

Online Authentication Barometer

October 2021

What's the latest in consumer habits, trends and adoption of authentication technologies across the globe?

To find out, the FIDO Alliance conducted a survey of 10,000 consumers in the U.S., U.K., France, Germany, Australia, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, India and China.











Executive Summary

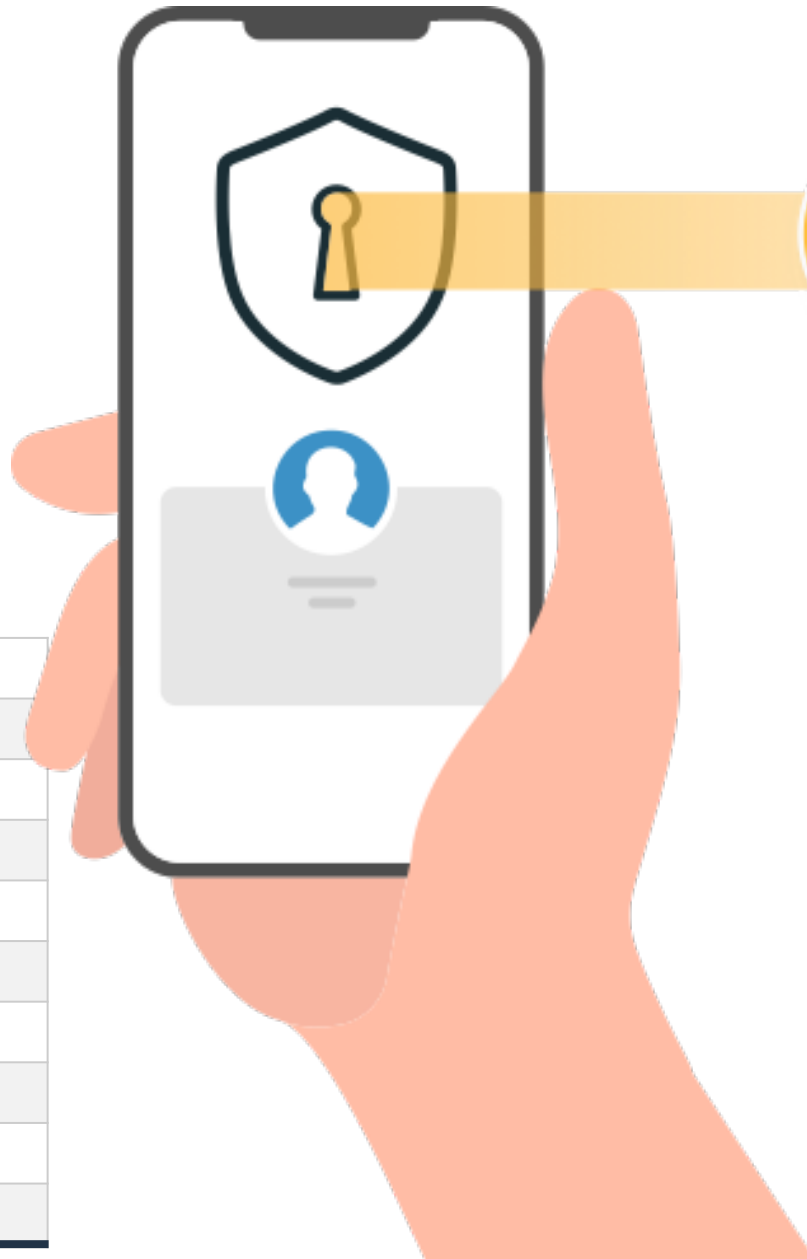
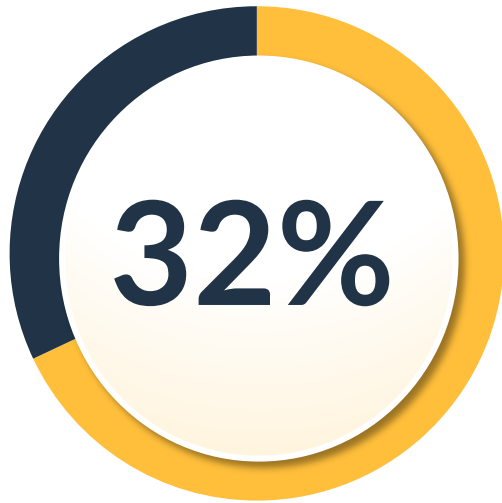
Here are five things we learned from this research:

- Passwords are, unsurprisingly, still prevailing over other, more secure and widely available authentication methods.
- Biometrics are gaining traction, both in perception of security and usage — a positive shift compared to historical consumer opinions.
- Consumers still wrongly believe that taking action to strengthen a password is the best way to secure their account.
- Many consumers still don't know what action to take to secure their accounts, even if they wanted to.
- Consumers need to be educated on the risks and implications of poor account security and the solutions available to lock down their accounts.











Passwords are, unsurprisingly, still the most common method of logging in across different accounts and devices.

Here's how many consumers have used a password in the past 60 days to access different accounts.

