

JIMS VIRTUAL WORLD

A NEWSLETTER BY THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

9 ways to increase the security of your laptop while on the road

Using your laptop to get work done away from your office or on the road is becoming widely accepted. But this rapid growth in laptop computing has made portable systems the target for theft around the world. If your laptop computer is stolen, company information can be exposed, as well as your personal and financial information.

Use these 9 tips to learn how you can keep your laptop more secure when you're on the road.

1. Avoid using computer bags

Computer bags can make it obvious that you're carrying a laptop. Instead, try toting your laptop in something more common like a padded briefcase or suitcase.

2. Never leave access numbers or passwords in your carrying case

Keeping your password with your laptop is like keeping the keys in the car. Without your password or important access numbers it will be more difficult for a thief to access your personal and corporate information.

3. Carry your laptop with you

Always take your laptop on the plane or train rather than checking it with your luggage. It's easy to lose luggage and it's just as easy to lose your laptop. If you're traveling by car, keep your laptop out of sight. For example, lock it in the trunk when you're not using it.

4. Encrypt your data

If someone should get your laptop and gain access to your files, encryption can give you another layer of protection. With Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7 you can choose to encrypt files and folders. Then, even if someone gains access to an important file, they can't decrypt it and see your information.

5. Keep your eye on your laptop

When you go through airport security don't lose sight of your bag. Hold your bag until the person in front of you has gone through the metal detector. Many bags look alike and yours can easily be lost in the shuffle.

6. Avoid setting your laptop on the floor

Putting your laptop on the floor is an easy way to forget or lose track of it. If you have to set it down, try to place it between your feet or against your leg (so you're always aware it's there).

7. Buy a laptop security device

If you need to leave your laptop in a room or at your desk, use a laptop security cable to securely attach it to a heavy chair, table, or desk. The cable makes it more difficult for someone to take your laptop. There are also programs that will report the location of a stolen laptop. They work when the laptop connects to the Internet, and can report the laptop's exact physical location. One such tracing program is [ComputracePlus](#).

8. Use a screen guard

These guards help prevent people from peeking over your shoulder as you work on sensitive information in a public place. This is especially helpful when you're traveling or need to work in a crowded area. This screen guard from [Secure-It](#) is just one example of a screen guard you could use.

9. Try not to leave your laptop in your hotel room or with the front desk

Too many things have been lost in hotel rooms and may not be completely secure. If you must leave your laptop in your room, put the "do not disturb" sign on the door.