

Google using its clout to widen use of encryption

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Google is wielding the power of its dominant Internet search to push more websites into protecting the people using their services.

The move announced late Wednesday involves a change in Google's closely guarded formula for determining the rankings of its [search results](#).

Websites that automatically encrypt their services will now be boosted higher in Google Inc.'s recommendation system. For now, encryption will remain a small factor in Google's ranking formula, but the Mountain View, California says it may put greater emphasis on the security measure in the future as part of its campaign to make it tougher for government spies and computer hackers to grab the [personal data](#) of unwitting Web surfers.

Users can tell if a website is encrypted if its address begins with "https."

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