

# Top tips: Data protection

Your data is valuable – make sure it doesn't fall into the wrong hands. Follow these top tips to secure your information against accidental loss and deliberate theft



## 1. Know what you need to protect

Understand what information you need to keep secure and where it is stored.

## 2. Know the rules

Ensure you know what policies your organisation has in place in order to protect sensitive data.

## 3. Use strong passwords

Make the passwords for your computer and website logins really hard to crack! Use upper and lower case characters, numbers and symbols to make them extra secure.

## 4. Secure your computers

Your data is valuable to hackers so make sure they can't get to it. Only use computers with up-to-date security software, firewalls and patches.

## 5. Be careful what you share

Think before revealing potentially sensitive data on social networking sites, or sending information by email.

## 6. Go under cover

Create user names on social networking sites that don't reveal your true identity ... and never reveal your actual date of birth.

## 7. Delete once complete

Delete sensitive information once you no longer need it – for example, always delete information from USBs once used.

## 8. Think before using USB sticks

USB sticks and other portable devices (phones, laptops etc.) are easy to lose – think twice before saving sensitive data on them, particularly if it's not encrypted.

## 9. Take extra care on the move

Keep close hold of your laptops, phones, USB sticks and other portable devices when travelling - 3,300 laptops are lost or stolen at the 8 largest European airports each week!

## 10. Encrypt your information

If you encrypt sensitive data it can't be accessed by the wrong eyes – end of story. Sophos Free Encryption is available at no cost from [www.sophos.com](http://www.sophos.com)