

# Security for Friends & Neighbors

EFF's Security Education Companion (SEC) is a curriculum and educational resource for digital security workshops



EFF One-Pager  
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Whether you're new to computer security concepts or you're new to teaching, there's a place for you. We've written tips for first-time teachers who want to share their digital security knowledge in single day sessions with friends and neighbors.

We encourage new digital security teachers to teach in pairs: plan your workshops with a friend.

## Who deserves security and privacy? (Everyone!)

Security and privacy are a team sport, and it takes everyone—friends, neighbors and colleagues—to help each other protect their digital information. Teachers have different approaches on how they like to share digital security with others. SEC employs an inclusive approach to teaching digital security by empowering digital security novices to take meaningful steps toward better security hygiene in a non-threatening way. You won't find methods like hacking participants, using scare tactics, looking down on tools and operating systems, or advocating for “perfect” security in this resource. This curriculum and educational resource is friendly and accessible for beginners and advanced users alike.

## What is security education and why is it important?

**It's not just a set of tools:** Security education is about teaching mindsets and skills that can be applied across different circumstances. Engaging people in a safe environment is as important as learning how to use the tools that make security a reality.

**It's different for every person:** Every individual will have a different set of needs, threat models, and concerns. Part of being an effective security teacher is being able to meet people where they are and help them make informed decisions about their digital safety as you teach them how to engage with these issues and concepts.

**It's empowerment:** At its heart, the goal of security education is helping learners develop a sense of personal agency about their privacy and security. When people feel helpless, hopeless, or overwhelmed by potential security threats, they are less likely to take steps to protect themselves. It is the responsibility of security educators to show learners how they can be in control of their own digital security.

## **Introducing the Security Education Companion: your resource for teaching digital security to beginners**

This resource came out of interviews with dozens of U.S.-based and international trainers about what learners struggle with, trainers' teaching techniques, the types of materials they use, and what kinds of educational content and resources they want.

SEC draws from community-centric approaches, as well as harm reduction, adult learning, and inclusive education. This informs our approach to how security and privacy concepts can be taught more effectively to beginners who don't identify as technically savvy. For each topic—like threat modeling, passwords, two-factor authentication, password managers, end-to-end encryption tools, and so on—SEC outlines learning objectives that structure each lesson and activity, and provides accompanying handouts and graphics.

### **Want more information?**

- Browse our introduction to teaching security concepts at [sec.eff.org/articles](https://sec.eff.org/articles)
- Visualize technical concepts with graphical handouts from [sec.eff.org/materials](https://sec.eff.org/materials)
- Pick out the best security lessons for your learners at [sec.eff.org/topics](https://sec.eff.org/topics)
- Keep up to date on security in the news at [sec.eff.org/blog](https://sec.eff.org/blog).