

# Encryption

## How does encryption work?

Encryption is the process of taking plain text, like a text message or email, and scrambling it into an unreadable format — called “cipher text.” This helps protect the confidentiality of digital data either stored on computer systems or transmitted through a network like the internet.

When the intended recipient accesses the message, the information is translated back to its original form. This is called decryption.

## USBs or Pen Drives

USBs are a helpful way to move data but they can also spread viruses and malware from one computer or network to another.

You might want to consider other ways of transferring data that offer greater security, e.g. saving work to an online storage provider or emailing it to yourself.

## But if you must use a USB, do so with care.

- Only use USBs that you’ve been provided with by your school. Play it safe and don’t use your own or any freebies you’ve been given.
- Make sure the USB is password protected. This means the data stored on it will be encrypted so can’t be accessed if the USB is lost or stolen.
- If there is an option to ‘autorun’ programmes from the USB, make sure this is switched off so files have to be checked first.