

# Authentication

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**Authentication** is the process of determining whether someone or something is, in fact, who or what it declares itself to be. Authentication technology provides [access control](#) for systems by checking to see if a user's credentials match the credentials in a database of authorized users or in a data authentication server.

Users are usually identified with a user ID, and authentication is accomplished when the user provides a credential, for example, a [Password](#), that matches that user ID. Most users are most familiar with using a password, which, as a piece of information that should be known only to the user, is called a knowledge authentication factor. Other authentication factors, and how they are used for two-factor or multifactor authentication (MFA)

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Last update: **2021/07/29 12:22**

