Imagine suddenly being alerted that someone is on a wild buying spree right inside your Amazon account?

It happened recently to a Dallas-area woman named Jonette Ferrier. Hackers had already shipped two game consoles worth more than $1,500 from her account and were ordering more as she watched.

Jonette immediately cancelled the new orders. But that didn't stop thieves—they kept buying more. So she changed her password thinking that would end the scam. Nope.

No matter how many times Jonette deleted an order and changed her password, the thieves kept returning. (More on how the hackers did this, later.)

She even got Amazon on the phone. They watched the whole cat-and-mouse game right on their computer console. Finally, someone figured out how to halt the theft ring. They told the woman to go into her Amazon Advanced Security Settings and turn on Two-Step Verification. That did the trick.

We define two-step verification as a "two-stage process to verify your identity when trying to access an online account. It requires 'something you know' and 'something you have.'"

We've all been doing this with our ATM cards for years. You enter the card (something you have). The machine reads it and then asks you for your PIN (something you know).

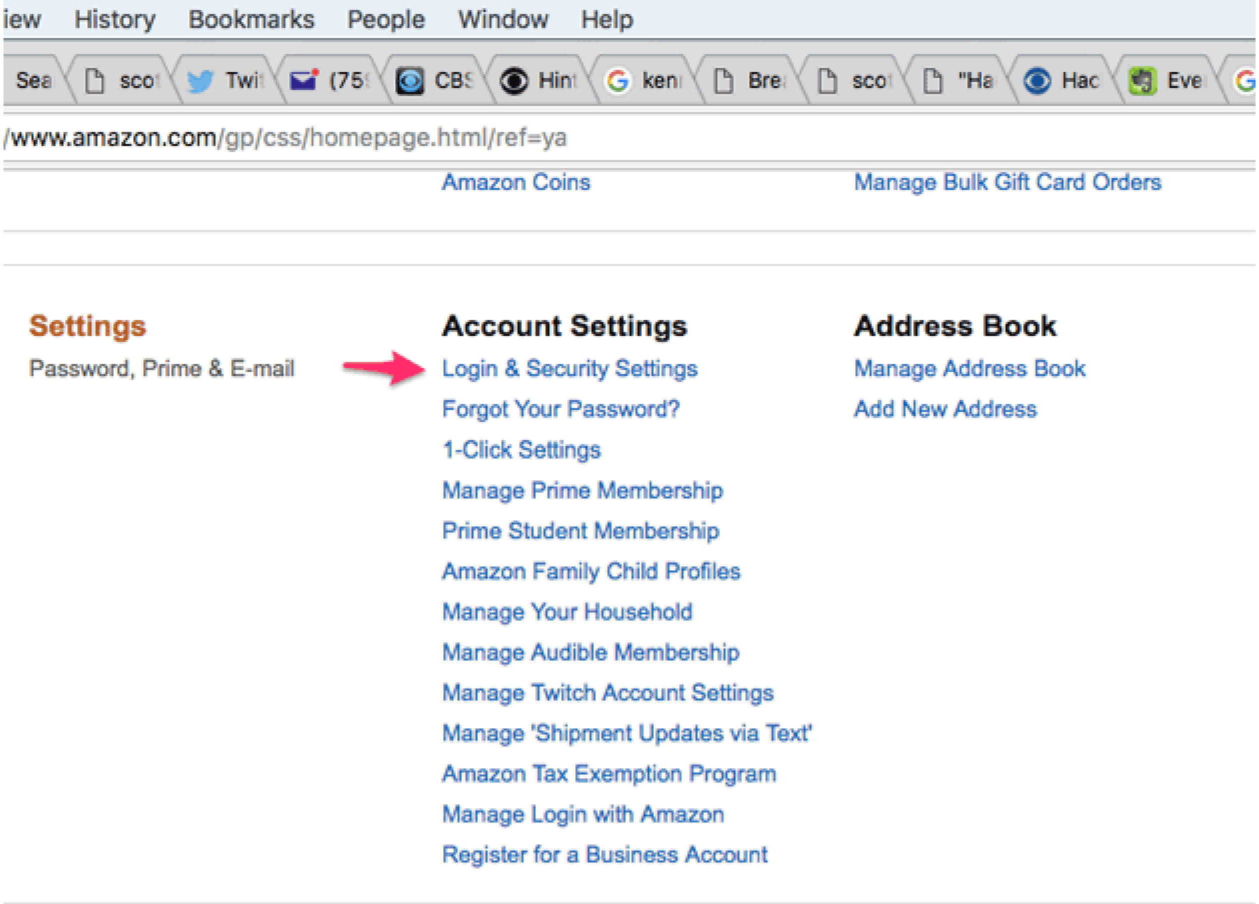
For online accounts with two-step verification, it's similar. You enter your username and password (something you know) and then you enter a code sent to your mobile phone (something you have). It's simple and highly secure. Now let's see how to do it on Amazon.

