

How to Self-Custody Your Crypto Safely in 2026

Your complete guide to truly owning your digital assets

Read [full guide at Kerberus.com/learn](https://kerberus.com/learn)



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Custodial vs Non-Custodial

Custodial Wallets

Exchanges like Coinbase, Binance hold your keys

- Username and password access
- Exchange has ultimate control
- Risk: freezes, bankruptcy, hacks

Non-Custodial (Self-Custody)

You generate and store your own private keys

- Complete control 24/7
- No company can freeze account
- You're entirely responsible

Your wallet isn't in a giant honeypot with everyone else's funds—state-sponsored hackers target exchanges, not personal Ledgers

What To Know About Self-Custody

It's True Ownership

- Control your private keys
- no exchange can freeze or lose your funds

Protect Your Seed

- Always write on paper or use metal wallet
- Store it somewhere safe and secur.
- Never digitize or share it with anyone

Biggest Threat

- Phishing and social engineering trick like pig butchering and address poisoning can trick users into handing over access and full control of their assets.



The Cost of Custodial Risk

"Not your keys, not your coins"

24

Months Frozen

FTX Users locked out while Bitcoin surged 290%

\$1.4B

Bybit Theft

Largest crypto theft in history, February 2025

- FTX, 3 Arrows Capital, Celsius, BlockFi, Voyager—all collapsed in 2022.
- Mt. Gox lost 850,000 Bitcoin worth \$50B+ today.
- QuadrigaCEO "died" with \$215M in investor funds.

How Crypto Ownership Works

Your crypto doesn't live "in" your wallet—it exists on the blockchain

01

Blockchain Ledger

All crypto exists on distributed networks of computers maintaining transaction records

