

# Tips to Help Keep Customer Data and Your Business Safe

Customer data is a valuable business asset. It's also vulnerable to a variety of threats. When you safeguard sensitive information, you create customer trust and loyalty, strengthen your reputation and could even increase profitability.

Here are a few important steps you can take to help protect:



## Your Computer Systems

**Be smart about passwords.** Change your passwords regularly, make them hard to guess and don't share them with others. Ask service providers about any default passwords you should reset.

**Install software updates.** Download patches you receive for your business software, internet browsers and mobile devices as soon as they become available.

**Use anti-virus software.** Install anti-virus protection and schedule automatic scans to routinely search for and identify potential issues.



## Customer Data

**Use a firewall to help prevent hacking.** Find out from your service provider if your firewall is configured correctly, which can help protect you from hackers and malware.

**Store only what you need.** Talk to your service provider about what data you're storing and understand what is allowed to be stored under PCI Data Security Standard.

**Protect any card data you store.** Ask your service provider about encryption or tokenization technologies, which makes it more difficult to access customer data if breached.

**Back up your information.** To lessen the impact of a potential ransomware attack, conduct frequent backups of your essential information.



## Your Terminals

**Inspect equipment regularly.** Take photos of terminals, cords and connections for comparison. Look for broken seals and new devices or cables. Alert your payment terminal vendor immediately if you have concerns.

**Install patches.** Terminal software glitches could leave you vulnerable. Ensure you're running the most up-to-date version by downloading any updates as soon as possible.



## Your Business

**Limit access to data.** Make your sensitive information available on a need-to-know basis. Ensure employees have their own login credentials — don't share them.

**Conduct security training.** Criminals look for human vulnerability. Help keep your business safe by providing staff with simple, easy-to-follow security guidelines and tools.

Learn more about data security at [americanexpress.com/datasecurity](https://americanexpress.com/datasecurity)