**Advanced security settings at Amazon**

Start by clicking on Your Account, right under your name on the right side of the navigation bar.

Then scroll down to Account Settings and click on the first item: Login & Security Settings.

Figure 1: Login & Security Settings


iew History Bookmarks People Window Help
Sea
sco
Twi
(75
CBS
Hin
ken
Bre
sco
"Ha
Hac
Eve
/www.amazon.com/gp/css/homepage.html/ref=ya

Amazon Coins

Manage Bulk Gift Card Orders

**Settings**

Password, Prime & E-mail

**Account Settings**

- Login & Security Settings
- Forgot Your Password?
- 1-Click Settings
- Manage Prime Membership
- Prime Student Membership
- Amazon Family Child Profiles
- Manage Your Household
- Manage Audible Membership
- Manage Twitch Account Settings
- Manage 'Shipment Updates via Text'
- Amazon Tax Exemption Program
- Manage Login with Amazon
- Register for a Business Account

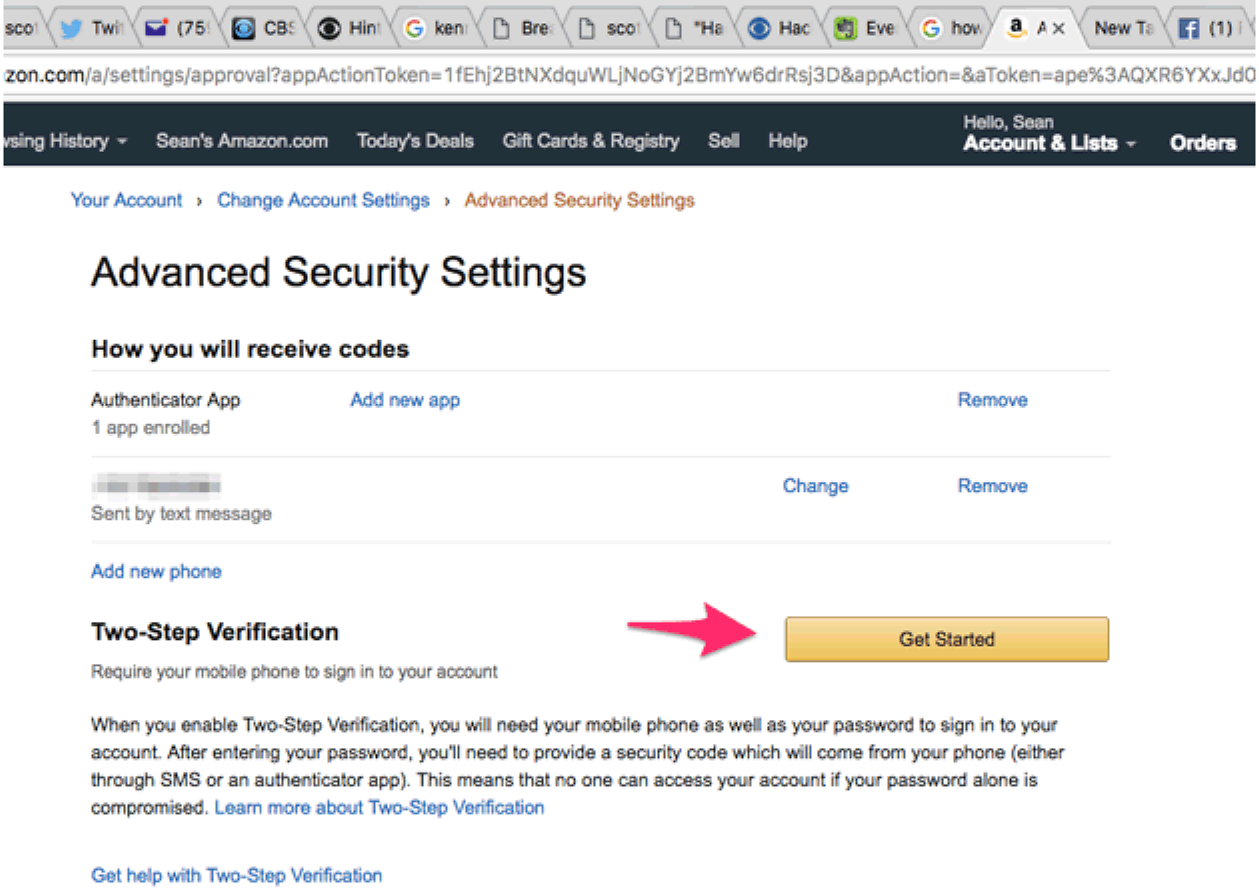
**Address Book**

- Manage Address Book
- Add New Address

Once you do that, Amazon will ask you to login again and you'll arrive at Change Account Settings. Scroll down to the bottom and find Advanced Security Settings. Click the grey box to the left that says "Edit."

