



## Is the Online World More Dangerous Than the Real World?

### Myth vs. Fact

**Myth:** Identity theft usually happens on the Internet.

**Fact:** Online methods accounted for only 11% of identity theft in 2009.

*(Javelin Strategy and Research, 2009)*

Most identity theft occurs offline. Stolen wallets and paperwork account for almost half (43%) of all identity theft.

Steps you can take to help prevent identity theft include:

- Defend your computer with firewall, antivirus, and antispyware software. Keep all software current (including your Web browser) with automatic updates. Password-protect your wireless connection at home.
- Never share with strangers personal information that could be used to steal your identity, such as your government-issued ID number.
- Never leave your wallet, purse, mobile phone, or laptop unattended.
- Create strong passwords that are hard to guess, and do not share them with others.

**For more tips, go to:**  
[microsoft.com/protect/fraud](http://microsoft.com/protect/fraud).

**Myth:** Child predators are moving to the Internet to exploit children by pretending they are children.

**Fact:** In 95% of Internet-initiated sex crimes against minors, the children knew the perpetrators were adults.

*(Crimes Against Children Research Center, 2010)*

Things you can do to help protect children on the Internet include:

- Educate yourself and children about the risks of online contact with strangers.
- Use parental controls to monitor and limit where children go on the Internet.
- Help children preserve their privacy on the Internet by teaching them to limit the information they divulge.

**For more tips, visit:**  
[microsoft.com/protect/familysafety/default.aspx](http://microsoft.com/protect/familysafety/default.aspx).





**Myth:** Making purchases on the Internet is risky.

**Fact:** Most security experts agree that the risk of fraud is greater with offline purchases.

To shop more safely online:

- Look for https ("s" stands for secure) in the Web address (URL) and a closed padlock [🔒] beside it or in the lower right corner of the window.
- Create strong passwords for all online accounts, particularly those used for banking or shopping.
- Consider the reputation of the company or website from which you buy.
- Never make online financial transactions on a public or shared computer, or on a public wireless network.

**For more tips, visit:**  
[microsoft.com/protect/fraud/finances/shopping\\_us.aspx](http://microsoft.com/protect/fraud/finances/shopping_us.aspx)

**Myth:** You have no control over your reputation on the Internet.

**Fact:** You can take steps to control your online reputation, and many do.

In a recent study in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States, over three quarters of those surveyed took steps in the last six months to protect their online reputations. This included searching online for information that was posted **about** them, and applying privacy settings on social networks.

*This is important because 86% of human resources professionals surveyed stated that a positive online reputation influences hiring.*  
*(Microsoft Online Reputation Research, 2010)*

Things you can do to help protect your online reputation:

- Monitor your reputation by searching for information about yourself on the Internet.
- Apply appropriate privacy settings on social networking services.
- Enhance your reputation by posting positive information in your online profiles.
- Defend your reputation by correcting online information about yourself that is untrue.

**For more tips, see:**  
[microsoft.com/protect/privacy/reputation.aspx](http://microsoft.com/protect/privacy/reputation.aspx)

