

# Why do Hackers Hack?

People turn to hacking for a variety of financial, political, and ideological reasons. The motives and goals of hackers in cyberattacks vary widely.

## The most common motives behind attacks by hackers

### Data Theft

Hackers try to steal personal data, user names, passwords, credit card information, or company data (industrial espionage).

### Data Destruction

This goal is actually more prevalent than widely believed. The focus is on punishing or crippling the victim, often targeting infrastructure or records. This type of attack is typically performed (or supported) by political activists, organized crime groups, or nation states.

### Financial Gain

Today the largest bank robberies are carried out virtually. While originally in the sphere of organized crime, even rogue nations have been documented as the source of successful attacks on financial institutions around the world.

### Political Gain

Recent history has seen many news stories of Social Engineering ("fake news"; leaked or fabricated documents) being used in overt campaigns to destabilize and disrupt election outcomes, both domestically and in other countries.

### Reputation / Recognition

This has long been a motive for hackers in general, to gain recognition from their peers.

### Revenge

This covers a wide range of motivations and levels, from the disgruntled employee "out to get" their boss, to the special interest group "defending" the victim of some "crime," to the foreign dictator targeting a political rival.