Now you're on the Advanced Security Settings page of your Amazon account. Look on the left side to see where you will see Two-Step Verification. Click the yellow button that says "Get Started."

Figure 2: Get Started



scot
Twi
(75
CBS
Hin
ken
Bre
scot
"Ha
Hac
Eve
how
A ×
New Ta
(1)
zon.com/a/settings/approval?appActionToken=1fEhj2BtNXdquWLjNoGYj2BmYw6drRsj3D&appAction=&aToken=ape%3AQXR6YXxJd0
wsing History
Sean's Amazon.com
Today's Deals
Gift Cards & Registry
Sell
Help
Hello, Sean
Account & Lists
Orders
Your Account › Change Account Settings › Advanced Security Settings

## Advanced Security Settings

### How you will receive codes

Authenticator App
1 app enrolled

[redacted]
Sent by text message

### Two-Step Verification

Require your mobile phone to sign in to your account

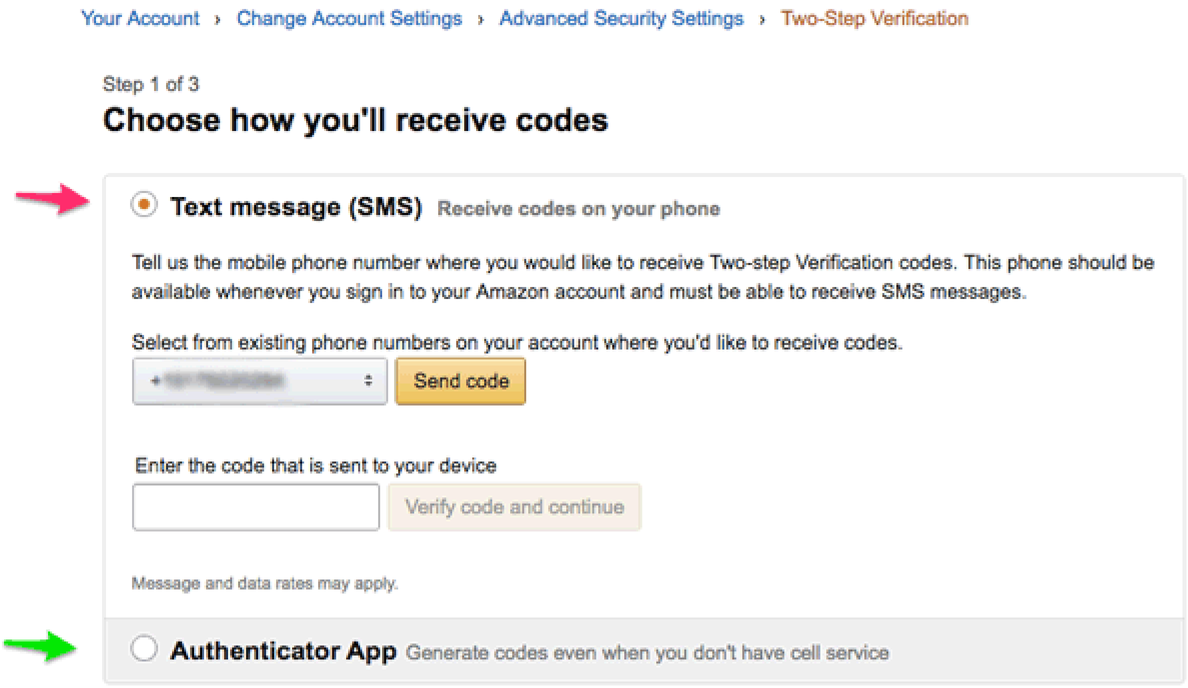
When you enable Two-Step Verification, you will need your mobile phone as well as your password to sign in to your account. After entering your password, you'll need to provide a security code which will come from your phone (either through SMS or an authenticator app). This means that no one can access your account if your password alone is compromised. Learn more about Two-Step Verification

