STREAMLINER INVESTIGATES

All the Streaming Services Cracking Down on Password Sharing

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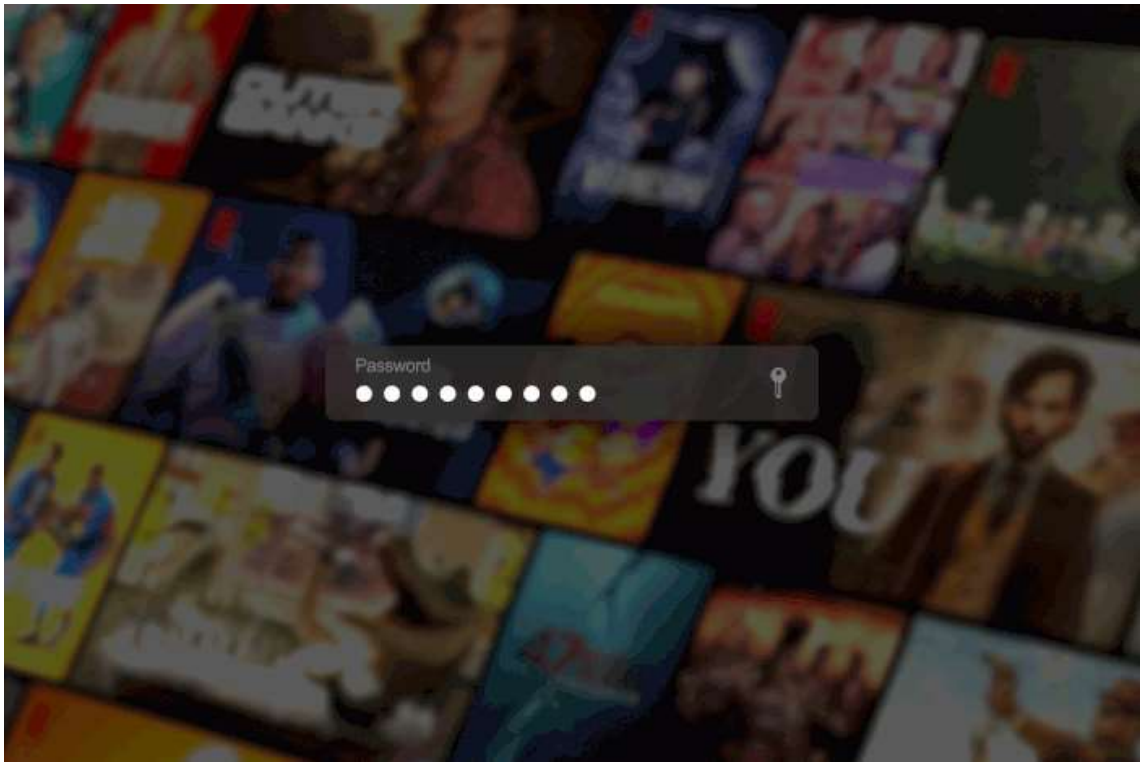


Photo-Illustration: Vulture; Photos: Netflix

This post was first published March 3, 2023, and has been updated several times, as streaming services mess with their terms and your monthly entertainment budgets.

Everyone — from those actually paying to the ones still bumming a log-in — wants to know how Netflix and other streaming services' crackdowns on password sharing affect them. Restricting a behavior widely seen as acceptable (even "caring"!) was always going to be risky. But it's the kind of drastic move that Netflix says actually grew subscribers — and it's a worst-case scenario for users still looking for ways to stay on their parents' or friends' accounts. These results may or may not change the way we use streaming services in general, depending on how other streamers deploy the same tactics. Disney+ and Hulu were the first to follow Netflix's lead and crack down on passwords, and now HBO Max is doing the same with its own restrictions.

In light of that, it's probably a good time to reacquaint ourselves with what exactly the password-sharing rules are at the major services. We reached out to seven of them to see where they stood on the issue.

HBO Max

The David Zaslav–run streamer is the latest service to crack down on password sharing, as subscribers are now being asked to confirm their main households for their HBO Max accounts as of October 2025. The streamer has been monitoring password sharing for years: "We anticipate that people living in the same household may share a single account/password, which is permitted in our user agreement," a rep for the company told us in 2023. "We are aware that password sharing outside of the household does occur and we discourage that activity." But that discouragement is now policy. Max rolled out an "Extra Member Add-on" tier for $7.99 a month in April 2025, and in May, on an earnings call, the company's head of streaming and games JB Perrette said their crackdown would grow "more assertive" in the next 12 to 18 months.

Disney+

Now, Disney stands for family! And family can be anywhere in the world; they can be your chosen family (a.k.a. your friends) and they can be your random ex-boyfriend's best friend's roommate. But it looks like money is thicker than blood, as Bob Iger has publicly said that "improper" password sharing will be dealt with. In 2024, the streamer mass-emailed its subscribers, warning that a March 14 update to the user agreement prohibits using "another person's username, password, or other account information" and adding that there will be "limitations on sharing your account outside of your household." And in late 2024, Disney rolled out a "Paid Sharing" plan, where subscribers are encouraged to add additional members to their account as an extra member if they do not live in the same household. The price ranges from $6.99 to $9.99 depending on their subscription tiers.

Hulu

The Disney+ stance applies to corporate cousin streamer as well. Hulu subscribers received similar emails outlining changes in their subscriber agreement saying that, "We're adding limitations on sharing your account outside of your household, and explaining how we may assess your compliance with these limitations." The agreement change went into effect on March 14, 2024, for current subscribers.

Prime Video

Amazon seems to not be too concerned with password sharing for its streamer. It's a multi-use membership where many people in a household can access through one paid account. A Prime Video rep confirmed to us that Prime Video has no updates. You can read up on the "Amazon Household" feature, which is explained on the company's FAQ pages. Basically, many family members can share an account and Amazon will gladly store multiple card information for quicker purchases, but the latter doesn't really concern Prime Video.

Peacock

While there's not a strict crackdown happening yet, Peacock seems to be taking baby steps toward one. In late 2024, they updated their Terms of Use stating that a password is "for personal use only" and that you shouldn't "share your subscription outside of your household." The streamer doesn't currently offer an ability to add people outside your household as an add-on, but it seems like Peacock isn't enforcing their policy quite yet. A rep for Peacock told us in October 2025 that nothing is changing at this time.

Apple TV

We believe Apple's streamer identifies with the Prime Video policy on this matter. Apple TV isn't Apple's main product. It actually has multiple different memberships for its Music, Fitness, News, and Arcade platforms and can be bundled all together with TV through Apple One. And all of those can be doled out to different people through Apple Family, which accommodates up to six people.

Paramount+

During a Paramount earnings call in November 2023, CFO of Paramount Global Naveen Chopra answered investor questions on the matter of password sharing, saying: "We don't see that as a major headwind to our growth efforts" for Paramount+ with Showtime, but that they would "continue to monitor" the situation. Earlier this year, a rep for Paramount+ confirmed that there's been no change to the streamer's stance on password sharing. But the company may have other things to focus on right now.