

# How to Change Passwords on Any Device (Windows, Mac, Smartphone)



It may seem like a simple thing, but changing your password is a fact of life, and knowing how to do it is something we here at How-To Geek generally take for granted, but the question is: do you know how to change your password?

It's a fairly routine process once you know what you're doing, but assuming that everyone knows exactly how it's done doesn't make it so. Today, we want to show you how to change your password on Windows (7, 8.1 & 10), OS X, Android, and iOS (iPhone and iPad).

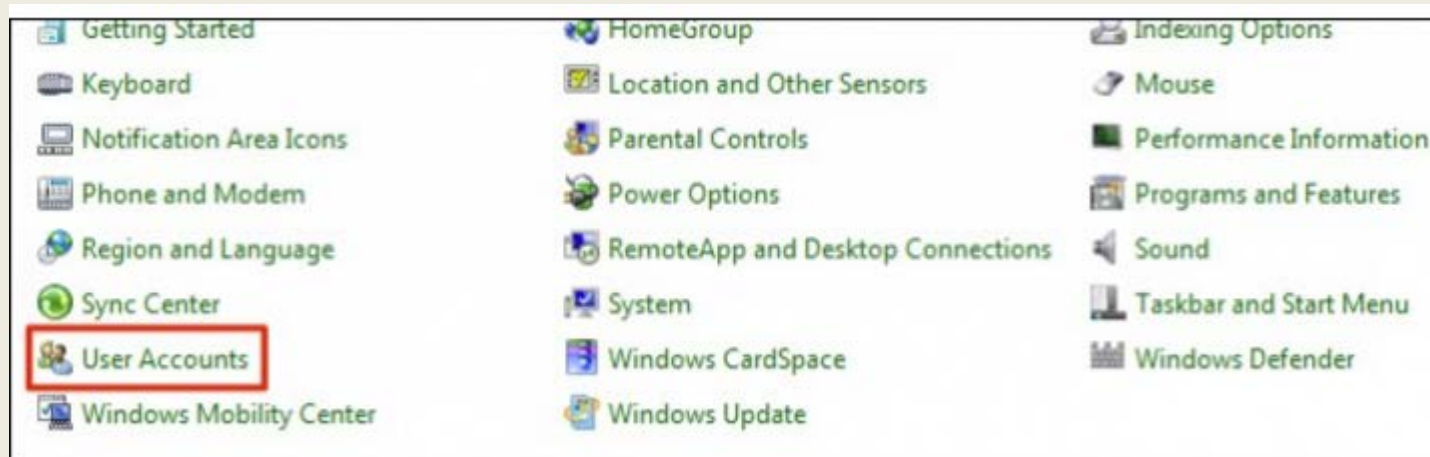
We hope then, armed with this new knowledge, that you'll take a moment to change your password on your devices because while it isn't the most secure method of locking out snoops and hackers, it is still often the first and only line of defense against them.

## Changing Your Password on Windows

To change your password on Windows, you will need to go through the following steps.





### Windows 7


Windows 7 is still the choice of a vast majority of Windows users and as such, needs to be addressed first. To change your password, you'll first need to open the Control Panel and click "User Accounts".



In your user account screen, click “Change your password”.

Make changes to your user account


- [Change your password](#)
- [Remove your password](#)
- [Change your picture](#)
-  [Change your account name](#)
-  [Change your account type](#)
  
-  [Manage another account](#)
-  [Change User Account Control settings](#)



**Matt Klein**  
Administrator  
Password protected

You will first need to enter your current password and then you can change it to the new one.

Change your password

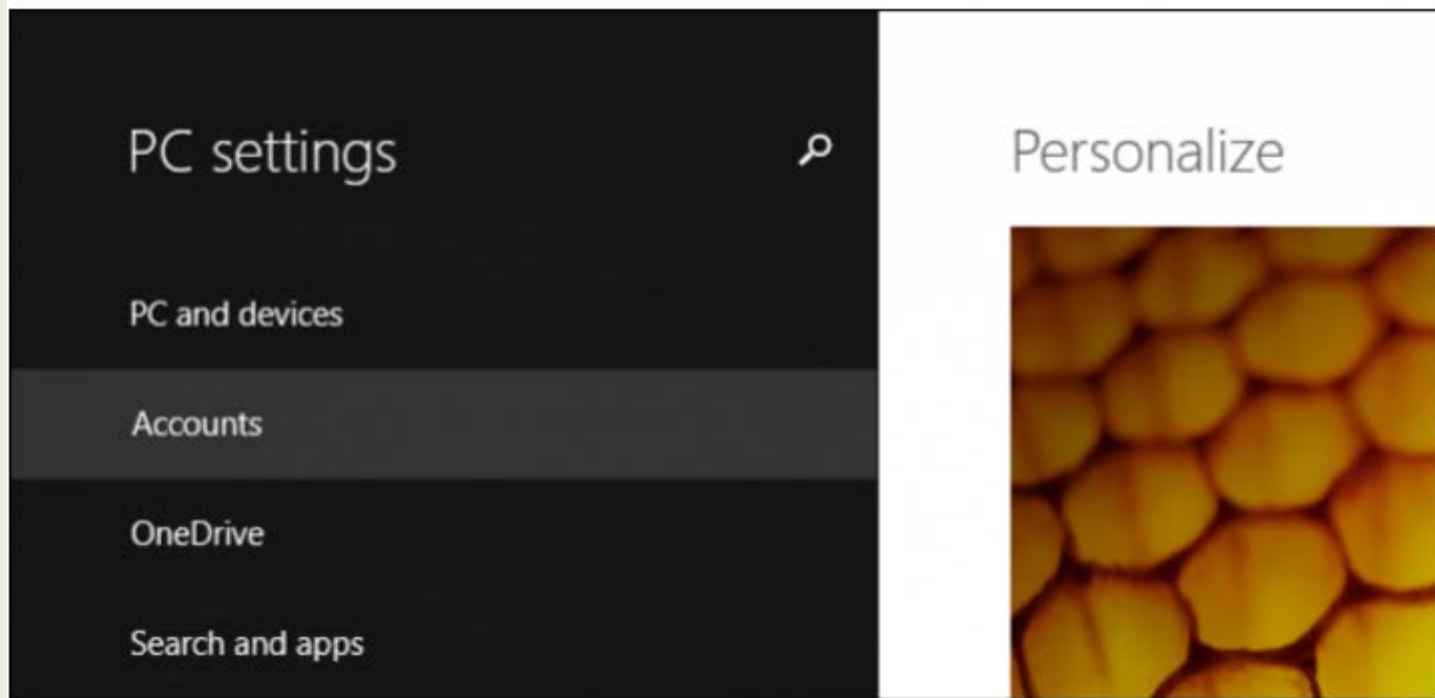
 **Matt Klein**  
Administrator  
Password protected

