



The lead up to the silly season is a busy and stressful time of year. With more festivities than you can click a mouse at, it's important to keep your cyber security in check while you shop, surf and share online.

Avoid being caught out and follow the "12 Days of Online Safety" - our top 12 online safety tips that will ensure you have a safe, secure and very merry Christmas.

## On the first day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Reset your password**

It's a good time of year to reset your passwords and make them more secure than ever. Ensure your new passwords are at least eight characters long and contain deliberate misspelling and numbers. Also, choose different passwords for different sites and applications so if one password is compromised, the damage is minimised.

## On the second day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Take precaution when purchasing**

Christmas shopping online is convenient and fun; just remember to take care when making a purchase that requires a credit card or your personal details. Check the site is secure by looking for the 'Secure Socket Layer' padlock down the bottom of the page - "no padlock, no purchase". Only provide the details you have to and ignore any additional information requests or personal questions.

## On the third day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Keep an eye on your kids online**

Time off over school holidays means your kids are likely to spend more time social networking on the web. It's a good time to set some basic ground rules so your kids develop cyber-safe habits from the get-go.

## On the fourth day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Be aware of scams**

Online scams and fraudulent emails are rife at Christmas time, so think twice before sharing account details, passwords and other personal info when your 'bank' gets in touch. If you're unsure if an email or phone call is legit, call the organisation back on their listed phone number and ask.

## On the fifth day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Give the gift of anti-virus software**

If you or someone you know doesn't have anti-virus software installed on their computer, now is the perfect time to download and install it. Ensure you regularly download the latest security patches and set up automatic updates where possible.

## On the sixth day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Spring clean your devices**

We carry a lot of information with us on our laptop computers, smartphones and tablet devices. If you don't need to carry it around with you, transfer it to a hard drive and keep it at home. This minimises the risk if your devices are lost or stolen.

## On the seventh day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Watch your hot spot**

Many public wireless hot spots are not secure, making it possible for others to track what you're doing. Avoid hotspots that are run by people or organisations you don't know and if you're prompted to select a network type, always select 'public' as this will give you increased security.

## On the eighth day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Preview your Facebook profile**

It's important you regularly preview your Facebook profile so you can see just how much is visible to others. Visit your profile page and click on "View As" on the top right corner, then update your settings as required.

## On the ninth day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Watch what you tweet**

While enjoying the festive season, it's wise to think twice about what you tweet and what photos you tag on social networking sites. Online content can come back and bite you so remember, what happens online might not always stay online.

## On the tenth day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Wipe before you recycle**

If you're lucky enough to score a new phone from Santa this year, why not recycle your old one? Before you hand your device over, make sure you wipe all photographs, personal files and contact information.

## On the eleventh day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Surf between the flags**

If you're travelling over Christmas and plan on keeping in touch using Internet cafes, make sure you surf safely by deleting your browsing history before logging off, limit the amount of personal banking and online shopping you do and make sure no one is snooping over your shoulder trying to read what you're typing.

## On the twelfth day of online safety, iiNet said to me: **Spread the word on safety**

We're keen to spread the word on online safety and we need your help. Share "iiNet's 12 Days of Online Safety" with your friends and family and ask them to pass it on too. It's the gift that keeps on giving.

  [blog.iinet.net.au](http://blog.iinet.net.au)

