Help keep your online accounts safe with these helpful tips

It's a new year, with new security threats. Here's some ways to help keep your accounts safe, and your data protected.

Have you changed and updated your passwords on your important accounts, such as banking, family records, and investment accounts?

Hackers try to compromise your important accounts by using common passwords, patterns and algorithms.

If a hacker, or an illicit program, finds it difficult to access your account, they move on to another account...one that is easier to hack into.

Let's make things very clear. Hacking into someone's account is a crime, but that does not stop criminals from trying!

So what can you do to protect yourself?

One very important tactic, as we alluded to you, is creating a password that is complex, hard to guess, and unique.

We want to be clear...this is not foolproof, but anything you can do to protect your important data and information, is well work the effort. And, one more important point. What's easier, updating your passwords, or dealing with the consequences of your financial, personal, and important accounts being compromised? That's for you to

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answer, but it seems like the small effort to update your passwords outweighs what you have to go through if you are hacked!

Here are some tips to update your passwords and make them more secure:

- Use a combination of lower case letters, upper case letters, numbers, and symbols
- The longer the better
- Don't use the same password for every account
- Do not use a pattern for your passwords, make it totally unique. Some suggestions are spelling things backwards, use symbols first, and place characters and commonly spelled words in a different order
- Where possible, use 2 factor authentication on accounts that allow it

If you access multiple accounts online, how do you remember all of your new passwords? There are some easy ways to do this, that are very secure, like password managers.

Once such example is **Last Pass**. Last Pass helps you securely manage your passwords via your browser, and can even suggest really secure passwords for you accounts.

To find out more about Last Pass, visit: www.lastpass.com.

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