user data, but this does not make them immune to attacks. While such apps don't easily commit breaches, there have been numerous cases of data theft in the past, such as the multiple LastPass hacks that occurred throughout 2022. In August and December In 2022, LastPass's system was compromised by malicious actors.

While LastPass has assured users that their passwords won't be stolen, breaches like these also raise questions about the real security of software password managers.

## 2. Flash drive (USB)

Picture 2 of What is the smartest and safest way to store passwords?

Using a flash drive allows you to store your passwords in offline settings. You may have used flash drives in the past to store important files and have the option to access them on multiple devices. But these nifty little devices can also be used to store your passwords and other important logins.

Of course, flash drives are not specifically designed to be secure. But if you don't trust password managers and you're not familiar with the other storage options available, using a flash drive can be a simple but effective method. How you store the password on the flash drive is up to you. You can keep them in a Word file, Excel sheet or PDF, or even use your own code to better protect them.

If you're concerned about the low security of conventional flash drives, you can purchase an encrypted drive to more effectively protect your information. These devices can often also provide password protection. Examples of encrypted flash drives include Kingston IronKey and Apricorn Aegis Secure Key 3NXC.

However, if you plan to use a flash drive to store your passwords, you must ensure that it is always kept in a safe place, ideally in your home. Such small devices are extremely easy to lose, and if you're using a standard drive, anyone can access the information stored on it if they happen to get hold of your flash drive.

## 3. Paper

Picture 3 of What is the smartest and safest way to store passwords?

You might think it's unwise to use something as simple as paper to store your passwords. But paper is a great way to keep your passwords safe in an offline environment, completely isolated from remote attacks.

Having a hard copy of your passwords also prevents you from losing them due to technical problems, which is always a risk when using any type of digital storage method such as flash drives and password managers .

Many people use simple notebooks to store their passwords, as they are more reliable than a piece of paper and provide more room to add additional login information over time. However, like flash drives, laptops are physical devices that can be easily lost. So, if you want to use this method of storing passwords, make sure you have a safe and secret hiding place where you can keep your credentials safe.

## Some additional tips

In addition to the caching methods above, you should also employ additional tactics to ensure your credentials don't fall into the wrong hands.

For example, consider breaking up your passwords. This method involves storing different parts of your password in different locations. You can store the first half on a password manager and the other half in a

notebook kept in a safe place.

This makes it much harder for bad guys to access all your passwords. The chances of your accounts being breached are greatly reduced when you split them this way.

You should also reset your password from time to time. This may seem inconvenient, but allows you to stay one step ahead of cybercriminals by updating your credentials, rendering old passwords useless.

Finally, you should always make sure that your password is complex. Simple passwords are quick and easy to remember, but also make it easier for cybercriminals to crack. Using capital letters, symbols, and numbers can be of great help in making your passwords more complex and elusive.

Passwords keep valuable data safe from malicious actors, so it's important to make their safe storage an absolute priority. You're better off choosing safety over convenience when it comes to private data. So, if you want to secure your password, make sure you're using an effective method.

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