

Exchange Service Center

Security and Encryption

In the United States, you can conduct transactions online with confidence using Netscape and Internet Explorer, since they support the recommended 128-bit key length encryption SSL (Secure Sockets Layer). International versions support 40-bit encryption.

SSL and 128-bit Encryption

If you have Netscape Navigator, simply select 'Help' from the Menu Bar, then click on 'About Netscape' and you will obtain a screen of information including the version.

If you see language referring to 'International Security', then your browser does not support 128-bit encryption. If you see language referring to 'U.S. Security' or 'Domestic Security,' then your browser does support 128-bit encryption.

If you have Internet Explorer, go to a secure page (a secure page uses the prefix 'https'). With your cursor positioned anywhere on the secure page, click on File (from the main menu), then Properties. Click on the tab marked 'Security' and look under the heading 'Privacy strength.' It will show you have 128-bit or 40-bit encryption.

To See If Your Session Is Encrypted

If you are running Netscape Navigator, look in the lower left-hand corner of the browser. You will see a small key as an indication that your session is running in an encrypted mode. When your session is not encrypted you will see a broken key. If you are using Internet Explorer, you will see a lock icon displayed in the bottom right corner of the window when you are on a secure page.

To See If 128-bit Encryption Is Enabled

If you are using Netscape Navigator, it is possible that your 128-bit encryption feature may be disabled.

To verify, select 'Options' then 'Security Preferences' then 'General.' There should be a check next to the 'Enable SSL v2.' Click on the 'Configure' button. The 'Configures Ciphers' window will appear.

Make sure the first item ('RC4 encryption with a 128-bit key') is checked, then click on 'OK'. Microsoft Internet Explorer does not allow you to turn the security features off.