If your password contains capital letters, they must be typed the same way every time you log on.  
[How to create a strong password](#)

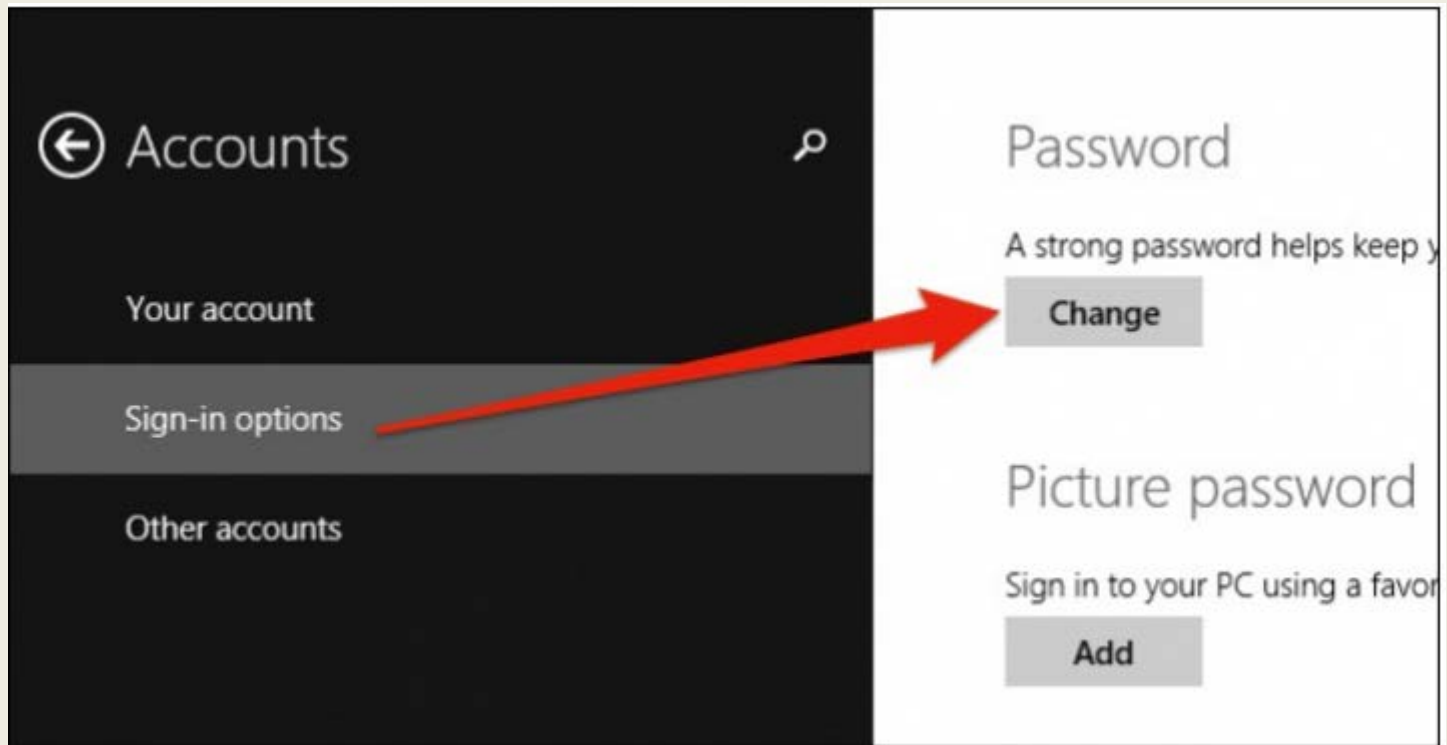
The password hint will be visible to everyone who uses this computer.  
[What is a password hint?](#)

## Windows 8.1

In the PC settings, click on “Accounts”.



On the Accounts screen, click the “Change” button under the Password heading.



You will first need to enter your current password.

## Change your password

First, confirm your current password.

