

Privacy Tips

- 1.** Your Facebook experience begins with “Adding a Friend.” Before adding a friend, however, ask yourself; “Knowing that, for the most part, the person I am adding will have access to my information and content, would I trust them alone in my own home with access to all of my possessions and information.” If they don’t pass this test, consider not adding them. If you choose to add them, apply your privacy settings so as to limit their access to certain areas of your profile.
- 2.** What you post on Facebook is backed up and archived on Facebook servers, indefinitely. If what you post is shared by others (your Friends), it in turn can be shared even further and is beyond your control to retrieve.
- 3.** It’s a fact that most employers, colleges and universities, and really anyone considering hiring you or having you on their team, will look to your Facebook profile to arrive at a decision, based on the quality of what you post and the nature and tone of your profile, your “Like” pages, and, in some cases, your Friend List.
- 4.** While we all want to be social and open, to a degree, consider the saying “less is better” when it comes to filling out details about yourself and family members, and the quality of the content that you post (photos, opinions, videos, etc).
- 5.** Consider not posting content (photos, videos, personal details, cell or BlackBerry PIN numbers) that can be used against you, or shared with others beyond your Friend list. Also, consider whether to tag your Friends in photos as what you tag is immediately shared with their Friends, and, depending on their privacy settings, their Friends of Friends.
- 6.** On your profile page, the first test to apply is viewing how your profile appears to the wider Facebook world - people who are not your Facebook Friend. Click “View As” in the upper right of your Profile page and on the next screen click the word “public.” From here click the “Wall,” “Info,” and “Photos” tabs. In each case NO information should appear. If details do appear, go to the appropriate Privacy setting and make adjustments.
- 7.** To View how each of your Facebook Friends sees you on (the amount of information you’re sharing with them), on the View As page, enter their name in the “enter a friend’s name” box. Again, if you’re sharing more information with this Friend than you’d like to, make privacy adjustments.
- 8.** Creating Friend Lists is very important as it allows you to customize the level of exposure to your content that you want each Friend, or groups of Friends, to have into your profile. To create Friend Lists, on your Home (News Feed) page, click Lists on the left side to reveal existing default lists, and, in the upper right, the ability to “+Create a List.” As lists are unlimited, create as many lists as you wish to separate your different Friends.
- 9.** On your Profile Page, click “Edit Profile” to begin setting privacy for a number of categories that appear on the left side of the page. While all of the categories deserve close treatment, the most important is the 3rd category, “Friends and Family.” At the “Friends” section, on the right side, choose who you want viewing your list of friends. A personal choice, and recommendation, is “Only Me.” If you allow your Friends to view your friend list, you run the risk of having their profiles opened up and potentially details about you - within their profiles - being revealed. A general rule of thumb across all settings is that “Friends” should be the highest level chosen.
- 10.** Moving to privacy settings, click “Account” in the upper right and choose “Privacy Settings.” Beginning with the center of the page (three large graphic icons), make sure that the selection is on Friends, or Custom (the ability to be selective in who you share with). This section relates to when you update your status or post media to Facebook from your mobile device.

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11. In the remaining four categories, click “Edit Settings” to the right of “How You Connect.” Gauge your own level of comfort in each setting, however, the recommended maximum is, again, “Friends,” or as close as possible to Friends. In the 1st choice of who can search for you on Facebook, many people do want to be discovered by old friends and family members. If this is your preference, choose “Everyone.”
12. In “How Tags Work” the configuration of the four available choices should be; On - On - Friends (or Custom, which is more selective) and finally, Off. Disregard the 4th choice as it is unavailable. To view, visually, how each setting functions, click on each setting for a short explanation.
13. If you apply the above tag settings as recommended, the next time you are tagged in any media by your Friends you will receive, on your Profile page beneath the Wall tab on the left, a tab saying “Needs Review.” Click on this to reveal the items you’ve been tagged in. Rather than choosing “Approve All” (not recommended), take a few moments to analyze each tag carefully and either “Approve” or “Ignore” each tag. **IMPORTANT:** If you choose Ignore, all this does is not post the tagged item to your profile for your Friends to view. To truly untag yourself from the photo or video, you must click the actual picture, and in the lower right of the image, choose “Report/Remove Tag.”
14. In the “Apps and Websites” choices, click “How people bring your info to apps they use” and deselect **ALL** boxes. Otherwise, the apps your friends use, even if you don’t use them, can access your information in each of the categories.
15. Finally, deselect the “Instant Personalization” and “Public Search” boxes. you can view a short video inside of the Instant Personalization page to learn what occurs when the box is selected.

Some final thoughts:

16. Consider not posting status updates that reveal your location or intentions (vacation, dates, who you’re with, your emotional state) as they can be shared with others, depending on your privacy settings and the settings of your Friends.
17. Because what you write on your Friend’s Walls are viewable to their Friends, and beyond, consider using the “Send Message” function on your Friend’s profile pages. This is a private, email-like function between you and them.
18. If you choose to remove Friends from your list, know that Facebook will never notify that person that you’ve removed them. It’s important from time to time to reevaluate the quality and relativity of our Friends, and it’s natural to trim the list to reflect current friendships and relationships.
19. Facebook can be a valuable communication tool on many levels, both personally and professionally - in keeping in touch with friends and family to staying abreast of companies and other organizations and entities that interest us in the world. But recognize that nothing is ever truly private on Facebook, or on any site.

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