

# Simple Steps to Online Security

Following these steps will get you halfway to a secure online life in just minutes. For deeper protection consult the sites featured in this Guide.

## **Disconnect, Update, Backup**

- Disconnect your computer from the Internet when you're not using it.
- Always use antivirus, antispyware and firewall software, updating them as frequently as possible. (See the "[Computer Virus Protection](#)" section of this guide to get a list of the best antivirus software.)
- Back up important files.

## **Cookie Control and Pop-Up Blockers**

Set up your operating system and Web browser to control cookies and pop-ups.

- Cookies are small files that Web sites can create on your computer that let them know about your past visits to the site.
- Pop-up windows are Web browser windows a site can instruct your browser to open automatically.
- Although all browsers are different, everyone has a "Preferences" or "Options" choice in one of its drop-down menus that will allow you to change its settings. Most appear under either the menu with the browser's name (like "Firefox" or "Safari") or the "Tools" menu.

## **Passwords, Policies, E-mail**

- Protect and change your passwords on a regular basis.
- Check the "Privacy Policy" sections of the sites you visit to learn how your information will be collected and used.
- Make sure your e-mail service provider uses e-mail encryption by checking their security features page.

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## Web Site Protection

Make sure a Web site is secure before sending any sensitive data.

- The prefix of the secure Web address should start with "https://." The "s" stands for secure.
- Look for a padlock or key icon on your Web browser (it's usually to the right of the address or at the bottom right corner of your browser). Click on these icons to learn more about the security of the site.

**From findingDulcinea's Web Guide to Internet Security: Staying Safe Online**