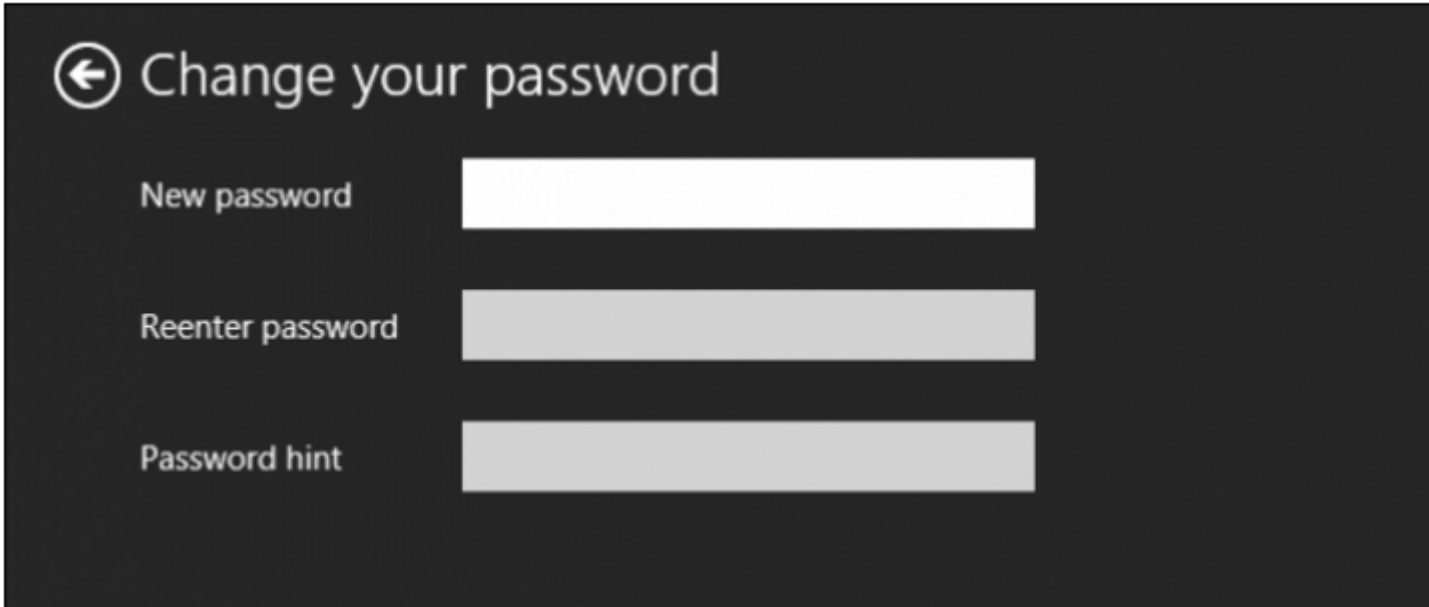


Matt

Current password



Once you enter your current password, you can then change it to something new.



← Change your password

New password

Reenter password

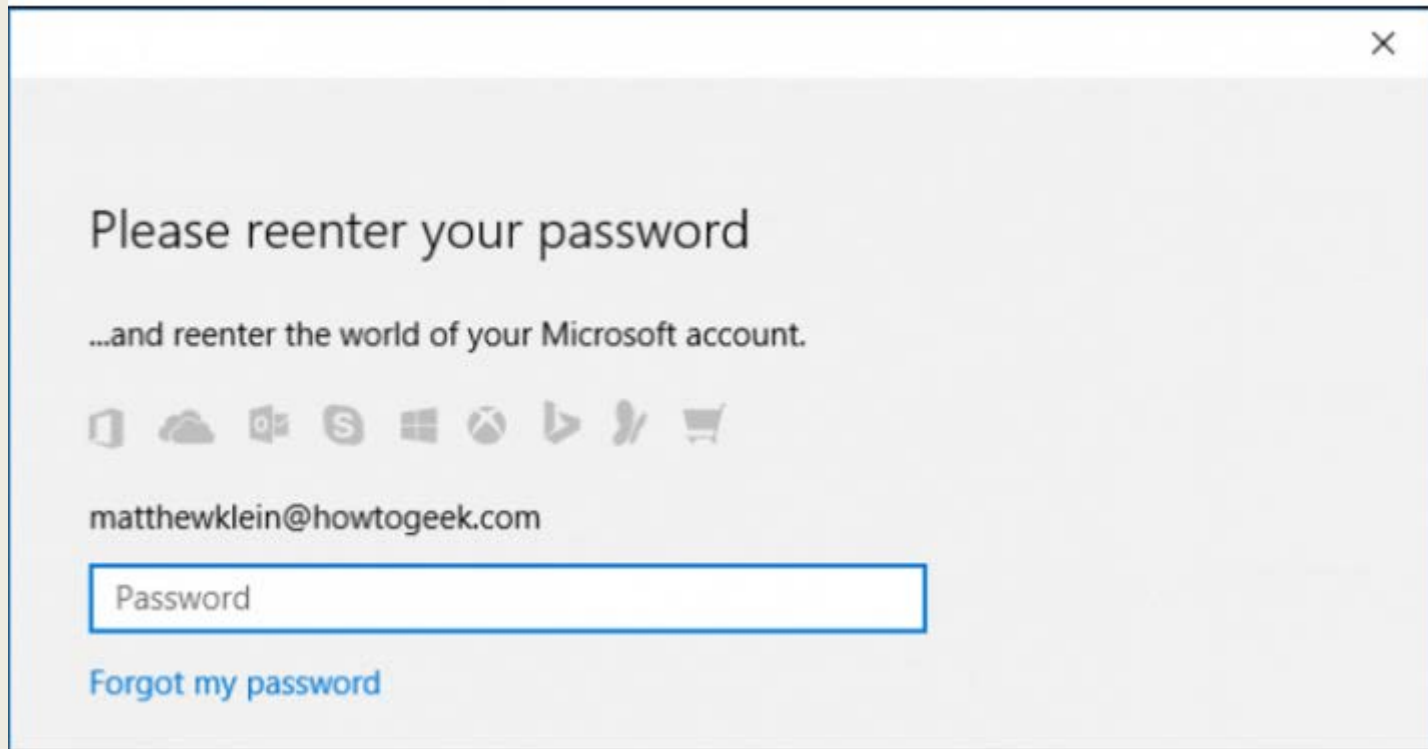
Password hint

## Windows 10

In Windows 10, the PC settings are now simply called Settings, and the way to change your password is still located in the Accounts section. In the Accounts section, click on “Sign-in options” and then click “Change” under the “Password” heading.



