bitwarden | Help Center Article

SECURITY

Account Encryption Key

View in the help center:
https://bitwarden.com/help/account-encryption-key/

Account Encryption Key

Each unique Bitwarden account has an encryption key which is used to encrypt all vault data.

Rotate your encryption key

> ⚠ Warning
>
> **Rotating your encryption key is a potentially dangerous operation.** Please read this section thoroughly to understand the full ramifications of doing so.

Rotating your account's encryption key generates a new encryption key that is used to re-encrypt all vault data. You should consider rotating your encryption key if your account has been compromised in such a way that someone has obtained your encryption key.

Before rotating

Before rotating, you should take the following actions to protect against potential data loss or corruption.

Re-create any account backup exports

If you are using Account backup encrypted exports to store long-term secure backups, you should immediately re-create the encrypted export of your vault data using the new encryption key.

Account backup encrypted exports use your encryption key to encrypt **and decrypt** your vault data, meaning that a rotated encryption key will not be able to decrypt an export created with the "stale" (prior-to-rotation) key.

Log out of client applications

Before you rotate an encryption key, we recommend you log out of any logged-in sessions on Bitwarden client applications (desktop app, browser extension, mobile app, and so on). Logging out of client applications in this way will prevent sessions from using the "stale" (prior-to-rotation) encryption key. After doing so, logging back in as normal will use the new encryption key.

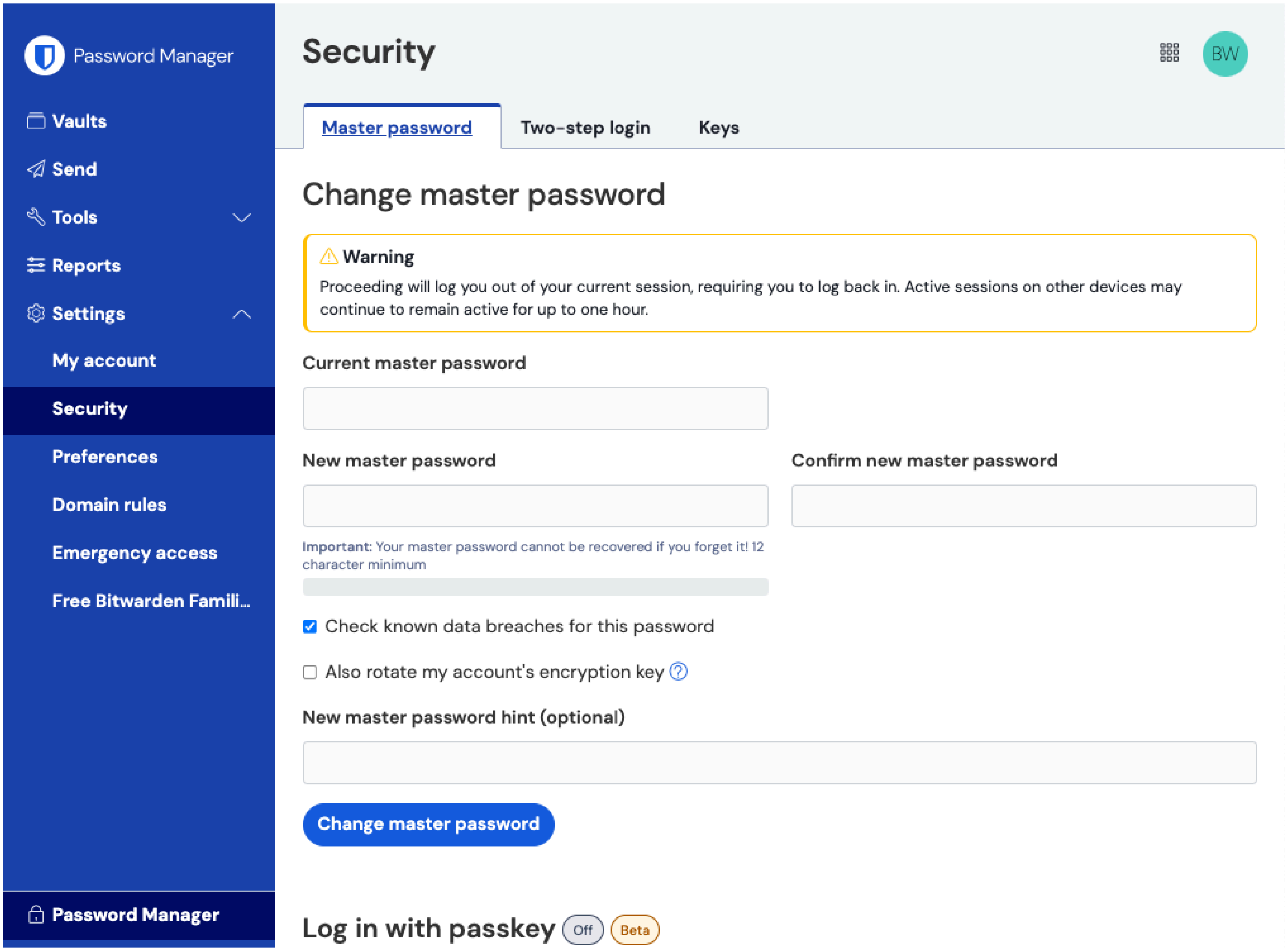
Making changes in a session with a "stale" encryption key will cause data corruption that will make your data unrecoverable.

> ⚠ Warning
>
> We recommend creating a vault backup prior to rotating your account encryption key. To learn more about vault exports and what items are included, see Export Vault Data.

How to rotate your encryption key

To rotate your account encryption key:

1. In the web app, navigate to **Settings** → **Security** → **Master password**:



Security

Change master password

⚠ Warning

Proceeding will log you out of your current session, requiring you to log back in. Active sessions on other devices may continue to remain active for up to one hour.

Current master password

New master password

Confirm new master password

Important: Your master password cannot be recovered if you forget it! 12 character minimum

☑ Check known data breaches for this password

□ Also rotate my account's encryption key

New master password hint (optional)

Log in with passkey

Master password settings

2. Enter your **Current master password** and create/confirm a **New master password**.

> **Tip**
>
> If you don't want to change your master password and only rotate your account encryption key, you can enter your current master password in the **New** fields to prevent it from changing.

3. Check the **Also rotate my account's encryption key** checkbox and accept the dialog.

4. Select the **Change master password** button.