‘Juice Jacking’: TSA Warns Air Travelers to Protect Themselves from This Growing Security Scam

Looking to give your phone a little extra juice before boarding your flight? Think twice – and then think again – before plugging directly into a public USB charging station.

In a Facebook post, the TSA warns that those stations are prime hunting spots for data and identity thieves, thanks to a practice called “juice jacking.” Per the TSA’s post, “Hackers can install malware at USB ports (we’ve been told that’s called ‘juice/port jacking’). So, when you’re at an airport do not plug your phone directly into a USB port.”

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You don’t have to let your devices die, however. The TSA writes: “Bring your TSA-compliant power brick or battery pack and plug in there.” Power outlets cannot be hacked the way USB ports can, so you can safely recharge with no worries.

The TSA also warns about the dangers of Wifi hacking.

“Don’t use free public WiFi, especially if you’re planning to make any online purchases. Do not ever enter any sensitive info while using unsecure WiFi,” the agency warns, adding that travellers should use cellular or enable a VPN if connecting to Wifi.

In this growing age of cybercrime sophistication, caution is

going to be your best ally in protecting your passwords, finances, photos, and everything else we store on our phones.

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