Three ways to protect the personal info on your phone

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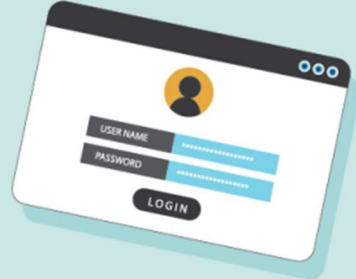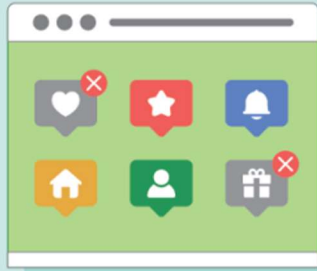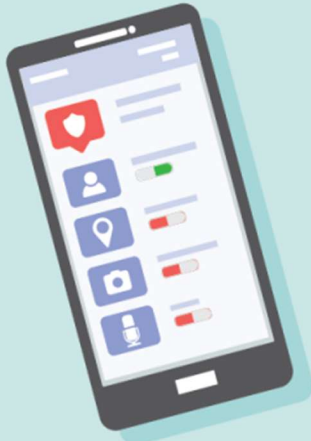September 11, 2024

Imagine carrying a written copy of all your conversations with you everywhere you went. Or copies of your account numbers, usernames, and passwords. Or all the photos and videos you've ever taken. I bet you'd do just about everything in your power to protect all that valuable information. Well, your mobile phone holds all that stuff — and maybe more. Are you doing everything in your power to keep it from ending up in the wrong hands? Here are three things you can do today to protect the personal information on your phone.

1. Lock it. Keep prying eyes out of your phone by setting it to automatically lock when you're not using it and create a PIN or passcode to unlock it. Longer passcodes are better, so use at least six digits. After you've set it up, you might be able to unlock your phone with your fingerprint, your face, or your iris.

2. Update it. Your operating system has security features built into it. And phone manufacturers regularly push out free updates to protect you against security threats. Set your phone to automatically update the operating system to stay up with the latest protections.

Bonus: Update your apps, too. And delete any apps you don't use.

3. Back it up. The convenience and portability of our phone puts it in peril. We might break or lose it. Or an opportunistic criminal might steal it. Back up your phone to the cloud or an external drive. That way you can recover your information if something goes wrong. And turn on the feature that helps you track a lost or stolen phone – it also lets you remotely lock or erase your phone if someone steals it, or you can't find it.

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