

Google account users get extra security

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Google just made it harder for hackers to hack into Google user accounts.

(PhysOrg.com) -- Google announced on Thursday that they are giving their Gmail users additional account security, free of charge. As of Thursday Google account users can turn on a "two-step authentication" feature that will require them to type in a special second password in addition to their normal password to access their account.

Users can acquire this short-lived code either by a phone call, [text message](#), or use of smartphone apps for Android, iPhone and [Blackberry](#) devices. This feature has been available to paid [Google](#) Apps users for the past six months, and now Google has been testing the feature internally with users who have been having problems with hackers getting into their accounts.

The process for turning on this feature in your Google account is a little

involved and requires approximately 15 minutes to set up. Users will be given the option to give out a backup phone number incase their phone is lost or stolen. Also Google account users who use IMAP access to their [Gmail](#) will require a special 16-character, randomly generated password instead of the normal password.

So what happens if you lose your phone and backup number? Google considered this may happen and gave users a way to regain access to their account with tough-to-answer security questions.

This security feature can pose a problem for anyone who travels overseas and may not be able to receive text messages while traveling. The smartphone apps for Android and the [iPhone](#) will generate password codes without a network connection.

The “two-step authentication” feature is currently only available in English however Google is working on translation and should be available for smartphone apps to all Google users in their native languages in a few months.

More information: [Google Blog](#)

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