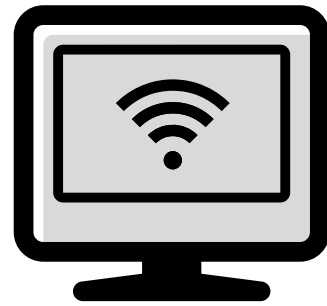


STAY SAFE ONLINE

Here are six things you can do now in order to protect your personal data while online.



1 USE STRONG PASSWORDS

One of the simplest ways you can protect your data is to use strong passwords. Make sure they are:

LONG: The longer the better; aim for 25 characters.

STRONG: Use a mixture of lower and upper cases, numbers and symbols.

UNIQUE: Have a different password for every one of your accounts.

2 GET A PASSWORD MANAGER

Strong passwords take effort, especially to remember them. A free password manager such as *LastPass*, *1Password* or *KeePass* will keep track of accounts, passwords and security questions. They'll also help generate strong, secure passwords.

3 BE AWARE OF BREACHES

If a site or service you use has been compromised, change your password immediately.

How do you know if there has been a data breach? It may hit the news or the company will contact you, but you can check your email at www.haveibeenpwned.com.

4 USE ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE

If you don't use antivirus software, you need to start. Now. There are many free programs such as *Avast* and *Sophos* for computers, and *Lookout* for mobile devices. Install it, run it regularly and always make sure to keep it updated.

5 STAY UPDATED

Software updates happen for a reason, whether it's to release new features or fix vulnerabilities. You may not like change, but being on the latest version keeps you safe. Set up your computer and devices to automatically update programs to make it easy.

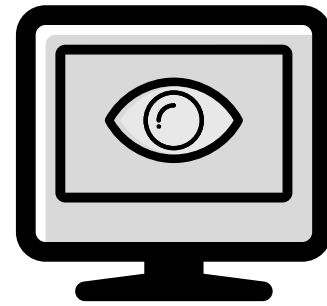
6 THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Having antivirus software doesn't give you license to be careless. Learn how to identify phishing emails and don't click or download anything you didn't go looking for.

Keep your work and personal email accounts separate. That way when you get an email to your work address that your Netflix account has expired, you know it's spam.

STAY PRIVATE ONLINE

When you're online, you're being followed. Whether by search engines, advertisers, or nefarious actors, your actions are tracked through settings you may have overlooked or not known about. Here are some easy steps you can take to stay private while online.



1 TURN OFF TRACKING

Third-party trackers follow you as you browse to track your habits and "personalize" services and ads.

Choose the *Do Not Track* option in your browser's Privacy and Security settings and install the *Privacy Badger* extension to block such trackers.

2 DELETE COOKIES

Not all cookies are bad -- like session cookies which only last as long as you are on a site. However, tracking cookies follow you between sites, mining and sharing your data. Periodically delete cookies from your browser's settings, even if you're doing everything in Step 1.

3 TURN ON AD BLOCKING

If you don't have an ad blocker such as *uBlock Origin* or *Adblock Plus*, install one of these free extensions in your browser and wonder how you lived without it.

Many sites rely on advertising revenue, so if you want to make sure your favorite places get that, use the browser extension *AdNauseum*, which clicks on blocked ads in the background.

4 SWITCH SEARCH ENGINES

Try *DuckDuckGo* or *Startpage.com* the next time you want to perform a search. This search engine prioritizes privacy, and does not store your IP address or log your user information. It will provide every user with the same result.

5 SO, ABOUT GOOGLE...

If someone told you they knew all your personal info, including where you live, the route you take to work, where you've been, who you've called, and could see all your emails, pictures (all those selfies too), what YouTube videos you've watched, what you've bought, searched for, and read... that would be a little creepy, right? Google provides amazing services, but you pay for them with your personal data.

Awareness is key and knowing what companies collect about you will help you get serious about your privacy. Do a *Google Takeout* on your account. (takeout.google.com) It will gather data from 50 different services and send it to you in multiple ZIP files.

After you see your life in their hands, limit what is stored by adjusting your settings under *Privacy and Personalization* in your Google account.