Assuming you're using a Microsoft account, you'll immediately be prompted to enter your current password before you can proceed.



A screenshot of a Microsoft account password reentry prompt. The window has a close button (X) in the top right corner. The main heading is "Please reenter your password" in a large, dark font. Below it is a sub-heading "...and reenter the world of your Microsoft account." in a smaller, dark font. Underneath the sub-heading is a row of eight small, light gray icons representing various Microsoft services: OneDrive, Office 365, Skype, Windows, Xbox, Bing, LinkedIn, and a shopping cart. Below the icons is the email address "matthewklein@howtogeek.com" in a dark font. A text input field with a blue border contains the word "Password" in a light gray font. At the bottom left of the form is a blue link that says "Forgot my password".

Please reenter your password

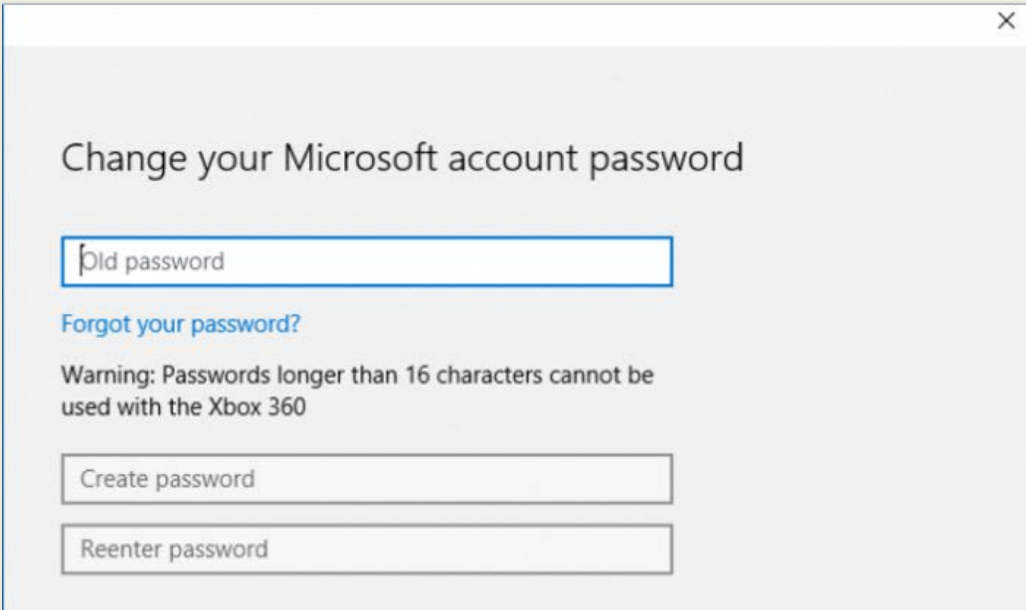
...and reenter the world of your Microsoft account.

matthewklein@howtogeek.com

Password

[Forgot my password](#)

Once you enter your Microsoft account password, you'll again be prompted to enter your old password and then you can change it to

A screenshot of a Windows dialog box titled "Change your Microsoft account password". The dialog has a close button (X) in the top right corner. Below the title is a text input field labeled "Old password". Below that is a blue link "Forgot your password?". A warning message reads: "Warning: Passwords longer than 16 characters cannot be used with the Xbox 360". At the bottom are two text input fields: "Create password" and "Reenter password".

Change your Microsoft account password

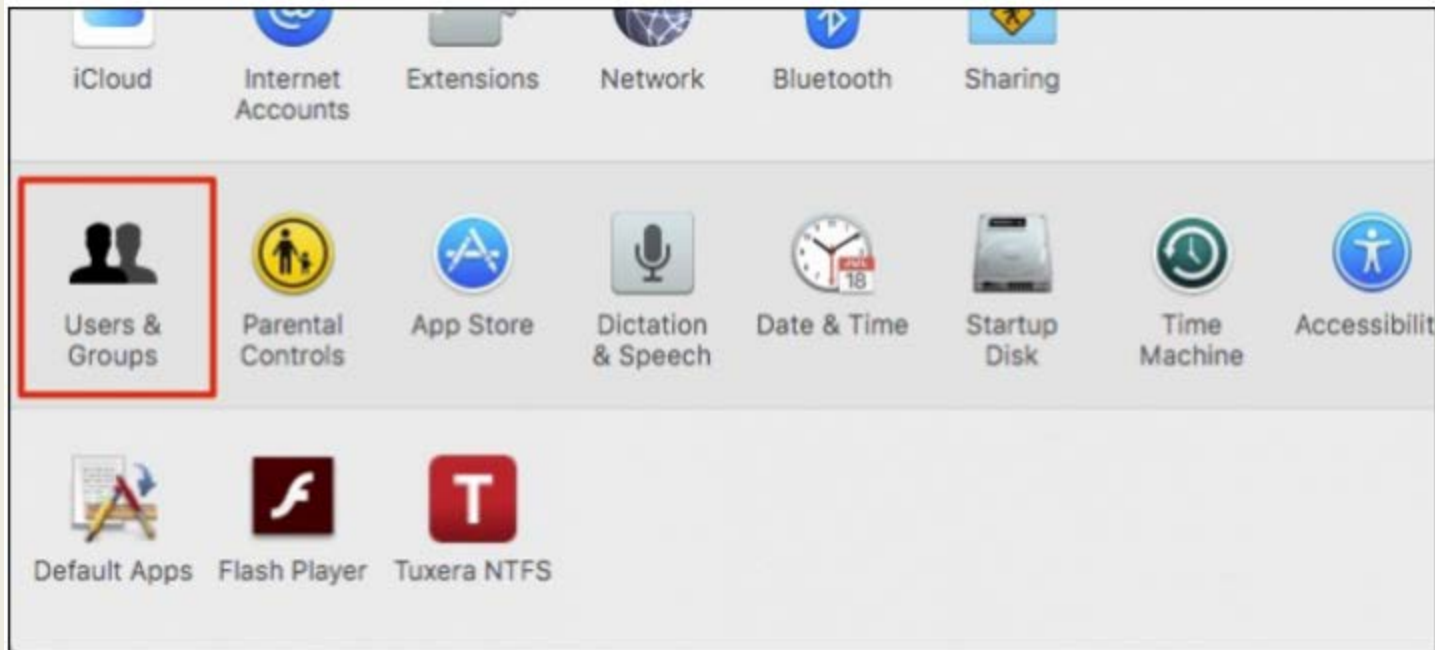
[Forgot your password?](#)

