

Password

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Password is a string of characters used to verify the identity of a user during the authentication process. Passwords are typically used in tandem with a username; they are designed to be known only to the user and allow that user to gain access to a device, application or website. Passwords can vary in length and can contain letters, numbers, and special characters.

A password is sometimes called a passphrase, when the password uses more than one word, or passcode or passkey, when the password uses only numbers, such as a [Personal Identification Number \(PIN\)](#).

A password is a simple application of challenge-response authentication, using a verbal, written, or typed code to satisfy the challenge request. The order and variety of characters are often what determines the difficulty, or security strength, of a given password. That is why security systems often require users to create passwords that use at least one capital letter, number, and symbol. For a password to be an effective security mechanism, its details must be kept secret. Otherwise, unauthorized users could gain access to the files and securities one is trying to protect.

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