

## Over 15,000 hacked email and social media accounts reported in one year.

If a hacker got into your email or social media account, what would they find? Health and banking information? Names and contact details for your friends and family? Private photos and messages? For most people, it's at least one of those.

Your email and social media accounts contain a wealth of personal information about you, which makes them a lucrative target for cyber criminals. **Between February 2020 and February 2021, Action Fraud received 15,214 reports about email and social media account hacking.** The majority of reports (88%) were made by individuals, with 12% of reports being made by businesses. Analysis of the crime reports revealed that Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat were the most affected social media accounts, with phishing messages being the most common tactic used by cyber criminals to lure unsuspecting victims.

The motivation behind the hacks are varied and can range from financial gain, to revenge or personal amusement. Some victims are extorted for money, whilst others have their accounts used to send malicious links to their contacts. One victim who had multiple email and social media accounts hacked paid over £2,000 to regain access to them. Another victim reported that her hacked Facebook account was used to trick her friends into sending money into a PayPal account they thought belonged to her.

### **Secure your email and social media accounts in just a few minutes. Here's what you need to do:**

- 1: Use a strong and separate password for your email,** as well as other important accounts, such as your banking or social media accounts.
- 2: Enable two-factor authentication (2FA).** It will help to stop hackers from getting into your online accounts, even if they have your password.
- 3: If you can't access your account,** search the company's online support or help pages. You'll find information about how to recover your account.

For detailed instructions on how to reset your password or enable 2FA on your accounts, visit: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/secureyouraccounts>

*(Please forward this email to any friends, family members or colleagues that may find this information useful)*

#### **Message Sent By**

Action Fraud (Action Fraud, Administrator, National)