

6 ways your email can get hacked

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1. **You fell for a phishing scam** that asked you to “confirm” your password. These [types of scam emails](#) can be convincing. But you should never respond to any unexpected message that asks you to verify your password, account numbers, addresses, or any other information of this kind. Phishing is a favorite tool of the [world's best hackers](#).
2. **You didn't log out of your account** after using a public PC or device. Aside from getting into the habit of logging out each and every time you use a shared device, it's wise to avoid using public PCs altogether (like the ones you find at internet cafes and libraries). There's really no way to know whether these machines are [infected with malware](#) or have [keylogging spyware](#) installed on them, making them a big risk.
3. **You used a weak, easy-to-guess password** or have been using the same password across multiple sites. Make sure your passwords are both long and unique for all the various sites and services that you use. A good rule of thumb: make them at least 16 characters. To make them easy to remember, base them on a complex sentence, with the first letter of each word serving as a character in your password.
4. **You didn't use up-to-date security software** on your PC. Without adequate protection, your PC can become infected with malware designed to steal your passwords – sneaking through in the form of dodgy downloads and suspicious email attachments. [Download AVG Internet Security](#) (or any reputable security software) so you are protected from the latest online threats. (It's a good idea to do the same for your [Android™ mobile devices](#), too).
5. **You used an unsecure Wi-Fi network** where hackers were able to eavesdrop on your data and intercept your passwords. To avoid this, you should only ever connect to reputable networks that you trust and which are password protected. Or, use a [VPN service like AVG Secure VPN](#), or [HMA!](#), to secure and encrypt your connection.
6. **Your email address was harvested by spammers**. This happens when you list your email address publicly online – in places like forums, online ads, blogs, etc. Just don't do it. For the great majority of us, there is no reason to publish an email address on the internet.