

PROTECT YOURSELF

from

IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft is one of the most nefarious crimes out there.

Here are seven ways to help protect yourself:



SECURE YOUR HARD COPIES

Every sensitive document should be kept in a safe. Credit cards and debit cards should be securely placed in your wallet at all times.

BONUS TIP: Shred all aged documents that contain sensitive information.

EXAMINE YOUR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Review your financial statements monthly and check carefully for fraudulent activity. Report any suspicious charges immediately.

BONUS TIP: Sign up for alerts and limit your credit card activity to a specific geographical area.

CHOOSE STRONG PASSWORDS

Use different, strong passwords for each of your accounts and devices.



BONUS TIP: Use a secure password service, like Gizmodo, to create and store unique passwords.

PROTECT YOUR COMPUTER

Invest in a strong anti-spyware program to protect your hardware from hackers.

BONUS TIP: Encrypt your hard drive for an extra level of protection.



AVOID PUBLIC WI-FI

Public Wi-Fi is a great hunting ground for thieves; steer clear if you can. At the very least, avoid all online banking or password logins while using public Wi-Fi.

BONUS TIP: Secure your own home Wi-Fi with a strong password.

BE WARY OF SUSPICIOUS EMAILS AND WEBSITES

BONUS TIP: If your inbox is flooded with promotional emails, unsubscribe from some of them. This will help you spot the truly bad apples in all that mail.

Don't open suspicious-looking emails or click on links for unfamiliar sites.

USE TWO-FACTOR IDENTIFICATION

The extra log-in step will help ward off scammers and add another layer of security to your accounts.

BONUS TIP: Never elect to have a device "remember your password" for a site that involves payments of any kind.