

PIN/Password Formation Tips

Most people tend to choose PINs/passwords that are easy to remember. One way to make them easy to remember is to pick PINs/passwords that are directly related to oneself, but generally these are considered to be **poor choices**. Therefore users should avoid basing their passwords on:

- their name, partner's name, child's name, pet's name, birthday, car registration number, phone number, National Insurance Number, sports team or any personal information that others can easily obtain

It is also a **poor choice** to re-use an old PIN/password or make a minor change to an old one, e.g., by incrementing a digit.

Other **POOR CHOICES** include PINs/passwords that comprise:

- an alphabetical series (e.g. ABCDEF or FEDCBA)
- a numerical series (e.g. 123456 or 654321)
- a series drawn from the keyboard (e.g. ASDFG or QWERTY)
- a series of identical characters (e.g. AAAAAA or 111111)
- single words that can be found in any dictionary

STRONG CHOICES include PINs/passwords that comprise:

- at least one symbol (punctuation mark) and / or one number
- different cases (combination of both upper and lower case)
- 8 or more characters*

*For the ARTL PKI, the PIN range is 8-16 characters.

Suggestions / tips for making **STRONG MEMORABLE PINs/PASSWORDS**:

- Use the first letters of the words of a sentence / phrase you can easily remember
- Use 2 words that do not ordinarily go together and separate them by a special character or a number

EXAMPLE

1] A good tip for creating a strong PIN/password is to create a passphrase (a sentence or group of words), then convert the passphrase into a PIN/password using only the first letter of each word with punctuation marks. If your phrase contains numbers, all the better.

PASSPHRASE	PASSWORD
My son's birthday is 1 December. When is yours?	Msb1D.Wiy?
I get a number 46 bus to work	Igan46b2w
Frank Sinatra – I've got you under my skin	FS-Igyums
Why is the world round and not flat?	Witwr&nf?
The last book I read was Pride and Prejudice	TlblrwP&P

This method creates a seemingly random combination of alpha, numeric and symbol characters, yet it is easy to remember.

2] Take 2 words that do not go together and separate them by a special character / number such as:

- Piano%Dinner
- Grass7Butter
- Cow\$Canoe