

June is National Internet Safety Month. National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) advises everyone to follow three easy steps before going online: **Stop. Think. Connect.** Here are a few guidelines to help keep you safe on-line:

Stop. Every time you access the Internet is an opportunity for someone to adversely impact you, so consider the security risks when posting, transacting, and sharing on-line. Understand the consequences of your actions and implications for your on-line privacy. Little bits of data, such as a phone number posted, or a birthday on Facebook, can be used to piece together personal information about you.

Think. Be wary of communications from strangers, or people you meet online. Also, be aware of unsolicited requests from friends, or businesses you have relationships with, like your bank or credit card company. Communication asking for your immediate action, or for personal information should raise red flags. If your financial institution asks for immediate action, reach out to the institution through a phone number you know to be associated with that institution to verify the communication.

Connect. When banking or shopping online, make sure the site is secure. Look for web addresses that start with `https://`, which means the site takes extra measures to help secure your personal information. `Http://` is not secure. Also, be aware that shared, public Wi-Fi connections are not secure. Hackers may be able to access your private information while on public Wi-Fi. Wait until you are on a private, secure connection to check accounts that require a login.

Cybercriminals are counting on you to be unaware and to not take Internet safety precautions. By following the above guidelines you can take a few extra steps to help keep your personal information secure.