02

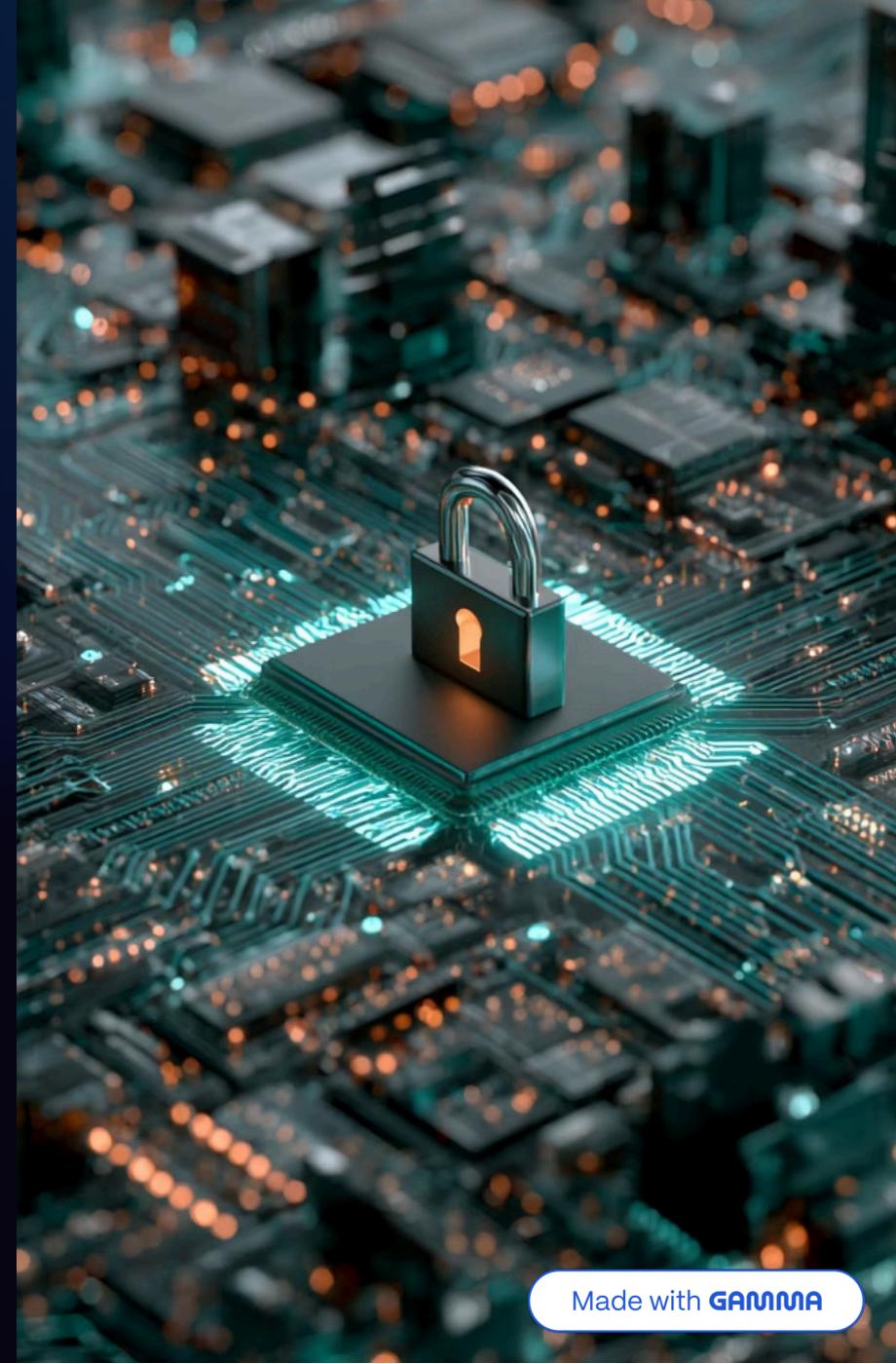
Cryptographic Keys

Your wallet generates public and private key pairs to access your holdings

03

Wallet Application

Software that lets you sign in and control your coins—no backup party exists



Public vs Private Keys



Public Key

Like your email address—share to receive crypto

- Safe to expose (with caution)
- View via "Receive" button
- Avoid doxxing with large portfolios

Private Key

Your password and proof of ownership

- If someone gets it, they own your crypto
- No reset button exists
- Never share or digitize



Your Seed Phrase: Do's and Dont's

A seed phrase is 12-24 English words in a specific order—your backup to restore complete access

WHAT IS A SEED PHRASE?

 YOUR BACKUP	PROTECT IT!
 <p>12-24 ENGLISH WORDS</p>	 WRITE ON PHYSICAL PAPER/METAL
<p>SEQUENCE OF 12-24 ENGLISH WORDS IN SPECIFIC ORDER</p>	 NEVER STORE DIGITALLY (PHOTOS, CLOUD STORAGE, PASS MANAGERS)
 <p>RESTORE COMPLETE ACCESS ON ANY DEVICE</p>	 KEEP SECRET & PROTECTED 

Write on Paper

Physical only—no photos, cloud storage, or password managers that can be compromised.

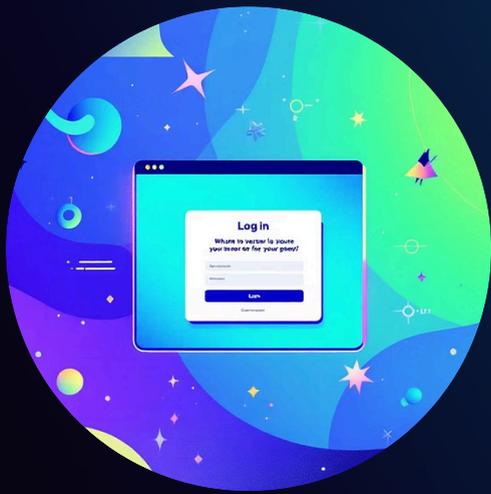
See [Ledger data hack](#) and [LastPass breach](#)

Correct Order

- Write it in the right order and triple check.
- One wrong word or swapped sequence = lost wallet forever

Security Threats to Self-Custody

From our [Top 26 Web3 Security Threats for 2026](#)



