

“How-to” change Facebook privacy settings

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Ever had strange people add you as a friend on Facebook or comment on your status? Ever wondered how to hide certain posts from certain people? The new changes of Facebook have made figuring out anything fairly difficult, but these tips and instructions can help you get that comfort of protection back.

When posting a status or photo to your “wall” and not a picture album, you can dictate who can see or not see that post by clicking on the gear icon at the bottom of the posting box. This is called the “inline audience selector.” There, you will see the following choices: Public, Friends, Only Me, and Custom. If you have created any lists, such as “Close Friends,” “Family,” or customized lists for the people in your life, then those will be listed after. Whichever option you select will be you can see that post. If you prefer a more customized selection, click “custom” on that list. A window will appear, where you can select certain people, lists, and/or networks of people for whom the post will be visible. All you have to do is type in the specific person’s name. You can also hide posts from specific people or lists, just by typing in a person’s name or title of a list.

To change your privacy settings in a broader sense, look to the top right hand corner of your screen. You will see your name and “Home,” as well as an arrow pointed down. Click on that arrow, followed by “privacy settings.” Now you will see a screen that says “Control Privacy When You Post” and “Control Your Default Privacy,” followed by other options. The 1st option of “Control Privacy When You Post” was explained above. The 2nd option, which is your default privacy, is used for status updates and photos that you post from a Facebook app. Basically, this setting is used for mobile posts, from iPhones, iPods, and other gadgets. You can set this to Public, Friends, or Custom. Custom here works just like custom above, type in who you would like to see or not see the posts.

The next option is “How You Connect.” Click on “Edit Settings” on the right, then select what you would like in the dialog box that appears. You can determine what groups of people can send you friend requests, Facebook messages, and look you up using the email address or phone number you provided. In the next option, “Profile And Tagging,” you can control what happens when your friends tag you or tag content you’ve posted. You can also control what happens when friends post on your wall. You can either allow all of your friends to post on your wall, or disable it so no one can. You can either enable or disable the option of reviewing posts that friends tag you in before they appear on your profile. This could be very useful to enable if you might have less-than-flattering pictures of you appear on Facebook from a party or such the night before.

You can dictate who can see posts that you’ve been tagged in, enable or disable the option of reviewing tags that friends add to your posts before they become official, and decide who can see tag suggestions when photos that look like you are uploaded onto Facebook.

The main menu also allows you to edit settings for apps, websites that might be synced to Facebook, and ads. You can also manage who can view your past posts and block other users, app invites, event invites, or apps.

If you want to manage visibility on your photo albums, first go to your profile, click on “photos” (this is at a different spot for users with timeline verses the old profile), click on a specific photo album, then set the visibility from the gear symbol in the upper right hand corner. This is the general setting used on Facebook, which I explained in the 1st instructions. You can also edit that album by clicking on the pencil icon that says, “edit album” under the title of the album. Here, you can add details about the album, tag a location, add more photos, delete the album, or set privacy again.

To change the privacy of information on your profile, such as family, relationship status, and more, go to your profile and click on “edit profile” on the top right hand corner. There is a menu on the left that organizes your information. The middle of the screen shows the information, and the icons on the right next to each piece of information change the privacy of each specific part. These icons bring up the same generic drop down menu. By using the menu on the left, and the privacy menus on the right, you can select who can and cannot see any piece of information on the “About” section of your page. The selection can be as broad or as specific as you would like.

The last interesting feature that I will share is called “View As...” and it can be found next to “Edit Profile” on the upper right hand corner of your profile. If you click on “View As...” you can see how your profile appears to the public, before anyone adds you as a friend. You can also type in a specific person’s name and view your profile as they see it. This can be a very useful tool to step in someone else’s shoes and experience your profile as they do. You can make sure what you want visible to them is visible, and what you want hidden is hidden.

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