Objective 5

Basic Internet Security for Home

GETTING STARTED WITH TECHNOLOGY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Cybercriminals often look for networks that are not secured. Once these individuals gain access to a network, they can monitor the sites that are visited, the streaming services used, and access account logins such as banking and financial institutions.

Since households are becoming increasingly connect to technology it is vital for an individual to keep their home network's security and firmware up to date.

Setting up and securing a home network does not require a computer science degree. It only requires some diligence and legwork by the user. The time invested helps keep your network and information safe and secure. Cyber threats and security risks have increased dramatically with the multitude of devices being connected to the internet.

HOW THIS HELPS YOU

A cybercriminal can use the network "chatter" to learn more about online habits, usernames, or passwords. This can result in personal data being compromised or ransomware attacks. Being sure the home network is secure is an essential component for keeping data secure and private.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

It is important to restrict your home wireless network as much as possible. A network with a tight circle of trusted devices and users can protect itself from unwanted online traffic. But a network with no password or has several users and devices is at a great risk.

Default settings are easy targets for cybercriminals. A typical consumer will purchase a device like a router, find the password and network name assigned by the manufacturer, and use it to connect their home devices.

The network name, known as the Service Set Identifier (SSID), is one of the easiest methods of a hacker to use when attempting to gain access to a network. Therefore, one of the first steps someone can make to help reduce unwanted internet traffic or monitoring is to update the SSID, and change default passwords.

Change the Network Defaults: Simply changing the SSID and password to your home network will give you a layer of extra security.

Limit Access to Your Network: Don't provide your network details to anyone you don't know or who doesn't need to be accessing your wireless network.

Set up a network for guests: Most home routers come with the ability for a homeowner to set up a separate network for guests to use. These users' online activities won't jeopardize the original network.

Use the firewall: These prevent undesired activity on your network without knowledge.

Shut it off: If no one is going to be home for an extended period, turn off the network router. Cybercriminals can't get access to your network if it isn't on.

Location, location, location: A router emits a signal that doesn't know the boundaries of your home's walls or property line. If a router is placed near the exterior of a home, other people can see the network visible on their device. Placing the router in a centralized location of the home will reduce some of the visibility of the network to others.

Update router firmware: The firmware needs to be updated periodically to include patches to fix known issues or improve security. Unfortunately, most manufacturer's products don't update the firmware automatically; the owner of the network must push the update manually by logging in to the router's settings.

You will need to be on your home network to update the settings. Brainstorm what you would name your home network, as well as password phrases.

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Windows:
1. Open Windows Settings and find Network and Internet.
2. Select your network.
3. Locate your IP address.
4. Enter your IP address into your browser's address box.
5. Enter the login credentials for your router.*
6. Once you've gained access to the router settings, change the SSID and password.

Apple:
1. Click the Apple icon and select System Preferences.
2. Select Network and then choose Details.
3. Locate the router IP address.
4. Enter your IP address into your browser's address box.
5. Enter the login credentials for your router.*
6. Once you've gained access to the router settings, change the SSID and password.

* Each router manufacturer will have a slightly different setup. It is likely there will be a Wi-Fi settings option. If there is any confusion or doubt as to how to get logged in to your router, visit the manufacturer's website and look for login support.