Phishing Attacks

Fake sites and emails trick you into giving access—biggest Web3 threat



Address Poisoning

Attackers send tiny amounts from similar addresses—one user lost \$50M



Wallet Drainers

Malicious software that logs keystrokes and auto-approves transactions



Social Engineering

Creates urgency and impersonates authority—real companies never ask for keys

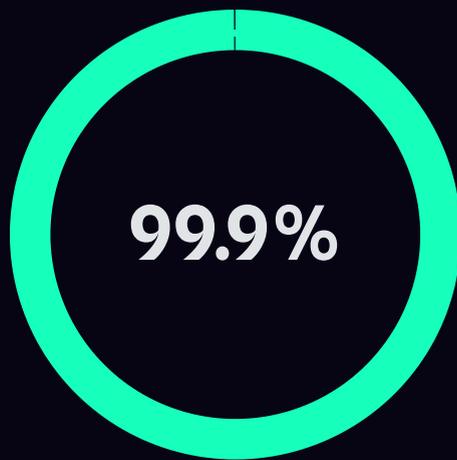
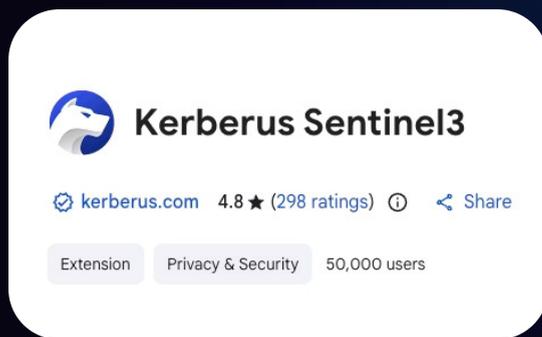


Learn more:
[Top 26 Web3 Security Threats for 2026](#)

The Solution: Kerberus' Real-Time Web3 Security

Kerberus Sentinel3 *automatically detects and blocks scam sites in real time* with 0 user losses since 01/2023

Install the free [Chrome Extension here](#)



Detection Rate

Across 1,000+ blockchain networks



Protected Users

Zero losses in 3 years



Coverage

Max transaction protection*

AI-powered detection blocks malicious Web3 sites before they reach your wallet—never touches your private keys

How to Get Started with Self-Custody

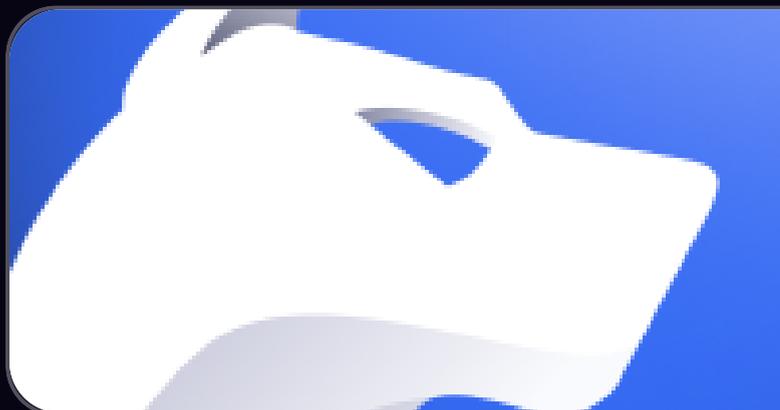
- 1 Start Small**
Begin with \$50-100 you can afford to lose while learning
- 2 Choose Wallet**
Pick a trusted hot wallet for beginners, hardware wallets for \$1,000+
- 3 Secure Seed Phrase**
Write on paper, double-check, store in fireproof safe immediately
- 4 Practice First**
Send \$5 test transactions to confirm everything works
- 5 Add Protection**
Install Kerberus Sentinel3 for automatic Web3 threat blocking

Self-custody is cryptocurrency's original promise: actual ownership without needing anyone's permission

Stay safe in Web3 with



Educate Yourself at Kerberus.com/Learn



 Twitter

Kerberus

We protect you from drainers on all EVM and SOL – 0 user losses since 01/2023 – \$30,000 Coverage On Your Txns You make the profits, we kee...



Guide created by [Werner Vermaak](#) for Kerberus

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