

Recovering accounts

A guide to recovering your hacked online accounts

Unauthorised payments, messages that you don't recognise, or logins from strange locations can indicate that someone is accessing your account. **If you see unusual account activity, start by contacting your account provider.** If you also think you may have lost money, phone your bank/utility. If you have been hacked, here's how to recover your accounts.

Step 1. Update the software and apps on your devices



Using the latest versions of **software, apps** and **operating system** on your phone or tablet will immediately improve your security. Remember to **update regularly** (or set your phone or tablet to automatically update) so you don't have to think about it. If you have antivirus software on your device, **run a full scan**.

Step 2. Check your email settings



Criminals will often change your email settings so they are sent copies of all the emails you send and receive. **Visit the support page of your email product** to find out how you can check this, and fix it if needed.

Step 3. Use the service's support pages



If you can't access your account, **search the company's online support or help pages.** You'll find information about how to recover your account. If you can't find the relevant page, use a search engine and type in (for example) 'Twitter account hacked'.

Step 4. Change passwords on relevant accounts

Change the password on all other accounts which use the same password as the hacked account. Once they've discovered one password, criminals will try and use the same password to access other accounts. For advice on creating strong passwords, visit www.cyberaware.gov.uk.

Step 5. Protect your accounts using 2FA



If available, **set up two-factor authentication** (also known as 2FA) on each account. 2FA prevents criminals accessing your accounts, even if they have your password. 2FA asks you to provide a second piece of information (such as an SMS code) when you log in, to check you are who you say you are. For instructions on how to set up 2FA, visit www.ncsc.gov.uk/2fa.

Step 6. Notify your friends, followers and contacts

Tell friends, followers and contacts that you've been hacked. **They should treat messages claiming to come from you with caution.** You should contact them regardless of whether you managed to recover your account or not.



Step 7. If you can't recover your account...

If you can't recover your account, you can create a new one. Make sure you update any linked accounts (for example bank, utility services or shopping websites) with your new details. Also tell your friends and contacts.



Step 8. Contact Action Fraud

If you have been affected by online Crime, you can report a cyber incident to Action Fraud using their fraud reporting tool at www.actionfraud.police.uk.