Get help with Two-Step Verification

**Step 1**

Next, you’ll see directions to “Choose how you’ll receive codes.” Your first step is to select “Text message (SMS)” and pick the mobile phone number you want to use. Tell Amazon to send a code to your phone number, and enter it on this page. (If you live in an area with spotty mobile connectivity, go to the bottom and choose Authenticator App. Go to your smartphone app store, download the program and use it as your “thing you have” to complete your two-step login.)

Figure 3: Choose How You’ll Receive Codes


Your Account › Change Account Settings › Advanced Security Settings › Two-Step Verification
Send code
Verify code and continue

Step 1 of 3

Choose how you'll receive codes

● Text message (SMS) Receive codes on your phone

Tell us the mobile phone number where you would like to receive Two-step Verification codes. This phone should be available whenever you sign in to your Amazon account and must be able to receive SMS messages.

Select from existing phone numbers on your account where you'd like to receive codes.

[redacted]

Enter the code that is sent to your device

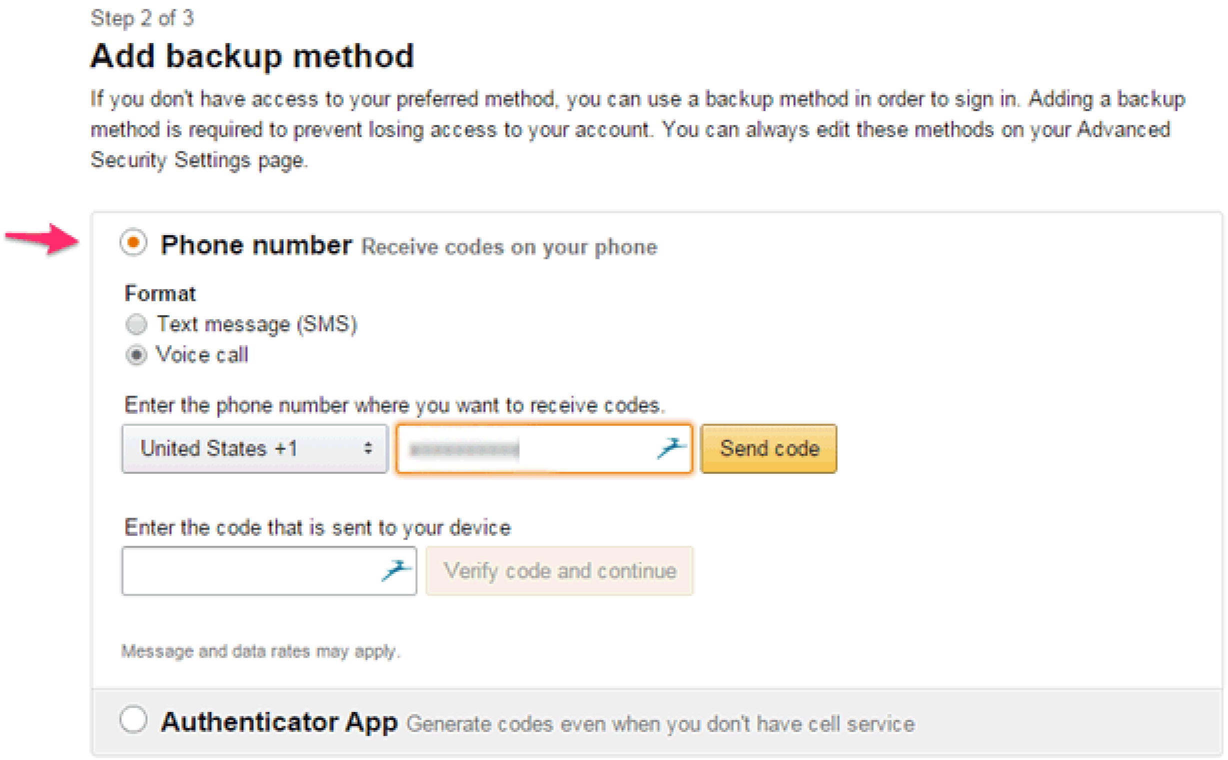
Message and data rates may apply.

