**Is Your Password Really Protecting You?**

Passwords evolved as a military strategy. Before computers, passwords were used by soldiers in WWII. U.S. paratroopers used passwords and counter passwords as unique methods of identification on D-Day and the Battle of Normandy in 1944. Counter passwords were in challenge-and-response format. During WWII, passwords and counter passwords changed every three days. Passwords as we know them today were not invented until 1972, and did not come into use until 1974.

Your privacy is largely dependent on password protection. Things like your ATM password, cell phone password, computer access, email accounts, online banking, Wifi network keys, social media accounts, security systems, and password protected websites rely on privacy.

Multiple passwords are a must. The average person regularly visits 25 password protected sites but only uses six different passwords. Seventy-three percent of people use the same password for multiple sites. Thirty-three percent of people use the same password for every site. Thirty-two percent of people save passwords and other login information on a cell phone. Sixty-two percent of smartphone owners do not use a passcode to secure their phone.

Most people use weak passwords. Complicated passwords are the key to protection and are much harder to hack. Four percent of people use the word “password” as their password. Twenty-five percent of the top 20 most used passwords are first names. An expert hacker can crack the average password in under 3 minutes. Five percent of men use their partners name in passwords. Thirty percent of women use their partner’s name in passwords. The average password is six characters long and all lowercase letters.

The top ten weakest passwords of 2012 were: password, 123456, 12345678, abc123, qwerty, monkey, letmein, dragon, 111111, baseball.

Here are some things that you should do when creating a password. Make your password eight characters or more. Use a mix of all four character types, using uppercase, lowercase, numbers, and special characters. Choose a password that you will remember. Test your password to make sure it is strong enough. Set up a password recovery method. Lastly, change your password twice a year.

Here are some things you should not do when creating a password. You should never use public information like a name, birthday or anniversary date. Never use complete words. Also, never write your password down. If you must write it down, use hints rather than the actual password. Do not use the same password for multiple accounts. Do not log in to your private accounts on public computers. This information could be saved and the next person could access it. Do not ever tell anyone your password.

**Infographic of this Article:**

Found at (<https://www.instantcheckmate.com/crimewire/post/is-your-password-really-protecting-you>)

Questions to Consider:

1. The article and the infographic share the same information, what are the similarities between them? Differences?
2. Which format do you prefer? Why?