

Cult of Mac **Ring in the new year by changing bad old passwords**

Ed Hardy 9:15 am, January 2, 2025



Ring in the new year with new passwords that haven't been stolen by hackers.

Image: Ed Hardy/Cult of Mac

It's a brand-new year, and that's a good opportunity to do something you've probably been procrastinating on: Replace your website passwords that hackers stole because of some company's lax security. Fortunately, Apple's new Passwords app makes it easy to find out which of your passwords leaked so you can change them.

Start the year off right by fixing a potentially serious problem now, *before* something bad happens.

Apple's Passwords app helps you deal

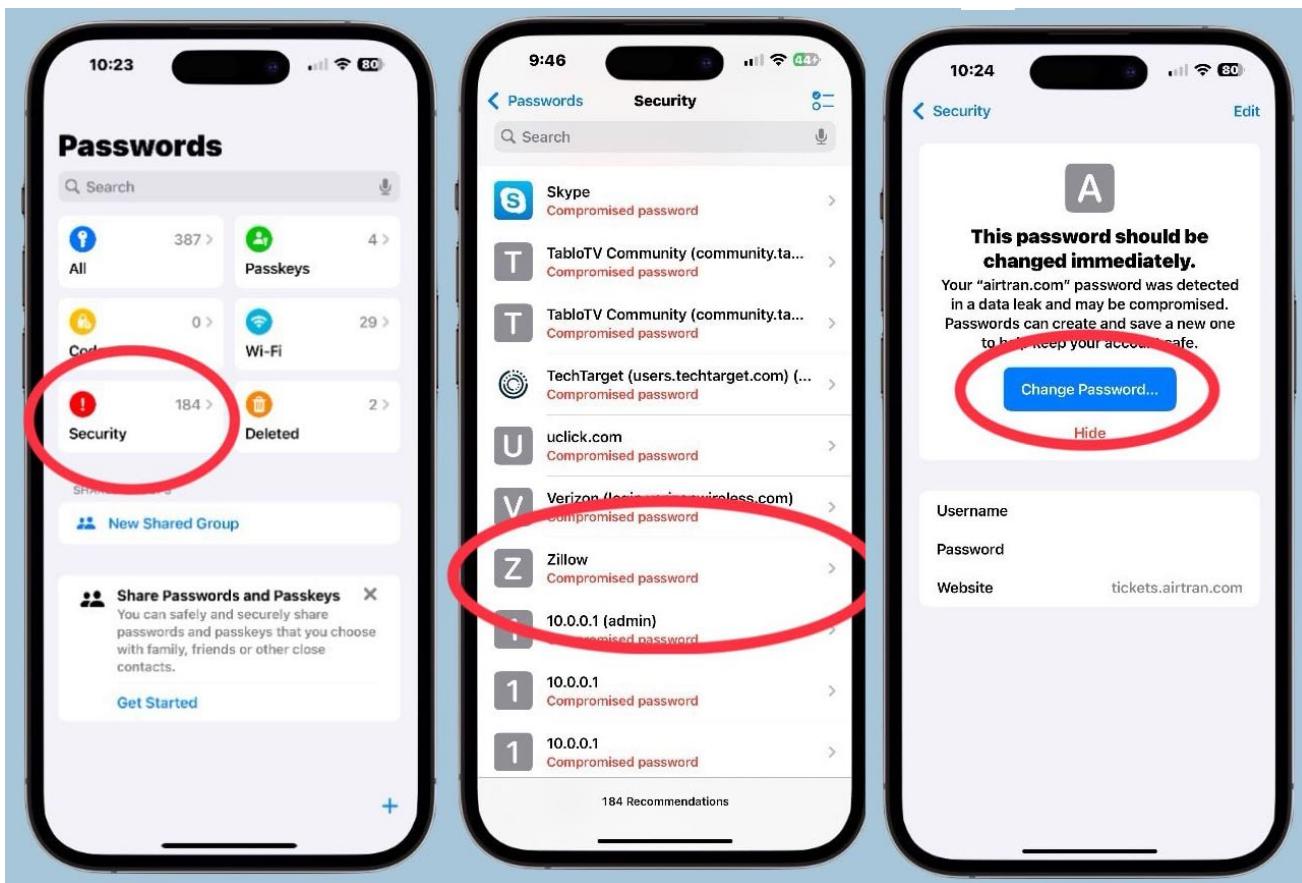
If you're like me, you probably use passwords to log in to hundreds of websites and apps. I have 387, for example. The only realistic way to deal with that is to give up the whole idea that you'll remember the login details for all these accounts. And there's absolutely no reason to try.

Apple makes it easy to store and use your passwords with its new [Passwords app](#). With it, your Apple device (iPhone, Mac, etc.) remembers passwords for you, and automatically inserts them into websites and apps. All you have to do is verify your identity with Face ID or Touch ID.

This makes it easy for you to use strong passwords and change them periodically because you never need to remember them. Your computer remembers for you. This means a strong, secure passcode is every bit as easy to use as stupid ones like [“12345678”](#) and [“password 123.”](#)

Your Apple devices protect the login details they store far better than many companies do. And when one of those companies gets hacked, your information gets compromised. So if you don't ever change passwords, you're opening yourself up to a criminal using your login info to, say, buy a bunch of products on Amazon. Or simply empty your bank accounts.

How to find and change passwords compromised by data breaches



Go to the Passwords app, open the Security section, choose a recommended account, then tap Change Password. [Screenshots: Ed Hardy/Cult of Mac]

Beyond simply storing them, your Apple device also will warn you if the login info in the Passwords app has been compromised by some negligent company's data leak. It's easy to find which ones need to be updated.

This feature is available on iPhone, iPad and Mac. (I'm using iPhone for my example.) Go to the new **Passwords app**. You'll need to go through Face ID or Touch ID to open it. Then look for the **Security** section on the app's home screen. Next to this you probably will see a number indicating how many security problems iCloud Keychain found in your password list. You'll note I have 184 – I need to take my own advice and update some passwords.

Now tap on **Security** to show a list of websites and applications for which your passwords have problems. You are told why for each one. "Compromised password" in angry red letters is one option. Other possible labels are "Easily guessed password" and "Reused password."

You have the option to tap on each website for a more detailed description of the security problems. This might include a scolding on reusing passwords. For each of

these recommendations, the Passwords app gives you the option to **Change Password**.

An example of changing a Google password

To give you an example of how easy this is, I'll change the password for one of my Google accounts using the Passwords app. While looking at the list of recommendations in the app's **Security** section, I see a warning that I use the same login details for my Gmail account as another website. So I hit **Change Password**, which opens the Google sign-on screen. I must sign in to the Google account before I can change anything, obviously. There's no problem because the Passwords app has the user name and current password stored and fills them in.

Google then takes me to a screen to enter a new password and confirm it. The Safari browser is smart enough to figure out that I want to create a new password, and it automatically suggests a strong one.

The Passwords app then asks if I should store the new password. I tell it to do so.

And that's it. The process is very similar with other sites. Or you could just take the Password app's warning and switch over to your favorite web browser, go to the website, and update the password there.

Change passwords the easy way: You'll be glad you did

I get it – changing passwords is kind of a hassle. I'm the guy with 184 security warnings, after all. But it's worth it.

Any day you discover someone has used one of your leaked passwords to steal money from you is a bad day. Changing your passwords goes a long way toward preventing that.

Need more help? Read our guide to [Apple's new Passwords app](#) or try an [Apple how-to on passwords for Mac users](#).