SQ Stitch Security Changes

In version 1.6, SQ Stitch has several changes related to security. They will affect **all** SQ Stitch users so it's important to read this entire document.

Security? Say what?

We are talking about internet security, not any kind of financial or personal security. There are two ways of connecting to a website: insecurely, and securely. With an insecure connection, the communications between your device and the website are in plain text, and it's possible for a hacker to watch everything that passes and collect data like passwords or credit card numbers. With a secure connection, the communications are encrypted (meaning scrambled in such a way that they can't be unscrambled by an eavesdropper). That's internet security: it doesn't mean some malicious person can't get your data, it means it's scrambled so it's no use to them.

Your browser indicates if your connection to a website is secure or insecure by showing different icons or messages next to the address box. For a secure connection, there may be a closed padlock. For an insecure connection, there may be a padlock with a line through it, or the words "Not secure". Browsers decide if they should give you a secure or an insecure connection by looking at the web address and seeing if it starts with http or https. "Http" basically means "web connection" and the addition of "s" means secure web connection.

In the early days of the internet, most websites were insecure except for pages that needed to pass confidential data (such as passwords or credit card numbers). This was because secure connections were slower. Nowadays, most websites, if accessed insecurely, will redirect you to a secure connection. Redirecting means that the website says, "Hold on, this is an insecure connection! I'm going to start over but this time with a secure connection. You're welcome."

What does this have to do with SQ Stitch?

When it was SQ Stitch was initially released, none of Scarlet Quince was secure. We were working on changing that and knew it would be a simple change for the main website, and expected that it would be simple for SQ Stitch as well. Unfortunately, it turned out that the database we use considers an insecure (http) database to be a separate copy from a secure (https) database. All the links we initially gave out for SQ Stitch were insecure (http).This meant that we could not just redirect you to https, or all your patterns and work would seemingly disappear.

Connecting securely does matter, though. It is possible, though very unlikely, that if someone happened to be spying on your connection, they could see your password for SQ Stitch. This in itself doesn't matter very much – it just means that someone could get some patterns they hadn't paid for. But it could matter if you have used the same password for other sites. It matters even more if you tend to use the same password for everything.

(Public service announcement: You should use a different password for every web site. If you're reusing passwords, you should go change them. There are password manager apps that will keep a list of your passwords securely.) When you use the same password for every website, if someone finds out what your password is for one site, they'll have it for every website. But it's still unlikely that someone watches your connection day after day waiting for you to log in to SQ Stitch so that they can steal your password and then try it on different bank websites in the hopes of getting access to your bank account. "Unlikely" doesn't mean it can't happen, though.

OK, how do I get my insecure data into a secure database?

In version 1.6, we are providing a way for you to convert your SQ Stitch data from an insecure database to a secure one. In addition, new users coming in to SQ Stitch for the first time on an insecure connection will automatically be redirected to a secure connection. Users coming in on an insecure connection who have already done the conversion will be reminded that this is not the copy where they should be stitching, and given a few options of what to do from there.

The conversion is risk-free. It does not destroy any existing data. It simply makes a copy of your data, then installs it in a secure database. It should only take 1-2 minutes per installed pattern (the ones that have "open" buttons on the patterns tab, rather than "install" buttons). Patterns that are in the list but not installed will only take a second. In addition, you have control over when the conversion happens – we will not start it automatically whether you're ready or not (but we will keep nagging you if you keep postponing it).

How the conversion works, step by step

First, the new version is called 1.6. If you start SQ Stitch and it still says 1.5.1, you are accessing the old version. If this happens, try clicking the "reload page" button (it looks like this:

and is located somewhere near the address bar in your browser. It may be on the right or on the left but it should be at the top of the screen. If this does not get you to version 1.6, you may have to clear your browser's cache. The procedure for doing this is different in every OS and browser, so if you don't know how to do it, Google for example "clear cache iOS Safari" or "clear cache Android Chrome". This can be risky, so if you are going to do that, be sure to make a backup of each pattern you're working on FIRST. If you can just clear the cache, that's fine, but (especially for iOS) sometimes if you clear the cache you are also clearing browser data and cookies. Your patterns are browser data, so if you clear it, your patterns will be gone and you'll need those backups.

