How to Survive a Data Breach

Unlike a postcard, nobody likes receiving a letter about their data being lost in a data breach. Sometimes your sensitive information is exposed onto the internet through no fault of your own. Because so much of our sensitive data is stored digitally, sometimes your information can be stolen even though you weren't personally targeted and you maintain good cybersecurity behaviors. When you find out your data might have been compromised in a breach, act fast.

- ✓ As soon as you find out your data might have been lost in a breach, **keep informed about the matter**.

Monitor the breached organization's communications about the incident. Look up stories from high-repute news organizations and info from trusted cybersecurity outlets to help you understand the nature of the data breach and what you should do.

- ✓ Change your password for the affected account and make it unique, **16 characters long**, and complex. **Enable multi-factor authentication**.

- ✓ **Keep an eye on your financial accounts for any suspicious activity**. If you notice anything unusual, contact the financial institution immediately and report the incident.

- ✓ **Look over your credit report for unauthorized activity**. Apply for credit monitoring if offered by the breached organization. **Report any discrepancies to the credit bureaus**.

- ✓ Be aware cybercriminals exploit big data breach news by sending **phishing messages** designed to trick you into sharing sensitive information. Legitimate organizations never ask for sensitive information, like passwords or bank account numbers, through email or text messages.