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Professional Facebook privacy in under 10 minutes

by Leora Maccabee on May 4, 2009



It will take you under ten minutes to tailor Facebook's privacy settings to your personal and professional needs. Yet Facebook estimates that <u>only twenty percent of its members use the privacy settings at all</u>. This post describes the essential steps you can take on Facebook to protect your identity, your privacy, and your reputation online.

Step One: Start by creating "lists" of your friends (Family, Friends, Professional) in accordance with what information you wish to reveal to them. You can always add people to these lists. For advice on creating your friend lists, read Alison Driscoll's post on Mashable, "Facebook Fail: How to Use Facebook Privacy Settings and Avoid Disaster."

Step Two: Go the "Settings" link in the upper right hand corner of the Facebook main screen and click on "Privacy Settings." You'll see four privacy options: "Profile," "Search," "News Feed and Wall," and "Applications." Click on "Profile."

Step Three: The default setting for your "Profile" is that everything is visible to "only friends." Here is where your friend lists come in handy. If you do not want certain information available to a friend list, go to the drop-down menu, click "customize," specify "only friends" and type into the "except these people" box the friend list you want to exclude.

Privacy > Profile Basic Contact Inform

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				Only Friends		
		Education Info		Only Friends	٠	[2]
		Work Info		Only Friends		[2]

Step Four: Then go to "Search." The default for your "Search" setting is a search visibility of "everyone." Facebook automatically creates a public search listing for you on sites like Google. Uncheck the public search listing box. Restrict your search visibility within Facebook from "everyone" to "only friends" or "friends of friends." Remove the Pages you are a fan of and your friend list from your search visibility. Knowing who a person's friends are can be valuable information to marketers, employers, credit rating agencies, insurers, and spammers.

Privacy > Search

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Search Re	sult Content				
Use these ch search.	neckboxes to contro	l what people can see ab	out yo	u, and how people can cont	tact you after finding you
Per	ople who can see m	e in search can see:			
17	My profile picture				
17	My friend list				
17	A link to add me a	s a friend			
1	A link to send me	a message			
1	Pages I am a fan	of			
Public Sea	arch Listing				
Use this sett	ting to control whet	ner your search result is a	vailabi	e outside of Facebook.	
R	Create a public se	arch listing for me and sub	mit it f	for search engine indexing ((see preview)
Ple	ase note that minor	s do not have public sear	ch listr	ngs.	

Step Five: Now go to "News Feed and Wall." The default for your "News Feed and Wall" setting is that all of your friends are notified if you change relationship status, post on someone's wall, comment on a photo, etc. If there is any information that you would not want to disclose to friends, uncheck that box.

Postin Vews	g to someone's Wall may appear in your mutual friends' Feeds.	Recent Activity will never be shown about: Pokes	
The Hardware Pour P	Show Wal posts phights section on your friends' home pages can include each Activity. Allow Highlights to show my activity when Comment on or like a note Comment on or like a photo or album Comment on or like a link	Messages Whose profile you view Whose profile you view Whose notes you revel Wrose notes you revel Groups and Events you decline to join People you reject as finends People you reneve from your friends Notes and photos you delete	
tecen	t Activity will appear on your Wall when you edit your . Also show Recent Activity when I		
1	V Remove profile info		
E.	Post on a discussion board		
28	V Add a friend		
lecen	t Activity can be shown in your Chat conversations.		
10	Show Recent Activity in Chat		

Step Six: Then click on the "Social Ads" tab under "News Feed and Wall." By default, Facebook occasionally uses your name in conjunction with advertisements, as in "Joe is a fan of Diet Coke." Configure your appearance in social ads to "no one."



Step Seven: Now go to "Applications." Click on "Settings." Certain Facebook Platform applications data mine the profiles of people's friends on Facebook for public information. For example, the <u>Your True Self</u> application searches through public information on your friends' profiles to guess your political affiliation and give you movie suggestions. Choose what information you want publicly searchable by these Platform applications. The default setting is complete searchability.