Warning: Passwords longer than 16 characters cannot be used with the Xbox 360

If you use a local account on either Windows 8.1 or Windows 10, the procedure will be almost entirely identical. Simply go to the Accounts section in the PC settings or Settings, respectively, click "Change" in the Password section, and follow the prompts.

## Changing Your Password on OS X

Changing your password on OS X is cinch and should only take a few seconds. First open the System Preferences and then click on “Users & Groups”.



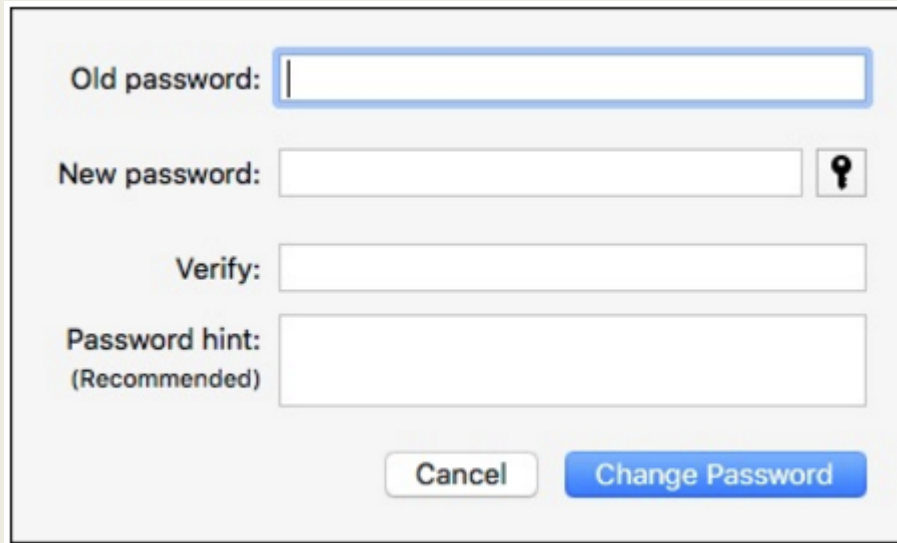
Now, you should see your account Password screen where you can click the “Change Password...” button.



If you want to use your iCloud password to log into and unlock your Mac, you can do so at the next dialog, however, for our purposes we're just going to change the local password on our machine's user account so we'll click "Change Password..." when prompted.



Simply now fill in the blanks. Enter your old password and then the new one. If you're having a hard time thinking of a new password, then click the key icon next to the "New password" box for a handy password generator.



The image shows a password change form with the following elements:

- Old password:** A text input field with a blue border and a vertical cursor on the left.
- New password:** A text input field with a key icon to its right, indicating a password generator.
- Verify:** A text input field for re-entering the new password.
- Password hint:** A text input field with the text "(Recommended)" below the label.
- Buttons:** A "Cancel" button and a blue "Change Password" button.

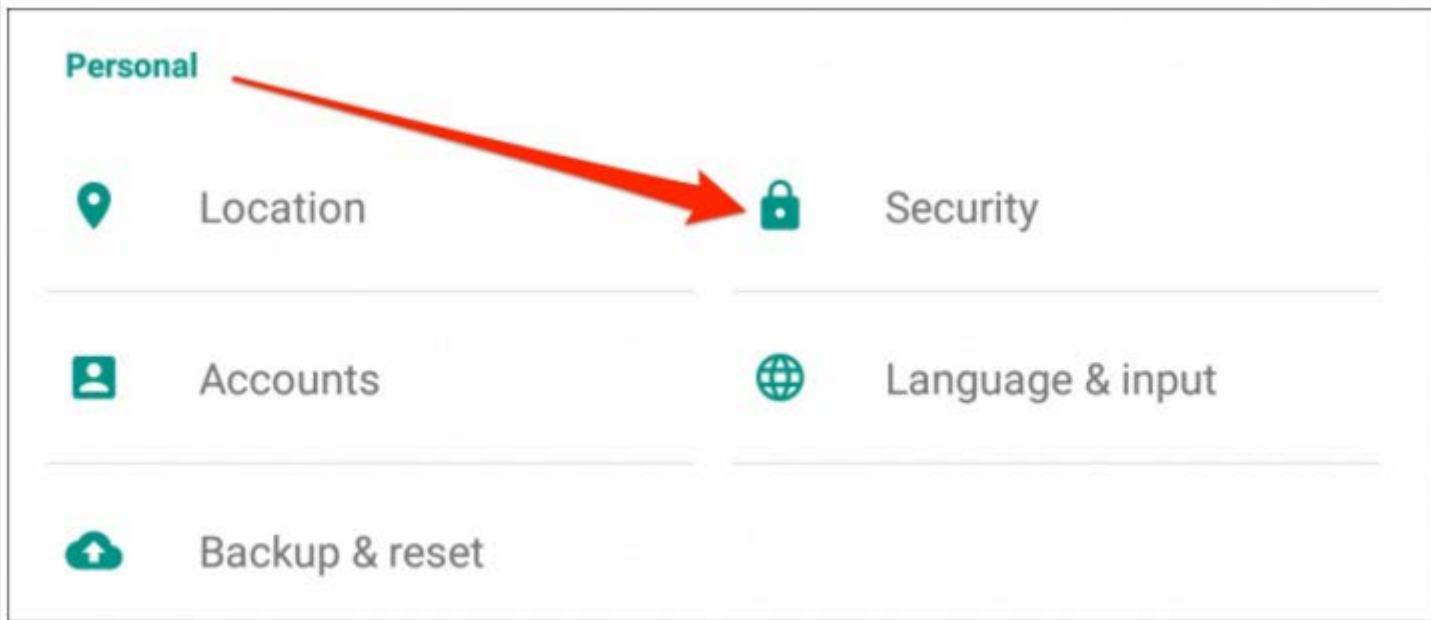
It's as simple as that to change your password on your computer(s). Let's move on now to smartphone and tablets.