You should start SQ Stitch the way you always have (insecurely) using whatever bookmarks or icons you've set up in the past. When you start this way, you will be reminded that you should convert to secure via the following dialog box:

You can choose "Do it now" or "Later". We don't want to force you to start a process that could take a while (depending on how many patterns you have installed) at a time that isn't convenient for you. However, we think it's important that everyone get off the insecure connection, so you will be asked every time you start SQ Stitch. "Never" is not going to be an option. (You can give yourself an extra level of comfort by making backups of all your installed patterns before doing the conversion, though this is unnecessary.)

When you decide to start the conversion, the first thing that happens is that all of your data is backed up to our server. Status messages will appear to let you know how far along in the process you are. When all of your data has been backed up, there will be a 15 second countdown before redirecting you to a secure connection and starting the restore.

You should see something like this. Note that the messages appear little by little, and the patterns listed will be YOUR patterns.

The countdown gives you a chance to read the messages. When the time is up, the program reconnects with a secure connection and begins restoring your data. Again, messages will appear to let you know where you are in the process. It will look something like this:

Restoring data to secure database

```
Options settings restored
User data restored
AUD002-D restored
BID001 restored
BOT003 restored
```
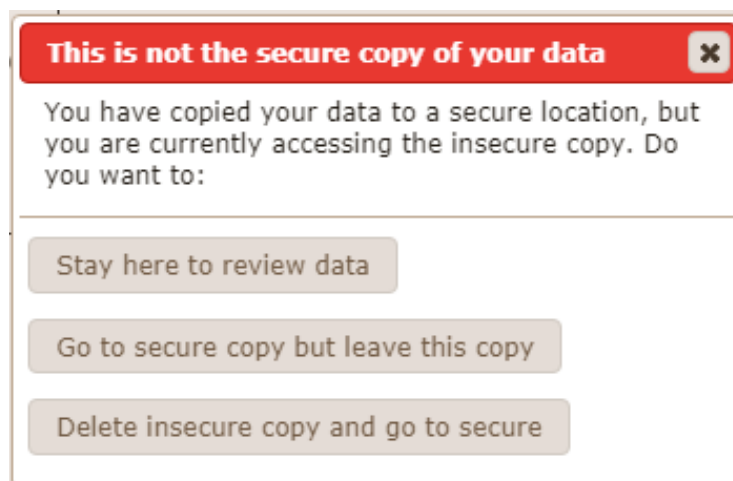
Then, after everything is finished, the following message appears:

The conversion from insecure to secure is complete.
Please update your bookmarks/icons to use a secure link (https) --
https://www.scarletquince.com/SQStitch/

(Click the link to access the secure version now)

After you have looked at the data in the secure copy, and you are
satisfied that your data has transferred correctly to the secure side,
you can return to the insecure (http) version to delete the data there.
That isn't required, but the second copy uses up storage. Going forward,
you should **only** stitch in the secure version.

The conversion process uses a flag on our server to track its progress. Once the process is
complete, if you access SQ Stitch insecurely, it will know that you have already done the
conversion, and you'll get a dialog box that looks like this:

This is not the secure copy of your data   ✖

You have copied your data to a secure location, but
you are currently accessing the insecure copy. Do
you want to:

> Stay here to review data

> Go to secure copy but leave this copy

> Delete insecure copy and go to secure

If you are making sure that there's nothing in the insecure copy that is missing from the secure copy, choose "Stay here to review data". You will continue to be connected insecurely. You should not do any stitching here, though. Your work will not be carried over to the secure database.

If you connected insecurely by mistake, but you're not ready to delete the insecure copy of your data, choose "Go to secure copy but leave this copy".

If you are satisfied that all of your data has been transferred to the secure side, you can choose "Delete insecure copy and go to secure". You will be asked if you're sure and can cancel if you change your mind.

We have made the whole process as fool-proof as possible, but as always, if something goes wrong, or you think it has gone wrong, get in touch and we'll try to get you back on track.