

Computer Security

1. Go straight to the retailer's site. Rather than browse to online retailers through a search engine where you may encounter malicious links, type the store's URL directly in your browser.
2. Be strict about passwords. Use a different password for each site, don't let the browser store passwords for you, and consider using a password manager instead of writing down all your passwords manually.
3. Look for the signs of security. Always look for the https prefix in the URL and the padlock icon in the browser's status bar.
4. Where possible, use a secure online payment service like PayPal. Check your PayPal accounts frequently to look out for any fraud.
5. Designate one credit card for online transactions - never use a debit card online.
6. Watch for seasonal scams. Be cautious with e-mails claiming to be shipping confirmation or package alerts that force you to open a file attachment. Delete any message that claims to provide tracking information but doesn't include a tracking number. Your best bet is to track a package through the retailer's or shipper's Web site.
7. Don't keep your personal or financial information, including account passwords, on your computer.
8. Don't give out personal or financial information to vendors over the phone, through the mail, or online unless you are absolutely certain that your contact is legitimate.
9. Keep a record of what you pay for and always check your online purchases off against your statement[s].
10. Keep your operating system, anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software up to date on every computer you own/use.