○ Authenticator App Generate codes even when you don't have cell service

**Step 2**

Once you enter your security code on the Amazon security page, you will arrive at “Add backup method.” You are *required* to choose a second, different phone number as your backup. Tell Amazon to send a code to your backup number and enter it on the security page.

Figure 4: Choose Your Backup Method



Step 2 of 3

Add backup method

If you don't have access to your preferred method, you can use a backup method in order to sign in. Adding a backup method is required to prevent losing access to your account. You can always edit these methods on your Advanced Security Settings page.

● Phone number Receive codes on your phone

Format

○ Text message (SMS)

● Voice call

Enter the phone number where you want to receive codes.

United States +1 [redacted]

Enter the code that is sent to your device

Message and data rates may apply.

○ Authenticator App Generate codes even when you don't have cell service

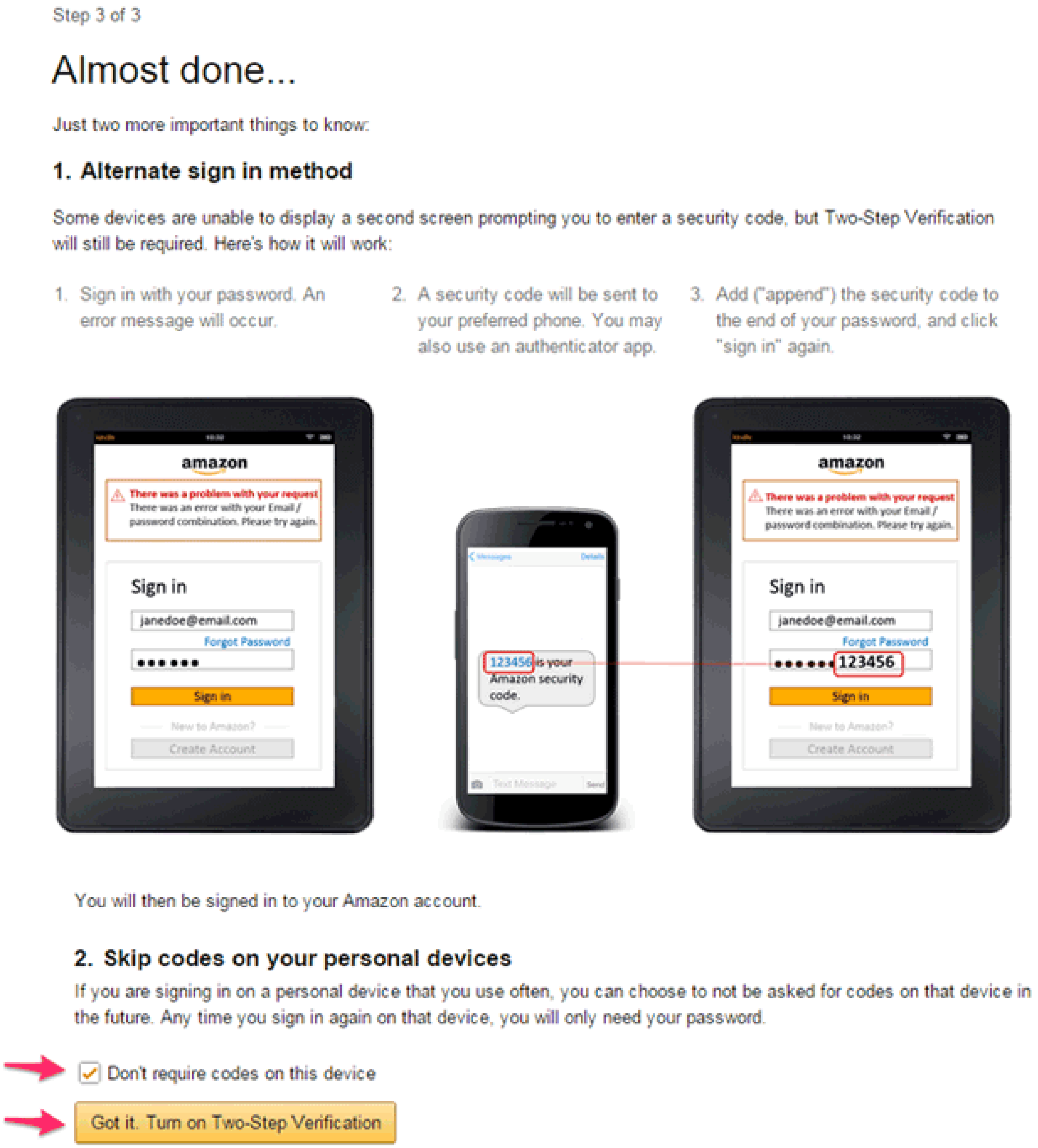
**Step 3**

In this last step, Amazon gives you some alternative directions about signing in from certain devices like pads or phones, and, importantly, offers you the alternative to skip codes on your personal devices.

You probably don’t want to enter a code every time you log in to Amazon from your personal computer or mobile device. No problem. Check the box next to “Don’t require a code on this device.” When you initially sign in from your other devices, you can do the same. (And of course, you can always add a device or computer that you use frequently under the "Devices that don't require code" area in your Advanced Security Settings page.)

Now just click the yellow box that says "Got it. Turn on Two-Step Verification."

Figure 5: Skip Codes on Personal Devices



Step 3 of 3

## Almost done...

Just two more important things to know:

### 1. Alternate sign in method

Some devices are unable to display a second screen prompting you to enter a security code, but Two-Step Verification will still be required. Here's how it will work:

1. Sign in with your password. An error message will occur.
2. A security code will be sent to your preferred phone. You may also use an authenticator app.
3. Add ("append") the security code to the end of your password, and click "sign in" again.

There was a problem with your request
There was an error with your Email / password combination. Please try again.

123456 is your Amazon security code.

You will then be signed in to your Amazon account.

