

PASSWORD MANAGER > DEVELOPER TOOLS

# Personal API Key for CLI Authentication

View in the help center:

<https://bitwarden.com/help/personal-api-key/>

## Personal API Key for CLI Authentication

Your Bitwarden personal API key can be used as a method for authenticating into the command line interface (CLI).

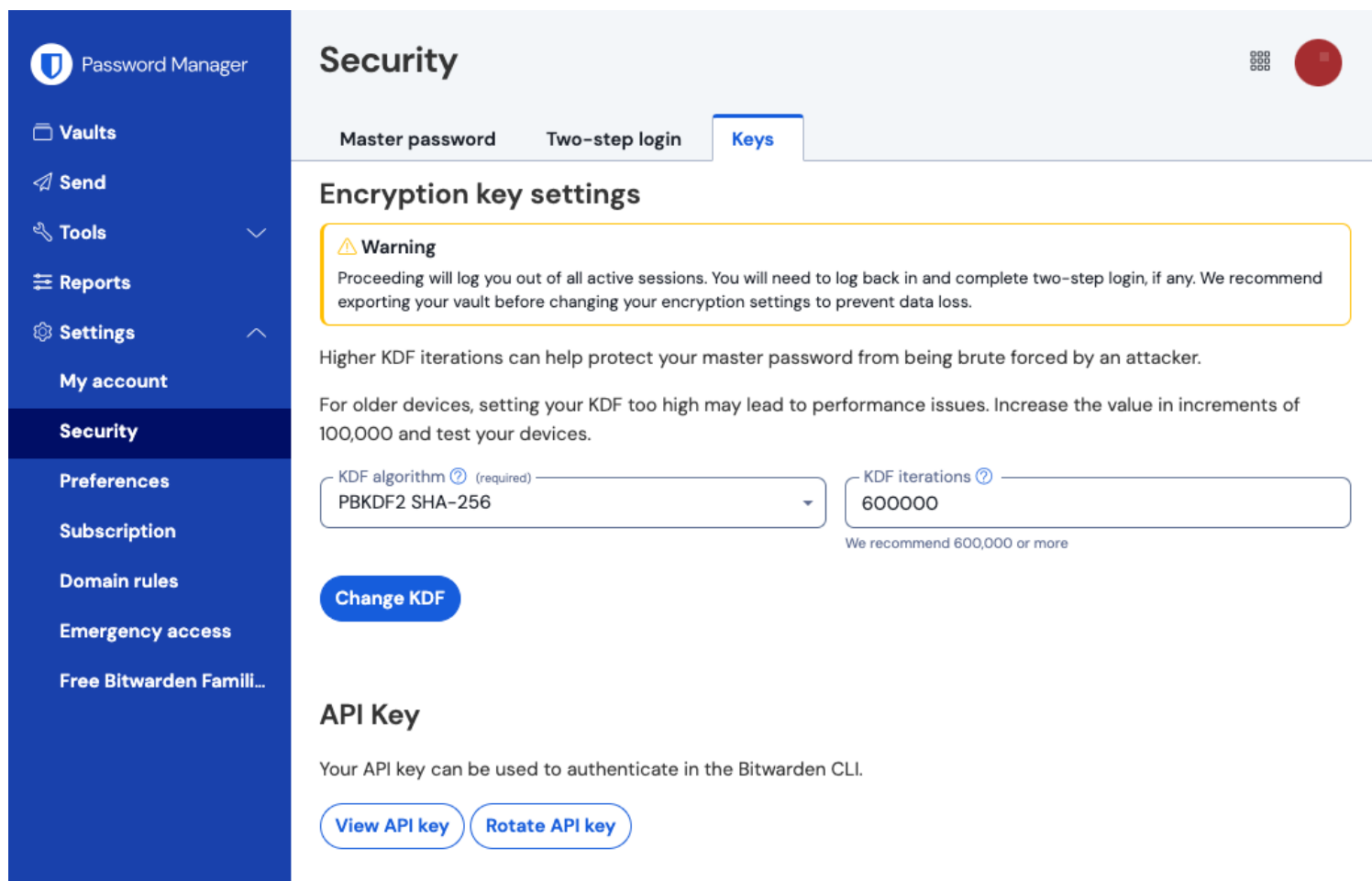
### Note

Your personal API key is **not the same** as the [organization API key](#) used to access the [Bitwarden Public API](#) or [Directory Connector](#). Personal API keys will have a `client_id` with format `"user.clientId"`, while organization API keys will have a `client_id` with format `"organization.ClientId"`.

## Get your personal API key

To get your personal API key:

1. In the Bitwarden web app, navigate to **Settings** → **Security** → **Keys**:



**Security**

Master password Two-step login **Keys**

### Encryption key settings

**Warning**  
Proceeding will log you out of all active sessions. You will need to log back in and complete two-step login, if any. We recommend exporting your vault before changing your encryption settings to prevent data loss.

Higher KDF iterations can help protect your master password from being brute forced by an attacker.

For older devices, setting your KDF too high may lead to performance issues. Increase the value in increments of 100,000 and test your devices.

KDF algorithm ⓘ (required) PBKDF2 SHA-256

KDF iterations ⓘ 600000

We recommend 600,000 or more

**Change KDF**

### API Key

Your API key can be used to authenticate in the Bitwarden CLI.

**View API key** **Rotate API key**

Keys

2. Select the **View API key** button and enter your master password to validate access. Once entered, you will be provided the following:

- `client_id`: `"user.clientId"` (This value is unique to your account and does not change.)
- `client_secret`: `"clientSecret"` (This value is unique and can be rotated).

- **scope:** "api" (This value will always be "api").
- **grant\_type:** "client\_credentials" (This value will always be "client\_credentials").

## Rotate your API key

Select the **Rotate API Key** button to rotate your personal API key. Rotating your key will only change your **client\_secret**.

Rotating your key will invalidate your previous key and all active sessions using that key.

## Authenticate using your API key

Logging in to the CLI with the personal API key is **recommended for automated workflows or providing access to an external application**. To log in with the API key:

*Bash*

```
bw login --apikey
```

This will initiate a prompt for your personal **client\_id** and **client\_secret**. Once your session is authenticated using these values, you'll be prompted to use the **unlock** command ([learn more](#)).

## Using API key environment variables

In scenarios where automated work is being done with the Bitwarden CLI, you can save environment variables to prevent the need for manual intervention at authentication.

| Environment variable name | Required value |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| BW_CLIENTID               | client_id      |
| BW_CLIENTSECRET           | client_secret  |