

Home Network Security Guide

Protecting your family's digital life starts at home. This guide will help you create a safer online environment for everyone in your household.

 FAMILY SECURITY

 HOME PROTECTION



Why Home Network Security Matters



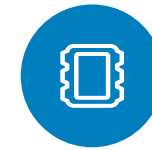
Protect Personal Information

Your home network connects to bank accounts, medical records, and private photos. A secure network keeps this sensitive data safe from hackers and identity thieves.



Keep Kids Safe Online

Children are especially vulnerable to online threats. Network security helps protect them from inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and predators while they explore the digital world.



Secure All Your Devices

From smartphones to smart TVs, every connected device is a potential entry point. Securing your network protects everything in your home at once.

Router Setup Basics

Step 1: Change Default Login

Your router comes with a default username and password that hackers already know. Change these immediately to something unique.

Step 2: Update Router Name

Don't broadcast your router model or personal info. Choose a generic name like "Home WiFi" instead of "Smith Family Netgear Router."

Step 3: Enable WPA3 Encryption

This is the strongest WiFi security available. If your router doesn't support WPA3, use WPA2 instead. Never use WEP or leave your network open.



Pro Tip: Most routers have a setup app that makes these changes easy. Check your router's box or manual for download instructions.

Creating Strong WiFi Passwords

01

Make it Long

Use at least 12-16 characters. Longer passwords are exponentially harder to crack.

02

Mix It Up

Combine uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters like @#\$%.

03

Avoid Personal Info

Don't use birthdays, names, addresses, or other information someone could guess or find online.

04

Use Passphrases

String together random words like "Purple!Bicycle37Mountain@Dance" - easy to remember, hard to crack.

Remember: Your WiFi password is the key to your digital home. Make it strong and keep it private.



Set Up a Guest Network



Why You Need One

A guest network creates a separate WiFi connection for visitors, keeping your main network and all your personal devices protected.

Benefits for Your Family

- Visitors can't access your shared files, printers, or smart home devices
- If a guest's device is infected with malware, it won't spread to your network
- You control when the guest network is active
- Easy to share a simple password without compromising your main network security

Keep Everything Updated

Monthly: Router Firmware

Check for router updates at least once a month. Most modern routers can update automatically - turn this feature on in your settings.

1

2


Weekly: Device Software

Enable automatic updates on all phones, tablets, computers, and smart home devices. These patches fix security vulnerabilities quickly.

3

Quarterly: Security Review

Every three months, review your network settings and connected devices. Remove anything you no longer use and verify all security settings are still enabled.

 **Set a Reminder:** Add a monthly calendar reminder to check for router updates. It only takes 5 minutes and could save you from a serious security breach.



Know What's Connected

Create Your Device Inventory

You might be surprised by how many devices connect to your network. Make a list of everything, including:

- Smartphones and tablets
- Laptops and desktop computers
- Smart TVs and streaming devices
- Gaming consoles
- Smart home devices (thermostats, cameras, doorbells)
- Voice assistants
- Printers and scanners
- Wearable devices and smart watches

Log into your router's admin panel regularly to see all connected devices. If you spot something unfamiliar, investigate immediately and remove it if necessary.

Parental Controls & DNS Filtering



What is DNS Filtering?

DNS filtering blocks access to harmful websites before they load. It's like having a security guard check every website request before letting it through to your family's devices.



Free Family-Friendly Options

Services like OpenDNS Family Shield or Cloudflare for Families are completely free and block adult content, malware, and phishing sites automatically across all devices on your network.



How to Set It Up

Change your router's DNS settings to point to a family-friendly DNS server. This usually takes just 5 minutes and protects every device automatically - no software installation needed.

Your Home Network Security Checklist

- ☐ Router is secured with a strong, unique password
- ☐ WPA3 or WPA2 encryption is enabled
- ☐ Guest network is set up for visitors
- ☐ Automatic firmware updates are enabled
- ☐ Family-friendly DNS filtering is active
- ☐ Device inventory is documented and reviewed regularly
- ☐ Unknown devices are blocked or investigated

Print this checklist and review it every few months to ensure your network stays secure as your family's needs change.

About CSNP

Making cybersecurity knowledge accessible to everyone through education, community, and practical resources.

Our Free Programs

- Business & Non-Profit Security
- Family Cybersecurity
- Kids Safety
- Senior Digital Safety
- Women's Security
- Parents & Educators

Everything we offer is completely free. Visit **csnp.org** to learn more, or explore our resource library at **csnp.org/resources** for guides, tutorials, and tools to keep your family safe online.