



4 Ways To Better Protect Your Privacy In Social Media Apps

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Social media is a great way to connect with family and friends, but the apps can sometimes go too far with sharing your location, letting people know if you're online, and if you read their message. Here are some online privacy tips to help you leave a smaller digital footprint.

1. Hide Activity Status

On many social apps your friends have the ability see if you're active, offline, or the last time you were online. Many social apps allow you to disable your activity status if you don't want your status to be seen by all your friends.

Instagram, for example, has added a new feature that allows your activity status to be seen by people you follow or send direct messages to. People can now see when you were last active, if you read their message, or if you're typing a response back. To turn this off:

1. Tap the **Profile** tab, which is located in the bottom right and looks like a portrait silhouette
2. Hit the menu button
 - Android:
 - iOS:
3. Scroll to the middle of the page and turn off **Activity Status**

Remember though, hiding your activity also stops you from seeing someone else's activity.

2. Disable Read Receipts

To further protect your privacy on social media apps, turn off the read receipts. Read receipts are notifications that let your friends know that you've read their message.

Twitter allows you to disable read receipts in your direct messages, but disabling read receipts will prevent you from seeing when other people have read your message.

1. Tap your avatar icon on the top left
2. Click **Settings and privacy**
3. Go to **Privacy and safety**
4. Uncheck the **Show read receipts** button

3. Stay Off-The-Grid

Social media apps use your current location for many reasons, such as delivering appropriate ads and notifying you about nearby events. They also can share your location, which you might want to turn off to keep private.

Snapchat is a great example of this. On the Snapchat map, you can find yourself and your friends' whereabouts. To turn this off:

1. Tap the  or your Bitmoji icon in the top left
2. Hit the  in the top right
3. Click **See my location**

4. Toggle **Ghost Mode** on

Now others can't see where you are, but you can still see where they are.

4. Be Selective With The Audience

There are a few ways that you can limit your audience on social media networks. First, you can take advantage of using direct messages to select contacts rather than updating a status or post for all your followers to see. If you don't want to use direct messaging, Facebook provides a different option.

Facebook allows you to choose the audience for your posts and updates. To begin:

1. Start creating a post
2. To limit your audience, tap the audience selector button under your name. The default says **Friends**, but it might also say **Public**, or a number of other options.
3. Select **More** and then **Specific friends**. This allows you to choose who will see your update. The rest of your friends on Facebook will not see your post on their News Feed.

These tips will help make your social media accounts more private, but by no means are the only ways to protect your privacy. If you're still concerned about your privacy online, check out this guide for [protecting your online identity](#).

Sources:

[Vents Magazine](#), [Popular Science](#)

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