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Privacy > Applications

Overview/ Settings	
What Other Users Can See via the Facebook PI When a friend of yours allows an application to access th you that your friend can already see Learn more.	atform eir information, that application may also access any information about
You can use the controls on this page to limit what types Please note that this is only for applications you do not u	of information your friends can see about you through applications. se yourself:
Share my name, networks, and list of friends, a	s well as the following information:
Profile picture	Events I'm invited to
Basic info Whets that	(E) Photos taken by me
Personal info (activities, interests, etc.)	Photos taken of me
Current location (what city 1'm in)	Relationship status
Education history	V Online presence
Work history	What type of relationship I'm looking for
Profile status	What sex I'm interested in
Wall	Who I'm in a relationship with
V Notes	Religious views
Groups I belong to	
Do not share any information about me through	the Facebook API
Applications Authorized to Access Your Inform	ation
When you authorize an application, it can access any info Information is never shared through Platform. You can v page.	emation associated with your account that it requires to work. Contact iew a full list of applications you have authorized on the Applications
Facebook Connect Applications	
Facebook Connect is a way to use applications outside of Internet, and send interesting information back to your P	if Facebook. You can take your Facebook profile information all over the acebook account.

When your friend connects their Facebook account with an application outside of Facebook, they will be able to compare their Facebook Friend List with information from that website in order to invite more friends to connect.

Don't allow friends to view my memberships on other websites through Facebook Connect.

Step Eight: Under the "Settings" link in the upper right hand corner of the Facebook main screen click on "Application Settings." Then go to the drop down menu for "show" and click on "authorized" so that you see a list of all applications that you have authorized to use on Facebook automatically authorizes certain applications, like Notes, Photos, and Events, for your profile. For each application, follow these steps. Click on "Edit Settings." On the "Wall" tab limit which stories can be published by that application on your behalf and without your knowledge. Click "Never publish any stories" or "Prompt me." On the "Profile" tab, click on the privacy dropdown menu and customize the privacy settings for each application using your friend lists.

Application Settings - Recently Used

Application Settings - Recently Used

Displaying 7 applications you have us	ed in the past month. Show: Recently Used	-	Displaying 7 applications you have	used in the past month. Show: Recently Used	
Events	Edit Events Settings	×	T Events	Edit Events Settings	×
🖭 Gifts	Wall Profile Bookmark Additional Permissions Box: Available (ndd)	×	1 Gifts	Wall Profile Sockmark Additional Permissions	×
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Notes	Tab: Available (add)	×	Notes	Prompt me before publishing any stories from Events.	×
Photos	Prividcy: Everyone	×	R Photos	 Never publish any stories from Events. Allow Events to publish specific story sizes automatically without 	×
f Links		×	1 Links	prompting.	×
Set Video	Curr	x	St Video	Okay	×

You did it. Facebook settings for a professional in (hopefully) under ten minutes.

Before you start posting (more) photos, links and text to your Facebook profile, keep in mind that even with all of the above-mentioned privacy settings, Facebook is not as private or as secure as one would hope.

- Facebook still has occasional, albeit rare, privacy bugs. TechCrunch found one on March 20, 2009, where for a few hours, users were allowed to gain access to portions
 of their friends' profiles that they should not have been able to see.
- Content viewed on Facebook may remain viewable in cached or archived pages if users copy or store the content, a situation you acknowledge in signing off on Facebook's Terms and Conditions.
- There are still no privacy controls over comments on Facebook. You will receive a notification if someone posts a comment on a photo but it will have been too late the comment will have already been published for all of your friends to see.
- Your friends can still post pictures of you on Facebook and "tag" them with your name, even if you change your settings so that your friends do not get a notification when you are tagged (see "Profile" setting defaults above). The photos will still be there unless your friends take the photos down. So stay away from friends with digital cameras at rowdy parties.
- Several courts in the United States and elsewhere have held that <u>private Facebook profiles are discoverable</u>. Be aware if you are involved in civil or criminal legal proceedings that your Facebook profile (as well as any blogs, websites, or other online content) may be fair game for opposing counsel.

Now that you have tailored your Facebook settings for your personal and professional needs, go have fun with it. On your own terms.

Tagged as: Facebook, Facebook for Lawyers, Marketing, networking, social networking

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