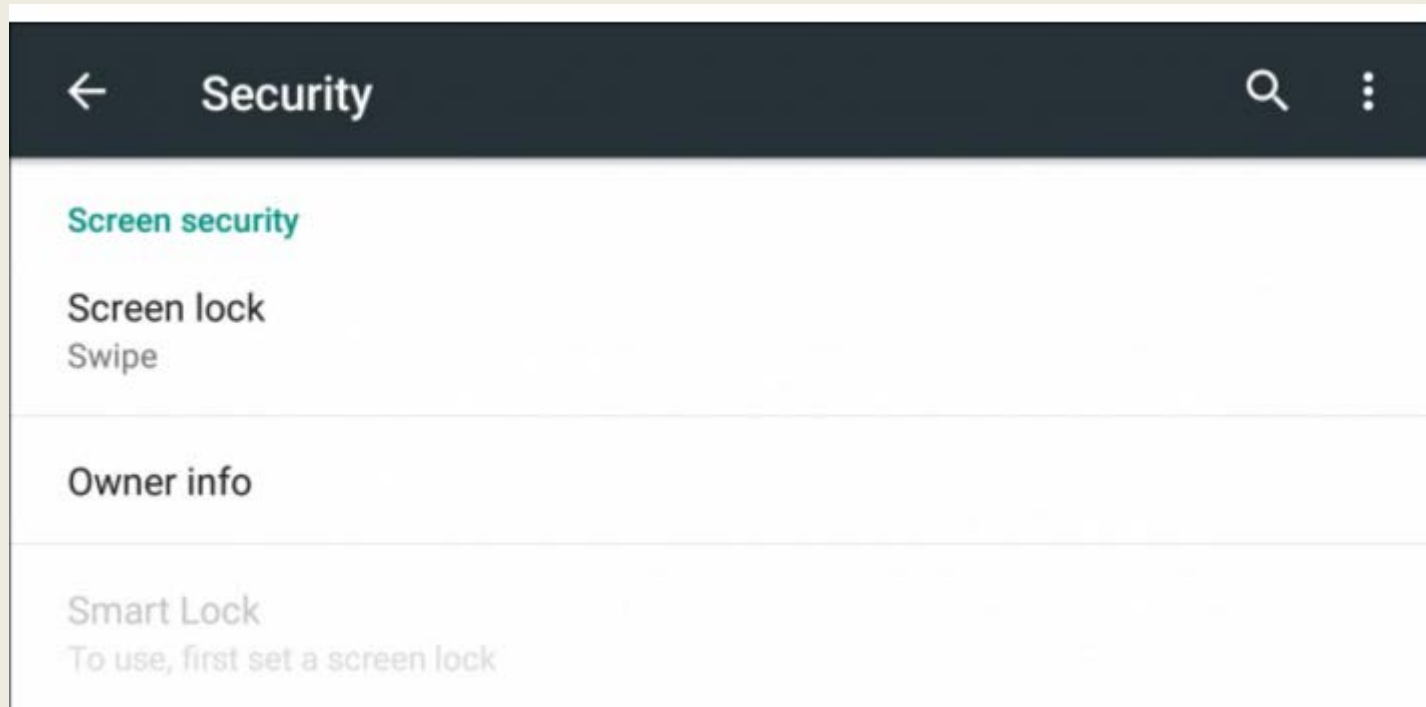
## Changing Your Password on Android

Android doesn't really press you to add security to your device, which we think is a bad thing. You should always have some kind of screen lock just in case you lose your phone or it gets stolen.

