

# Security Corner

## Protecting Your DEVICES

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With all of today's technology, the ever-growing number of devices we have means there is no shortage of security threats. Personal computers, mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, VR headsets (and who knows what's coming next) all provide a potential security threat, and are in your house, or in your pocket, or on your head. The bad actors are primarily going after the quickest and easiest targets. As the owner and operator of these devices there are a series of things that you can do to make yourself a harder target.

**Firewalls and Anti-Virus** Security applications are readily available, often installed within your Microsoft or Apple operating system. Using these resources or installing a trusted third-party application (or both!) makes your device tougher to compromise, making it a less attractive target. A lot of effective security is avoiding being the low-hanging fruit, and this is a big step toward that goal.

**Patching and Updating** Nobody is perfect, including computer and mobile application programmers. Programmers, users, and security experts regularly identify unintended (and sometimes, unfortunately, intended) vulnerabilities within these programs. Updates are regularly released to address those vulnerabilities, and it is up to you to install these updates. Installing these security patches and updates is another step in avoiding being the low-hanging fruit.

**Manage Your Location Sharing** The most secure location sharing setting for your mobile device is turning it off entirely. But then you lose functionality that relies on sharing, such as GPS directions and the Dunkin' app locating the nearest store. So, in practice, turning it off entirely may not be realistic. Your device has options for choosing which apps can use location, and if they use it all the time or only when the app is open. Managing these settings helps to protect you from oversharing and putting your device at risk.

**Use Trusted Networks (or VPNs!)** Public wifi networks are the wild west of internet connectivity. They are convenient, but you never know how much time the owners dedicate to network security (it is a safe assumption that it's not a lot). The most secure thing you can do is not use these networks. But if you do need or want to use a public network, your security is up to you. Unencrypted wifi traffic on an open network is an easy target, but using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) makes a specifically-encrypted connection for your device to protect yourself.



## How to Manage Market Volatility



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The stock markets can and do experience unpredictable price movements on a regular basis, both to the upside and the downside which financial experts refer to as market volatility. We'll focus primarily on downside volatility as that's generally the greatest concern to most investors.

A "market correction" in a major index such as the Dow Jones Industrial Average is a decline of 10% or more. A "bear market" is a decline of 20% or more and conversely a "bull market" refers to an increase of 20% or greater. Volatile markets generally tend to be temporary and recent history has shown that they can occur with little or no warning.<sup>1</sup>

Market volatility in many instances can be caused by a variety of factors such as unexpected economic news, political developments, domestic and international events such as the pandemic or geopolitical conflict, and changes in Federal Reserve monetary policy.<sup>2</sup>

Four steps you can take to manage market volatility:

**"Time in the market" is more important than "Timing the market."** Try to tune out short-term volatility. Taking a long-term view of the market is generally a more effective strategy than trying to time it in the short term.<sup>3</sup>

**Revisit or establish your financial plan.** Review your financial goals and time horizon, make any necessary adjustments, and then most importantly stick to your plan. This will help to keep you on track and avoid any emotional urges to buy or sell in reaction to short-term price changes.

**Review your risk tolerance and diversified portfolio.** Do you find yourself becoming anxious during down markets? Are you willing to accept moderate losses in exchange for the potential of earning higher returns? Diversifying and periodically rebalancing your portfolio with an appropriate mix of stocks, bonds, and cash can help you to weather any unexpected market turbulence.<sup>4</sup>

**Work with an experienced financial professional.** A financial advisor can review your situation and investments, make sure that you're following a solid plan, and provide you with confidence as you plan for a prosperous financial future.

<sup>1,2</sup>USBank.com <sup>3,4</sup>Fidelity.com

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