

How to secure your data

Think of a good password

A strong password has

- Fifteen characters or more
- The longer the better!
- A random distribution of characters

Combine

- Upper case letters: A - Z
- Lower case letters: a - z
- Numerals: 0 - 9
- Special characters: ! " # \$ % & ' () * + , - . / : etc.

Use a 'pass-phrase' instead of a password and replace some letters with numbers and/or special characters.

Encrypt your data with zip

Most users have a zip program on their computers, so this is the easiest and least restrictive option for most

To create a zip file

- Create a folder with all the data you want to protect
- Right click on the folder and choose your zip program
- Follow the instructions by your zip program to compress/archive your folder and assign a password during this process
- To unzip, click right on the zip file and extract the files using your password

Encrypt your data with VeraCrypt

Another good tool to encrypt your data is VeraCrypt: <https://www.veracrypt.fr/en/Downloads.html>

- It's open source, free of charge and easy to use
- It offers secure encryptions

How VeraCrypt works

- You create a container in Veracrypt, comparable to a folder on your computer
- The container will be encrypted and can be saved on your computer, on a USB-stick or a cloud
- To access your encrypted container, you use Veracrypt to mount it, meaning you assign a free drive on your computer
- Once mounted you can transfer your data to the container, access the container's content, and work with the content just like you usually work with your files
- When you are done with your work, you dismount the container, and your files are secured again

This website offers a great walkthrough of all steps of the encryption and the mounting process: <https://security.vt.edu/resources/veracrypt.html>

Upload to a cloud

Once encrypted, save your data to a secure cloud

- Always be careful what you save in a cloud
- Personal data should not be stored in a cloud openly
- However, once encrypted, your data is safe and can be stored there
- Examples for cloud services are:
 - Dropbox
 - Google Drive
 - Amazon Cloud



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