

Basic FAQ

What is the myNEU Security Campaign ?

As myNEU portal services continue to expand, the types and amounts of personal information and transactions accessible over the portal grows. Future portal services may include online access to direct deposit healthcare and financial information. Maintaining the safety, security and privacy of myNEU services is essential to continued customer acceptance and trust in these services.

The safety and security of electronic experiences is increasingly threatened by those who seek to access accounts and information by guessing passwords and password reset challenge answers. These efforts can result in loss of privacy, identity theft and fraud. To help mitigate these threats, the University will launch in late October, a campaign to encourage users to change their myNEU passwords and password reset challenge answers.

What does the myNEU Security Campaign involve ?

All myNEU accountholders will be invited to select new myNEU passwords and password reset challenge answer that are easy to remember yet difficult to guess. **Passwords and password reset challenge answers should meet new complexity guidelines designed to deter guessing. For details on complexity guidelines, please see the Advanced FAQ later in this document.**

How will I benefit from this campaign ?

By changing your myNEU password and password reset challenge answer, your myNEU accounts and your personal information will be more resistant to password and password reset challenge answer guessing.

I'm a student. How do these changes affect me ?

On October 31, 2007, you will be invited to change your myNEU password and password reset challenge answer to make them more complex. For details on complexity guidelines, please see the Advanced FAQ later in this document.

myNEU Security Campaign Frequently-Asked Questions

Advanced FAQ

What is a complexity guideline ?

Complexity guidelines describe how a password or password reset challenge answer should be formulated to make it harder to guess. Under existing password rules, a password as simple as “123456” or “abcdefg” could be used. Starting October 31, 2007, easily-guessed passwords like these should no longer be used. Instead, passwords should be at least eight characters, and contain at least one uppercase character, one lowercase character, and one numeric character.

Under existing password reset challenge answer rules, a password reset challenge answer as simple as “abcd” or “1234”, or “blue” could be used. Starting October 31, 2007, easily-guessed password reset challenge answers like these should no longer be used. Instead, password reset challenge answers should be at least two groups of three characters, separated by a space.

How do I create a strong password ?

One technique for creating a strong password is to **transform a phrase**. Remember that passwords should be at least 8 characters long, and include at least one uppercase, one lowercase, and one numeric character. For example:

Type of phrase	Phrase	Password example Do not use these examples for your password !
Line from a childhood verse	Yankee doodle went to town	YDW2town
Expression inspired by a favorite city	Chicago is my kind of town I love Paris in the springtime	CizmKot2 ILUVpinST9
Food preferences	I dislike broccoli I eat ice cream for breakfast	eyeH8brocolee EYEeetIC4bfst

What are other methods for creating strong passwords ?

Strong passwords can also be created by **combining a word or phrase with letters and numbers**:

Phrase	Password example Do not use these examples for your password !
Five barbequed chickens	5BbkewChicknz
Formative years	4mativeYEARZ

The password examples listed above can be made stronger by inserting a special character anywhere

myNEU Security Campaign Frequently-Asked Questions

How do I make a very strong password ?

The strongest passwords feature a **combination of nonsensical letters, numbers and special characters**. These can be difficult to remember, but are highly resistant to guessing:

Password example #1: 5pN! !X99732\$

Password example #2: 78HK&302mmz

Password example #3: 12\$\$32&koU

What passwords should be avoided ?

Avoid passwords that contain any portion of:

- a correctly spelled dictionary word.
- your, child, or spouse first/last name,
- sequential alphabetic/numeric strings
- phone numbers, license plate numbers
- street name

What is the limitation on the length of my password ?

It is recommended that passwords longer than ten (10) characters become more difficult to remember. The recommended length limit is sixteen (16) characters.

Remember....Do not use any of the examples for your password !

myNEU Security Campaign Frequently-Asked Questions

About the Password Reset Challenge Answer

What makes a strong password reset challenge question and answer ?

A strong password reset challenge question and answer are related in a way that only you understand.

Challenge QUESTION examples	Challenge ANSWER examples
	<i>Should be at least two groups of three characters each, separated by a space.</i> Do not use any of these examples as your challenge answer !
what is my secret shame ?	eating YELLOW flowers slurping morning COFFEE sleeping WHILE standing
What are the marks of the beast ?	PINK elephants with shoes laughing striped TIGER

Must I think up my own password reset challenge question and answer ?

Yes.

What must I remember about my password reset challenge answer ?

The password reset challenge answer is case-sensitive. This means your answer will be stored in exactly the same case in which you define it. When answering your challenge question, you must answer in exactly the same case as was used to define the answer. For example:

If your challenge question is...	AND, your answer is...	Then, in order to reset your password, your answer must be...
What are my two favorite cities	ABILENE and Waco	ABILENE and Waco

Answers such as **Abilene and Waco**, or **Abilene and WACO**, don't match your challenge answer, and are therefore invalid answers.

What is the limitation on the length of my password reset challenge answer ?

It is recommended that password reset challenge answers longer than 7 words becomes difficult to remember.

myNEU Security Campaign Frequently-Asked Questions

How the Security Campaign Affects NUNET Passwords

How does the campaign affect my NUNET password ?

The NUNET login experience is unchanged.

Will I now be forced to change my myNEU password on a regular basis ?

While periodic password changes are a strong and effective defense against password compromise, this level of security is often less acceptable to academic communities. It is strongly recommended however that all members of the community change their passwords on all systems on a regular basis.

How does the campaign affect my Lotus Notes password ?

This upgrade does not impact your Lotus Notes username and password. If however, you wish to set your Lotus Notes password to match your myNEU password, you may do so. Changes you make to your Lotus Notes password are not coupled to any other password or system.

For those who use a web browser to read their Northeastern University email, you will continue to use your myNEU password to access Notes mail on the web.

I'm a student. How does this affect me ?

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