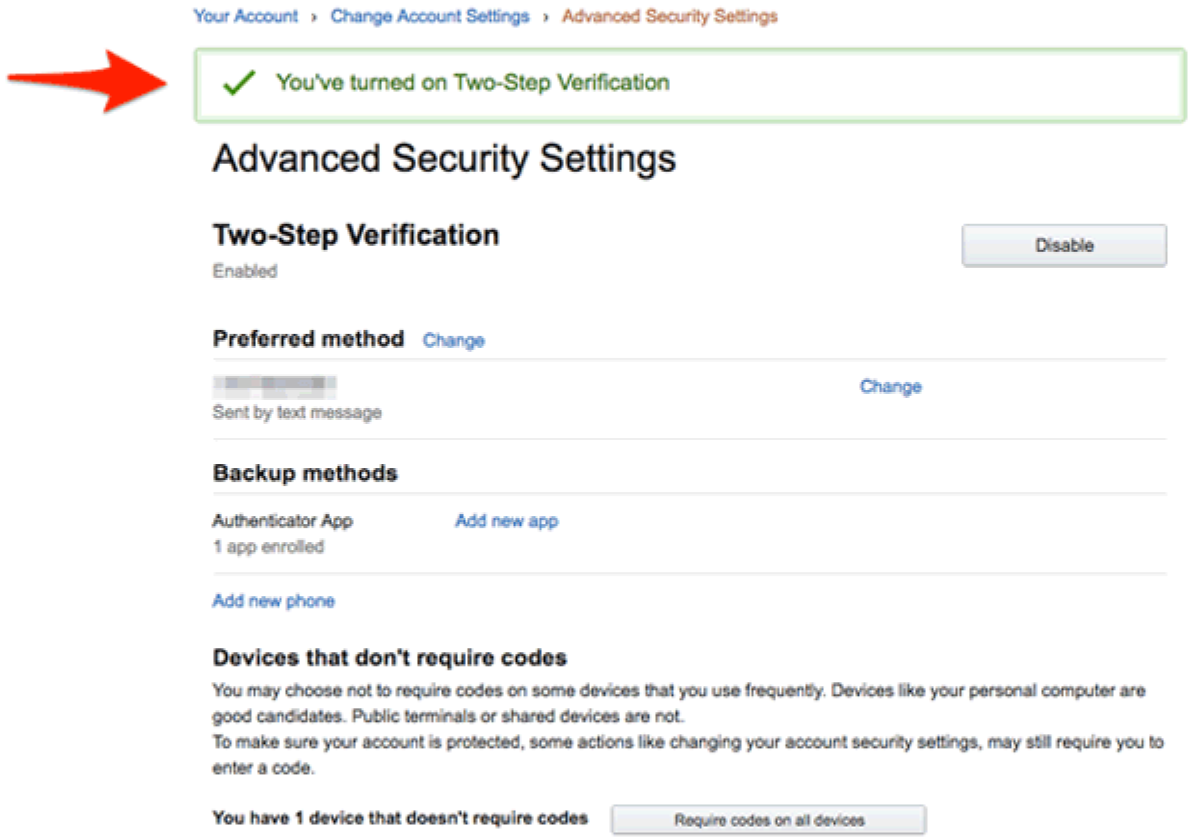
### 2. Skip codes on your personal devices

If you are signing in on a personal device that you use often, you can choose to not be asked for codes on that device in the future. Any time you sign in again on that device, you will only need your password.

☑ Don't require codes on this device

Now you're done. You will see the following screen as confirmation that you have succeeded in setting up Two-Step Verification.

Figure 6: Confirmation



Your Account › Change Account Settings › Advanced Security Settings

✓ You've turned on Two-Step Verification

Advanced Security Settings

**Two-Step Verification**

Enabled

**Preferred method** Change

[redacted]

Sent by text message

**Backup methods**

Authenticator App

1 app enrolled

**Devices that don't require codes**

You may choose not to require codes on some devices that you use frequently. Devices like your personal computer are good candidates. Public terminals or shared devices are not.

To make sure your account is protected, some actions like changing your account security settings, may still require you to enter a code.

**You have 1 device that doesn't require codes**

Congratulations! You've just added a major new security feature to your Amazon account. You can shop now assured you're very safe. It's a simple, brilliant approach that foils hackers.

**The mystery of the changing password**

So how did the hackers know Jonette Ferrier's Amazon password, even as she changed it?

She probably had a type of malware on her computer known as a "key logger." This kind of software records every key stroke you make and then sends it to the hackers. So each time she changed her password, the hackers could see what she was doing and continue their scam using the new password.

You can reduce the risk of getting infected by a key logger several ways. Of course, it's good to have antivirus and anti-malware software on your computers. But one of your best protections against malware is to ensure that you *always* update your software. Updates close security holes that hackers exploit. It’s the one thing nearly every computer expert in the world does religiously. And you should, too.