

Steps you can  
take: Plan for  
future needs  
and protect  
your accounts



# Top 10 steps you can take to help Schwab and your advisor protect your account

**1 Freeze your credit.** Freezing your credit reports prevents criminals from taking out credit cards or loans in your name.

**2 Use two-step verification.** This security feature requires that you enter a unique security code whenever you access your accounts online, making it more difficult for someone to gain access to your information.

**3 Secure your passwords.** Using password manager software makes it easier to manage your login information across websites—and helps you create strong and unique passwords.

**4 Use biometrics where available.** If your smartphone or PC offers biometric security options like a fingerprint reader or voice or facial recognition, we recommend using those features. They add another unique layer of security that could stop financial criminals in their tracks.

**5 Do not click on links in emails and texts.** Online financial criminals try to make their emails or texts look legitimate. Be skeptical of all emails, texts, and any included links and attachments unless you are 100% certain that the email or text is legitimate.

**6 Verbally verify disbursements.** Ensure that you have enough information or documentation so that you know where you're sending your money. If you receive an email instructing you to transfer money, verify the instructions by calling the sender at a phone number you've used to contact them previously, then verbally verify the instructions. Do not call any new phone numbers provided in the email.

**7 Stay current on the latest scams.** Keep up-to-date on the latest scam tactics so that you can protect yourself from falling victim. Visit these sites for information:

- [www.fbi.gov/scams-and-safety](http://www.fbi.gov/scams-and-safety)
- [www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts)

**8 Set up account alerts.** Monitor your financial accounts by setting up alerts to warn you when any important changes are applied to your account.

**9 Exercise vigilance with your online presence.** Limit what you share on social media and set privacy and security settings on websites and applications to safeguard your information.

**10 Monitor account activity regularly.** Make a habit of reviewing your financial account statements and online activity. Confirm that you recognize all the transactions listed—and report any that you don't.

# Plan ahead for your financial needs as you and your loved ones age

- 1 Start trust and estate planning.** Organize your financial records and work with financial and legal professionals to plan for future financial needs.
- 2 Appoint a power of attorney.** This is a trusted individual who can manage legal or financial matters on your behalf in the future if needed.
- 3 Designate a trusted contact for your financial accounts.** This is another trusted individual you can designate. In the event of an emergency, like suspected financial exploitation, financial institutions can reach out to this person to help resolve the issue.
- 4 Never give out information or money in response to email requests, text messages, or phone calls.** These communications may appear to be from a legitimate source, but can be used to commit fraud or a scam.
- 5 Trust but verify.** Apply due diligence when sending funds by performing online searches to see if the scenario looks legitimate or if others have been victimized by similar-sounding frauds or scams. Get supporting documents, meet people, and view goods in person. Be on alert if you receive a request to send funds in cash, cryptocurrency, prepaid debit cards, or gift cards.
- 6 Stay connected.** Being involved in the community and having trusted individuals to assist with financial matters can provide you with a source for advice and guidance if you're ever a victim of financial exploitation.
- 7 Don't hesitate to ask for help right away.** Reach out to others if you are concerned that you could be the victim of fraud or financial exploitation. The sooner you ask for assistance, the sooner you can work to recover any lost funds and prevent further losses.

For more information about fraud, identity theft, and senior financial exploitation, visit:

- [schwab.com/schwabsafe](https://www.schwab.com/schwabsafe)
- [schwab.com/seniors](https://www.schwab.com/seniors)

## If you suspect that you or someone else is being exploited

You or a trusted person should contact Adult Protective Services. You can find information about your local Adult Protective Services office at the Eldercare Locator on [eldercare.gov](https://www.eldercare.gov), a public service provided by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, or by calling **800-677-1116**.

Also contact Schwab or any other financial institutions so that they can help protect clients and their assets.

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