

Digital Privacy: Protect Your Visibility

Sixty-one percent of respondents in a **2023 Pew Research Study** felt that there was nothing they could do to protect their privacy. Others were concerned with how companies and governments use the information they collect. Although we live in a data driven world, we still have *choices*.

Digital Privacy

Digital Privacy is not about keeping secrets and it's not the same as data security. Digital Privacy is about deciding **WHO** gets access to your information, **WHEN**, and **WHY**.

To be sure, choosing more restrictive privacy settings usually means giving up a measure of convenience. The more a company *knows* about us, the more personalized service they can provide. It's not an "all or nothing" decision, but it is *your* decision.

A few simple habits will help you reduce your everyday exposure.

Habit 1: Understand Local Privacy Laws

In addition to Europe's **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**, **California's Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA)** and **Privacy Rights Act (CPRA)**, and US **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**, there are laws that may be specific to your area.



Here are resources* to help you get started:

- **Canadian Privacy Laws:** https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/02_05_d_15
- **Foley & Lardner LLP's U.S. State Comprehensive Consumer Data Privacy Law Comparison:** <https://www.foley.com/insights/publications/2024/05/us-state-consumer-data-privacy-laws/>
- **UK Data Protection Legislation:** <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>
- **Australian Privacy Act:** <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-legislation/the-privacy-act>

Habit 2: Regularly Review Application Permissions

Review app access and tighten permissions where possible.

Regularly check these settings on your devices:

- ✓ Location
- ✓ Microphone
- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Photos
- ✓ Contacts
- ✓ Bluetooth

Consider:

- For sensitive permissions such as Location, Microphone, and Camera, consider limiting permissions to **While Using**.
- If you're not sure how access is used, test setting the permission as **Never**.
- You can always restore the permission if it eliminates critical functionality.
- ***Can you use a shortcut to the website instead of an app?***

* Resources and links provided are only informational not intended or implied endorsements or legal advice.

Habit 3: Understand Advertising IDs

Advertising IDs are unique identifiers assigned to mobile devices and computers that help advertisers track customer behavior across apps and websites. Once you learn about Ad IDs, you may want to disable them on some of your devices. Here's how:

In **Windows**:

1. Go to **Settings**.
2. Go to **Privacy & Security**.
3. Go to **Recommendations & Offers** under the **Windows permissions** heading.
4. Toggle **Advertising ID** to **Off**.

Additional Resources: <https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2022/05/how-disable-ad-id-tracking-ios-and-android-and-why-you-should-do-it-now>

Habit 4: Shrink Your Public Footprint

Carefully consider when sharing “Day in the life” and vacation posts. Items like receipts, coffee cups, test results, and boarding passes may unintentionally reveal information you don't want to share. Search for and remove any old profiles or events with location information.



Habit 5: Share Photos Safely

Even if you don't include location coordinates with your images, the curious and determined can use Google Image Search or tools like ChatGPT to determine your location, so you may want to think about how and when you post travel or live updates.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2023/10/18/how-americans-view-data-privacy/>

<https://theconversation.com/why-people-dont-demand-data-privacy-even-as-governments-and-corporations-collect-more-personal-information-262197>

<https://www.visionmediaus.com/blog/ad-ids-explained-advertising-beyond-third-party-cookies>

NOTES:

💡 **Remember** the goal of digital privacy is to take control of who has access to your information, when they get access, and why.

For more **Digital Wellness** courses, check out our course catalog: rainwatergrowth.com/courses