

For immediate release

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# Phone fears: Pincodes used to dodge Facebook pranks and hide naked selfies

- ➔ 66% of Australians use smartphone passcodes in fear of being exposed
- ➔ 2 million Aussies lock devices to protect inappropriate photos
- ➔ Best ways to keep your phone safe

**11 January, 2017, Sydney, Australia** -- The majority of Aussies use pincodes on their smartphones to hide everything from financial details to private photos and philandering, according to new research by [finder.com.au](http://finder.com.au), Australia's most visited comparison site<sup>1</sup>.

The [finder.com.au](http://finder.com.au) study of 2,027 people reveals that 66% of smartphone users -- equivalent to 12 million Aussies -- keep their phones passcode protected.

The main reason people lock their devices is to guard against identity fraud, although phone fears range from kids gaining access to prank Facebook posts and accidental Tinder swipes

Alex Kidman, telco expert at [finder.com.au](http://finder.com.au), says some people go to great lengths to keep their devices locked, using fingerprint recognition and iris scans to gain access.

"The good, the bad and the ugly is stored on our devices and some have more to hide than others," he says.

Surprisingly, one in three (34%) smartphone owners leave their phone unlocked when unattended.

"It's fair to say almost our entire lives are stored on our phones these days so it's reassuring to see that most aren't prepared to take the risk of leaving them unlocked," says Mr

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<sup>1</sup> Experian Hitwise since 2015

Kidman.

Gen Y has more to hide than any other generation with one in four (25%) using a password to conceal inappropriate or private images, compared to Gen X (8%) and Baby Boomers (2%).

Baby Boomers are the most concerned with keeping financial details safe, with more than half (52%) keeping their phone locked for this reason, compared to 35% of Gen X and just 20% of Gen Y.

### Top 10 phone fears that makes Aussies use pincodes

1	I'm worried about identity fraud (35%)
2	I want to protect my financial details (33%)
3	To prevent my kids from accessing my phone (17%)
4	I want to avoid my friends posting a prank status on Facebook (13%)
5	So no one sees the inappropriate/private images I have saved (10%)
6	I have to for work (7%)
7	So my friends don't accidentally like something or comment on a post they shouldn't on Instagram (6%)
8	I don't want my partner to access my phone (5%)
9	So my friends don't intentionally like my crush's photo on social media (3%)
10	So my friends don't accept a proposal on tinder or other dating app (3%)

source: [finder.com.au](http://finder.com.au)



### Five ways to keep your phone safe

#### 1. Set a strong pincode

The name of your dog or first born is pretty guessable, especially if you have kids trying to crack your pin. Use a good combination of letters, numbers and symbols.

#### 2. Use the fingerprint scanner

If you have a newer smartphone, you needn't bother with a pincode: just use biometric identification like a fingerprint swipe or iris scanner. The best part is, that's one less password you need to remember.

### **3. Lock important apps**

Locking your phone is one thing, but how about your banking app? Depending on your phone, there are apps such as App Lock which add an extra security layer for whichever app you choose. If your phone falls into the wrong hands, at least your banking details are safe.

### **4. Back it up**

You don't want to lose your phone and all your treasured photos. Regularly back up your device so all your data is saved elsewhere and can be easily retrieved.

### **5. Steer clear of dodgy apps**

Stick to downloading games in the app store and official apps rather than a third-party free version. It may be free, but it could be loaded with nasty surprises.