		56%	59%	45%	38%	27%
		Financial Services	Work Computer or Account	Social Media	Multi-Media Accounts such as Netflix or Spotify	Smart Home Devices
US		55%	55%	45%	36%	24%
UK		61%	58%	43%	38%	24%
France		58%	54%	47%	39%	22%
Germany		54%	54%	40%	31%	19%
Australia		66%	59%	42%	34%	24%
Singapore		65%	62%	52%	41%	27%
Japan		38%	52%	32%	23%	23%
South Korea		35%	51%	34%	28%	28%
India		59%	62%	58%	52%	40%
China		67%	68%	62%	57%	46%













Yet, 32% of consumers believe biometrics are the most secure way to log into their online accounts, apps and devices (compared to passwords, 19%)

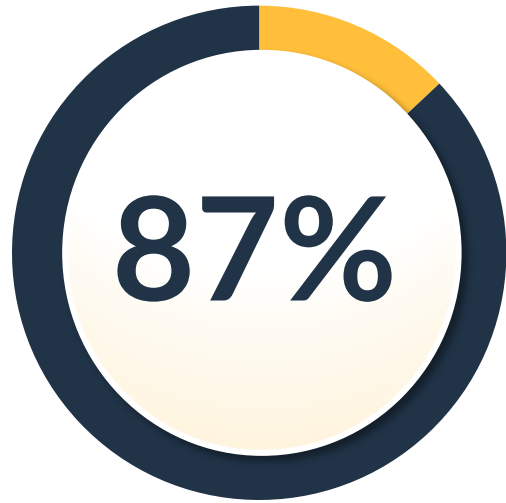
US		29%
UK		44%
France		34%
Germany		32%
Australia		32%
Singapore		36%
Japan		19%
South Korea		20%
India		31%
China		42%

This could be a factor in why biometrics are the second most commonly used method for login.

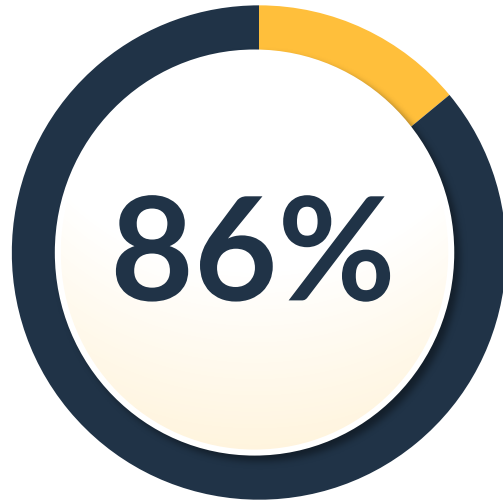
Here's how many consumers have used biometrics in the past 60 days to access different accounts.

		35% Financial Services	26% Work Computer or Account	22% Social Media	16% Multi-Media Accounts such as Netflix or Spotify	19% Smart Home Devices
US 		29%	20%	16%	13%	15%
UK 		39%	17%	22%	13%	13%
France 		26%	16%	13%	8%	7%
Germany 		25%	15%	12%	7%	9%
Australia 		25%	12%	15%	9%	9%
Singapore 		52%	28%	24%	17%	23%
Japan 		20%	26%	18%	11%	13%
South Korea 		26%	26%	20%	13%	16%
India 		51%	41%	35%	30%	34%
China 		59%	47%	44%	35%	47%

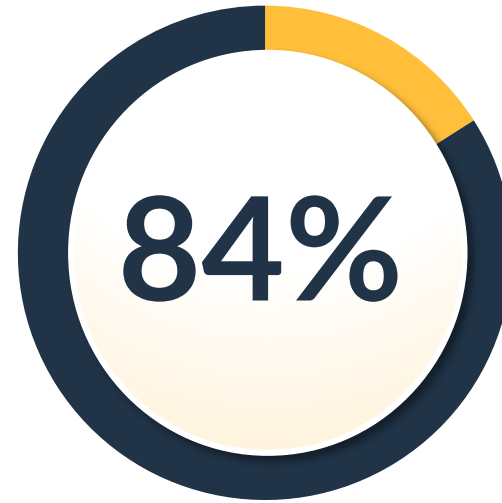
Consumers say they are concerned about their security.



would be concerned if their smartphone were to be hacked or compromised



would be concerned if their PC or laptop were hacked or compromised













have taken steps they believe will better protect their accounts from being hacked or compromised



Consumers say they are concerned about their security.

These are the steps respondents have taken that they believe will protect their accounts:

		43% Improved password strength	38% Now uses biometrics	21% Now uses authentication software
US		29%	20%	16%
UK		39%	17%	22%
France		26%	16%	13%
Germany		25%	15%	12%
Australia		25%	12%	15%
Singapore		52%	28%	24%
Japan		20%	26%	18%
South Korea		26%	26%	20%
India		51%	41%	35%
China		59%	47%	44%

Of those who have not taken action, a third (37%) say it's because they don't know how.

What should consumers know about increasing the security of their online accounts?

Consumers should be educated that not all authentication options are created equal. They should know about these technologies when considering how to secure their accounts:

- **Passwords.** While it is encouraged that all passwords should be unique and complex for every account, they shouldn't be relied on as the only method to keep accounts safe as they are an easy target for hackers.
- **SMS OTPs.** While a step up in security, one-time-passcodes have been recognized widely by the tech industry for being less effective against common threats like phishing, SIM swap, SS7 and more. They can also be a hassle.
- **Authenticator Apps.** While they raise the bar for security, they can be intercepted via phishing, man-in-the-middle and other advanced attacks. They also need to be re-set up whenever a user gets a new device.
- **FIDO Security Keys.** These provide maximum security, protecting accounts against targeted attacks 100% of the time. They are strongly recommended for users with administrator access, public-facing figures, C-level executives, or those who have larger online followings.
- **FIDO On-device Biometrics.** The benefits of security keys apply here as well, with an added layer of simplicity since many consumers already have access to this technology through the biometrics on phones or laptops that they are likely using already to unlock these devices.

Research Methodology

The survey was conducted among 10,000 consumers across the UK, France, Germany, US, Australia, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, India and China.

- At an overall level results are accurate to $\pm 1.0\%$ at 95% confidence limits assuming a result of 50%.
- The interviews were conducted online by Sapio Research in September 2021 using an email invitation and an online survey.
- This survey will be repeated on a regular basis to study the evolution of these results over time.

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