

Q: I tried to change my password using the `passwd` command or Preferences.app, but it didn't seem to take effect. Why not?

Q: How do I remove my password?

A: Use the Preferences application to change your password. If you are on a network composed of NEXTSTEP and non-NEXTSTEP OS's you might also need to update the NIS (formerly known as Yellow Pages) database by running the `yppasswd` command. If your account information is stored in NIS, run the following command in a Terminal or Shell:

```
machine>yppasswd your-login-name
```

as in: `yppasswd jsmith`.

If your account is stored in NetInfo (which is the default in NEXTSTEP) do the following to remove your password:

- Launch NetInfoManager.
- Open the domain where your account is stored; this is probably the root (/) domain if you

are on a Network. If you are on a standalone machine, the right (local) domain will come up by default.

- Click the users directory , then double-click your account name. This opens the property editor.

- Click the passwd property, then remove its value and save the changes

Removing a password that is stored in NIS is slightly more difficult. On the yp-master server do the following as root:

- Edit the /etc/passwd file and remove the passwd field from your account.

- Then run the following commands in a Shell or Terminal:

```
ypmaster#cd /etc/yp  
ypmaster#make passwd
```

Warning:

Removing a password from an account is a serious security risk! Make sure that all the accounts have a password. Change the passwords once a month.

What makes a good password? One that's:

- easy to remember
- hard to guess
- uses upper and lower case letters, number, and punctuation
- is not found in the dictionary
- is not a proper name

The UNIX password security mechanism really depends on two things:

- the fact that it's hard to decrypt the encrypted passwords
- users' choosing passwords that are hard to guess (so that brute-force attacks are intractable)

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Valid for 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 3.1