

Microsoft Furthers Password-Free Future

Written by Marco Attard
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The Windows 10 October update brings more capabilities to Windows Hello, the Microsoft login system-- now offering not only facial recognition, fingerprint or PIN, but also support for USB or NFC FIDO2 devices.



As a Microsoft blogpost insists, "passwords can be difficult to remember, are often reused and can be used to hack your account anywhere, anytime, from any device." Windows Hello already sidesteps the need for a password through facial recognition or fingerprint readers, while the Windows Security provides clear alerts in case one needs improve account protection.

One potential improvement comes to Dynamic Lock, the system pairing PC security with a smartphone. Dynamic lock pairs with a smartphone via Bluetooth, and automatically locks the PC whenever the mobile device is out of range. Also improved is Windows Hello setup, with the lock screen allowing one to instantly go to configuration.

As mentioned earlier, the Windows update brings support for security keys-- allowing users to sign into Microsoft services such as Outlook.com, Office 365, Skype, OneDrive, Cortana, Microsoft Edge, Xbox Live on PC, Mixer, Microsoft Store, Bing and MSN via hardware device. Such devices need to be Microsoft-compatible, and the company suggests offerings from partners such as the Yubico and Feitan.

Singing into a Microsoft Account with a security key requires logging into a Microsoft account on the Edge browser, before entering the "more security options" section within the Security tab. The instructions allow one to set up the key, with the FIDO2 standard handling public-private key encryption (the local device stores the private key, while the Microsoft cloud holds the public key).

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