

Identity Theft Safety Tips

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the nation, and students may be particularly vulnerable to this crime. Learn how to protect yourself and your future from identity theft by going to www.ed.gov/misused

The first step to prevent identity theft is awareness of how and when you use your personal information. By keeping close tabs on your personal information, you can reduce your chances of becoming an identity theft victim.

- Memorize your Social Security number and passwords. Don't record your password on papers you carry with you.
- Don't use your date of birth as your password.
- Shred pre-approved credit applications and other financial documents before discarding them.
- Order credit reports every year from each of the major credit reporting agencies and thoroughly review them for accuracy.
- Never give personal or financial information over the phone or Internet unless you initiated the contact.
- Don't carry your Social Security card or birth certificate with you.
- Report lost or stolen credit cards immediately.
- Check your monthly credit card and bank statements for unusual activity.
- Use a firewall program on your computer, especially if you leave your computer connected to the Internet 24 hours a day.
- Do not download files sent to you by strangers or click on hyperlinks from people you don't know.

Source: <http://www.les.sc.edu/safetytips.asp>