

ACTIVITY

How Passwords Get Cracked

Audit the Sign-Up Page

Here are six rules from a website's sign-up page. For each rule, circle what you'd do with it, then write why. Every rule, website and password on this sheet is made up.

How do you earn points? Each rule is worth 1 point, and the last question is worth 1 point, 7 points in all. A rule earns its point when the circle matches the current rules and the box gives a reason. A blank box earns no point.

1. Read each rule.
2. Circle Keep, Change or Delete.
3. In the box, write 1 sentence: why, or what you'd write instead.
4. Answer the last question. Then check with a partner.

How do you decide?

Keep: the rule already matches the current rules. Change: the idea is right, but the rule needs fixing. Delete: the rule makes accounts less safe.

Here are the six rules.

Rule 1

Your password must be at least 15 characters long.

Circle one: **Keep** **Change** **Delete** Write 1 sentence: why, or what you'd write instead.

Rule 2

Your password must include a capital letter, a number and a symbol.

Circle one: **Keep** **Change** **Delete** Write 1 sentence: why, or what you'd write instead.

Rule 3

You must change your password every 60 days.

Circle one: **Keep** **Change** **Delete** Write 1 sentence: why, or what you'd write instead.

Rule 4

Passwords can be at most 12 characters long.

Circle one: **Keep** **Change** **Delete** Write 1 sentence: why, or what you'd write instead.

Rule 5

We check every new password against a list of common and leaked passwords.

Circle one: **Keep** **Change** **Delete** Write 1 sentence: why, or what you'd write instead.

Rule 6

After several wrong tries, you have to wait before you can try again.

Circle one: **Keep** **Change** **Delete** Write 1 sentence: why, or what you'd write instead.

Last question. The site also makes you pick a security question, like the name of your first pet. Say what's wrong with that. Write 1-2 sentences.