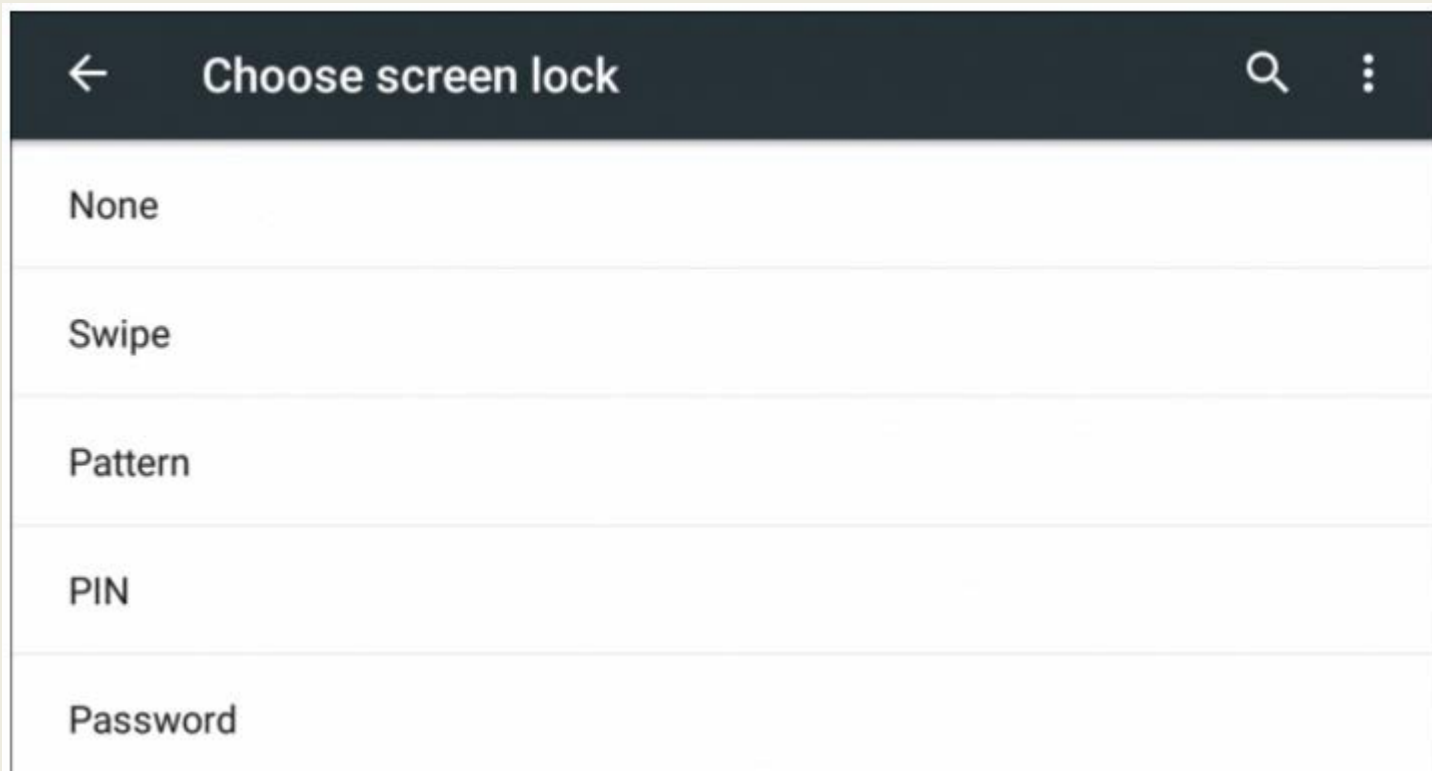
To add or change your device's screen lock, first open the Settings and tap open the "Security" option.



On the next screen, you will see the “Screen lock” option. Tap that open to add or change your device’s accessibility.



You'll have three options to choose from (we don't recommend None or Swipe). Out of all three, the Pattern is probably our preferred method but you can also choose a PIN or a traditional Password to unlock your device.



## Changing Your Passcode on iPhone or iPad

If you're using a recent iPhone 5 or later, then you'll have the wonderful option of [Touch ID to unlock your device](#), but you will still need to enter your passcode from time to time such as when you restart.

