



Digital safety guide

Facebook privacy & security



The settings that keep your account, posts, and personal details among friends. Go one section at a time — no need to do it all at once.

Before you start

Find Settings	Tap the menu (three lines or your profile picture) › Settings & privacy › Settings . On a computer, start at your profile picture.
Accounts Center	Your password, two-factor authentication, and ad settings. Meta is renaming it Meta Account during 2026–27.
Can't find it?	Menus move. Use the search bar at the top of Settings.

✓ Do

Know what's always public: your name, profile picture, and cover photo. Pick photos you'd show a stranger.

Choose Friends or Only me for anything personal. Nothing needs to be Public.

Check the background before you post: house numbers, street signs, license plates.

Ask family to do the same. Their settings can expose you, too.

✗ Don't

Show your birth year, phone number, or hometown on your profile.

Use "Continue with Facebook" to sign in to other apps and games.

Accept a second friend request from someone you're already friends with. It's likely a copycat account.

Tell Meta AI anything private. Since December 2025, Meta uses those chats to pick your ads.



01 Start with Privacy Checkup

Facebook's guided tour of its most important settings, and the quickest first pass. Walk through all five topics, then come back every few months: Facebook adds and moves settings often.

Menu › Settings & privacy › Privacy Checkup

02 Lock the front door

Everything in this section lives in one place:

Settings › Accounts Center › Password and security

Two-factor authentication	A second check after your password, so a stolen password alone isn't enough. Use an authentication app if you can; a text message is a fine fallback. Keep the backup codes on paper somewhere safe.
Passkey	Set one up. You'll sign in with your face, fingerprint, or screen lock, and fake login pages can't steal it.
Where you're logged in	Log out of any phone or computer you don't recognize, then change your password.
Login alerts	Turn them on so you hear about new sign-ins right away. While you're here, run Security Checkup once.
Saved login	If your phone or computer is shared, or has no passcode, turn this off so Facebook asks for your password each time.
Password	Make it long and used nowhere else. Change it right away if someone else might know it; there's no need to change a strong one on a schedule.



03 Decide who sees your posts

Settings › Audience and visibility

SETTING	CHOOSE
POSTS Who can see your future posts?	Friends
POSTS Limit who can see past posts Switches every older post to Friends in one step.	Use it once
POSTS Who can see the people, Pages, and lists you follow?	Only me
STORIES Story audience, and the options that let others share your stories	Friends; sharing off
FOLLOWERS AND PUBLIC CONTENT Who can follow me?	Friends
ACTIVE STATUS Show when you're online	Off

04 Control how people find you

Audience and visibility › How people find and contact you

SETTING	CHOOSE
Who can send you friend requests?	Friends of friends
Who can see your friends list? Scammers copy a profile, then message everyone on its friends list.	Only me
Who can look you up using your email address or phone number?	Only me
Do you want search engines outside of Facebook to link to your profile?	No



05 Tidy up your profile and tags

Your profile details

Your profile › Edit profile (or the About tab)

For each detail (birthday, hometown, current city, relationship, work, school), tap the audience button beside it and choose **Only me** or **Friends**, or delete it. Keep anything you do share vague.

Next, see what a stranger sees: on your profile, tap **•••** › **View As**. Fix anything that shows up, such as old profile pictures. Your current profile picture and cover photo always show.

Good to know

Facebook removed the address, religious views, political views, and "Interested in" fields from profiles in December 2022. If an older guide tells you to hide them, there's nothing left to change.

Meta uses public posts from adults to help train its AI. Posts you share only with friends stay out of it.

Posts and tags

Settings › Audience and visibility › Profile and tagging

SETTING	CHOOSE
Who can post on your profile?	Friends or Only me
Who can see what others post on your profile?	Friends
Review posts you're tagged in before they appear on your profile? Nothing tagged with your name lands on your profile until you okay it.	On
Review tags people add to your posts before they appear?	On



06 Guard your location, photos, and apps

Location

Facebook ended its Location History feature in 2022, so your phone's settings are what count now.

iPhone: Settings › Privacy & Security › Location Services › Facebook › **Never**.

Android: Settings › Apps › Facebook › Permissions › Location › **Don't allow**.

And skip "checking in" while you're still somewhere.

Camera roll

Settings › Preferences › Camera roll sharing suggestions

Turn off both switches, including **cloud processing**, so Facebook doesn't upload photos from your phone to suggest AI edits. On your phone, give Facebook **Limited** photo access, too.

Apps and websites

Settings › Apps and websites

Remove anything you don't use, on both the **Active** and **Expired** tabs. Ideally, both are empty.

🕒 *What about face recognition?*

Older guides say to turn off Face Recognition. Facebook shut that feature down in 2021, so there's nothing to change. If Facebook ever asks for a video selfie to prove it's you, do it only inside the official app, never from a link in a text or email.

Words to know

Authentication app: an app that shows a new sign-in code every 30 seconds.

Copypcat account: a fake profile using a real person's name and photos.

Passkey: sign in with your face, fingerprint, or screen lock. No password.

Legacy contact: someone you pick to look after your account after you pass away.

07 Limit how your data is used

Settings › Accounts Center › Ad preferences

SETTING	CHOOSE
Activity from other businesses What stores and websites tell Meta about your visits. Off means Meta won't use it for your ads, feed, or Meta AI. It replaced Off-Facebook Activity in mid-2026.	Off
Ads shown outside of Meta	Not allowed
Categories used to reach you Your relationship status, employer, job title, and education.	Turn each off

08 If something goes wrong

You can't get in	Visit facebook.com/hacked from any device. Once you're back in, change your password.
A fake profile uses your name	On the fake profile, tap ⋮ › Report profile , then the option for pretending to be you. Warn friends not to accept its requests.
Plan ahead	In Accounts Center › Personal details , keep your email and phone current so you can recover your account, and choose a legacy contact under Memorialization .

Want a hand with this?

We'll walk through every setting in this guide with you, at your pace.

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