

Connect to public Wi-Fi, and you could be connecting to danger.



www.getsafeonline.org



There's nothing easier and more convenient than being able to connect to Wi-Fi when you're in a café, pub, gym, hotel room or other public place. So you can keep up with your friends, check the news, catch up on your email and check your bank account.

BUT WAIT!

Is that public Wi-Fi secure?



If you're doing anything private online such as banking, paying for something, logging into a shopping site or confidential email – our advice is not to do it when connected to a Wi-Fi hotspot.

This is because you have no guarantee that the connection is secure, so there's a chance that it could be eavesdropped on or hijacked by a criminal, eager to defraud you or steal your identity ... or both. This could be done by somebody snooping on the café, pub or hotel's genuine but unsecured Wi-Fi ... or setting up a fake hotspot on their laptop and fooling you to log in to it.



This may sound like the stuff of a spy thriller, but it's happening to people every day, across the UK.

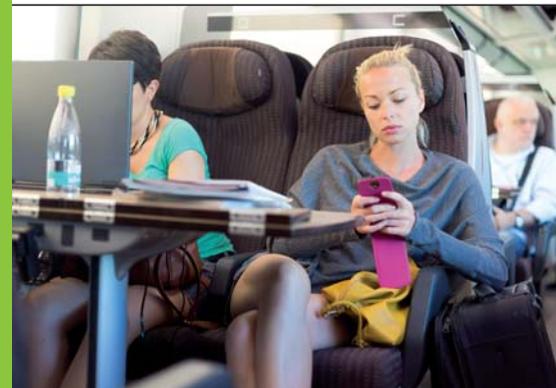
We've put together some simple top tips to help you protect yourself from inadvertently giving away confidential information via Wi-Fi hotspots:

Top tips for using public Wi-Fi

- Don't use the public Wi-Fi provided in places such as cafés, pubs and hotel rooms if doing anything confidential online, including logging into online accounts.
- Remember that just being given an access code or being asked for your email address, doesn't indicate that the Wi-Fi connection is secure.
- Instead of using premises' hotspots, use a mobile broadband dongle that is set to secure, your 3G or 4G data connection – even if it's slower – or wait until you can access a router you know to be secure.
- Consider using a VPN (Virtual Private Network) to connect when accessing your company network. If you are a mobile worker, ask your IT department.



- Wherever possible, use well-known, commercial hotspot providers such as BT OpenZone or T-Mobile.
- Ensure your home and office wireless networks are secured.
- It's OK to use public Wi-Fi hotspots for things that you don't have to log into or aren't confidential, like checking the news or planning (but not booking) your next holiday.



For more information, visit www.getsafeonline.org select Smartphones & Tablets then Wireless Networks & Hotspots

Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by a number of government departments, law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.

For the full story on protecting yourself, your family, and keeping your finances and your workplace safe on the internet, visit

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