To change your passcode, first open the Settings and then tap open

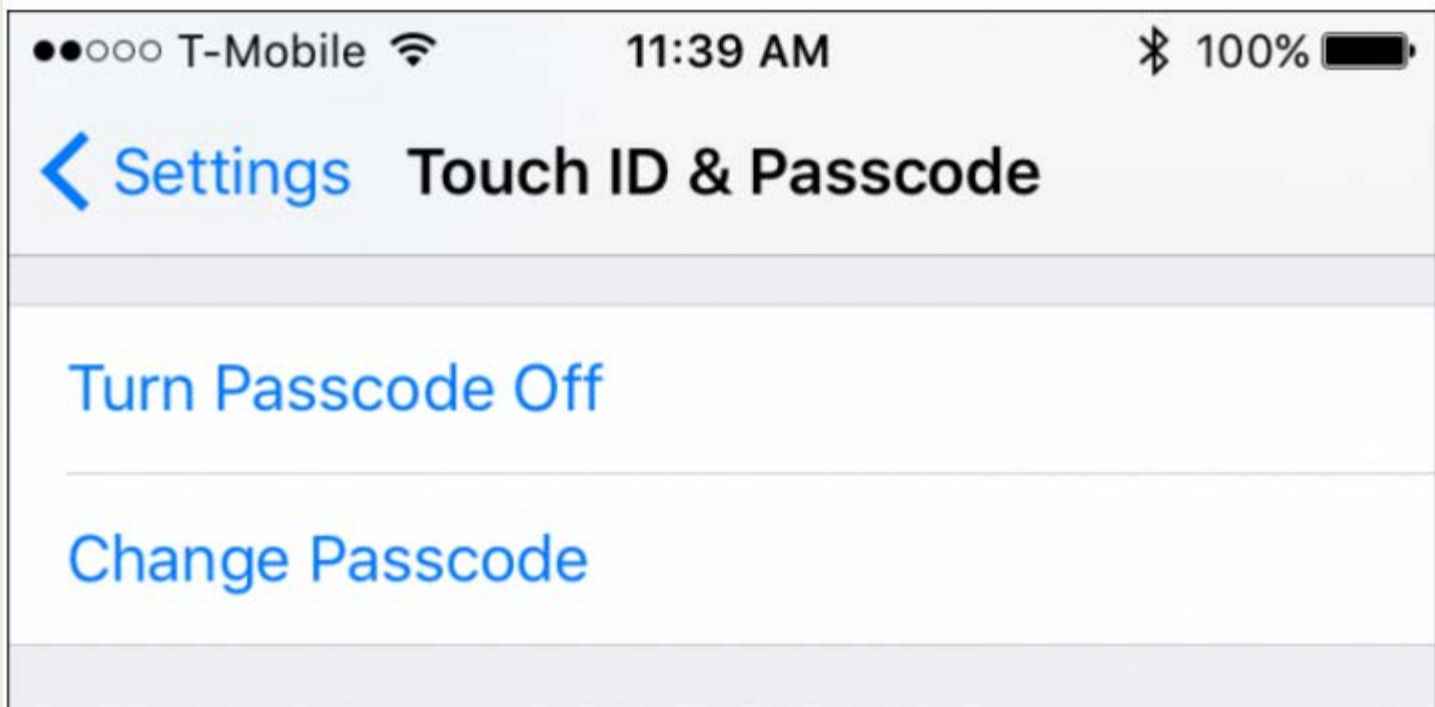


You will immediately need to enter your passcode before you can proceed.

Enter your passcode

— — — — —

Scroll down until you see the passcode options. You can either turn the passcode off (not recommended) or you can change it.



When you change your passcode, you will again be prompted to enter your old one.

Enter your old passcode

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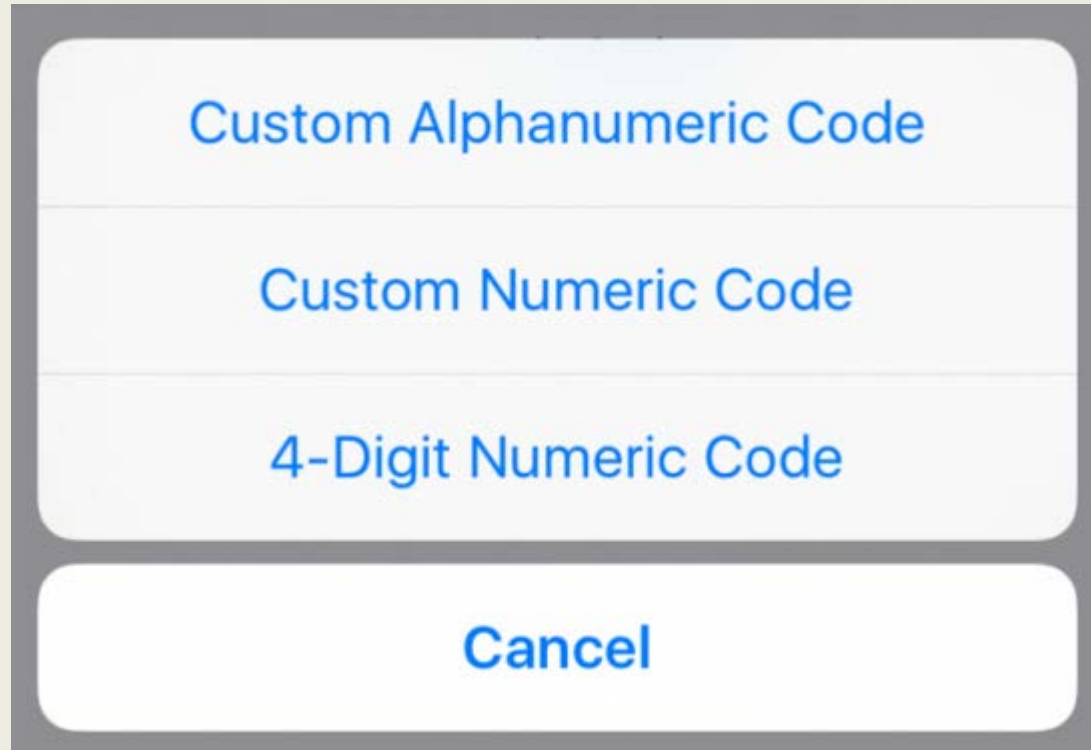
Once you do that, you will need to enter a new one

Enter your new passcode

— — — — —



Note, there are also options to use a different type of passcode such as an alphanumeric code, which is a traditional password, a custom numeric code, or if you're using iOS 9, you can resort to the older and less secure 4-digit passcode (not recommended).



Knowing how to change or even add passwords to your devices is smart and often necessary. Unfortunately, device makers typically don't make this obvious and as such, users often use the same method of accessing their devices for as long as they own them.

To that end, it's up to you to make your device's security your personal goal. The chances of your devices being "hacked" or broken into depends entirely on how careful you are with it, and the complexity of the security you've put into place. Don't be complacent about this, much of your life is contained within a very small item that can easily be lost or stolen. We hope this article was useful to you and you now feel confident changing your passwords on your computer, phone, or tablet.

## What Makes a Good Password?

**Length.** Good passwords are long. As a general rule, the longer a password is, the more difficult it is to crack using brute force and dictionary methods (and it's certainly harder to guess). You should always strive to overshoot the minimum password length. If the site says you need a password that is a minimum of six characters, make it longer.

**Complexity.** As a general rule, you should avoid simple words. Avoid dictionary words, place names, and proper nouns. Your middle name, your dog's name, the name of a state, a popular musician, are all terrible password components as they are likely already in the tables and files password crackers would use. If you *do* use words like "dog", "house", or "blue" in your password you should use at least four of them in the same password, and in a way that decreases the chances it could be brute force attacked, like "MyDog\$House!sBlue".

**Uniqueness.** This is the big one, and the one most people trip up on. More important than simply having a good password is having a *different password for every site you visit*. You can have the best password in the world, a password so fantastic that it would take a super computer decades to crack it, but if a company's entire system is compromised and hackers discover it, they know it, and they have access to any account you use it on.



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