

KEEPING YOUR DATA SAFE IN FACEBOOK

AND

FACEBOOK DO'S AND DON'T'S GUIDANCE

PROTECTING YOUR DATA

There are a proportion of people who are either worried about their data security as existing FB users, or simply avoid FB because they have heard scare stories about data security.

Below are some notes on ways that you can make yourself more secure. Obviously, no online system is 100% secure from all dubious goings on – but with a little care you can make FB as secure if not more so than your house.

I don't want my email address to be accessible via FB

Perfectly understandable. The work-around to this is to create an online email address using something like [gmail](#) (click for how) that is **JUST** for use to create a FB account.

Create the gmail account (you can fib a bit about your details to be ultra safe)

Use that email account to create the FB account

Never look at that gmail account ever again (but remember the address and password – you may need it if FB have some kind of issue or you need to change your FB password.

Even if someone hacks FB and strips off detail your mail account tells them nothing

I don't want people to be able to see my personal details in Facebook

The solution to this is simple ----- FIB.

The basic details are below, and few of them are compulsory

- Your Name – you can fib here, but don't be too far from your name – that can cause problems if you join a group where they need to identify you
- Your Date of Birth – so make something up – a different day/month and take a year or so off
- Where you live – Chose somewhere else – fancy living in Chelsea? --- Go for it.
- Where you went to school --- Well one went to Eton don't ya know. 😊
- Where you worked --- I was a Secret Agent for MI5 – any more and I will have to kill you
- Marital Status --- Get a virtual divorce or hook up with your perfect virtual man/woman

Nothing else is needed. Going by the above, you appear as if you are someone else – if your details become hacked then they cant use any of it to access anything you want kept safe.

DO'S AND DON'T'S

Facebook can be an enjoyable diversion, or it can be a source of annoyance and stress for users.

Just think before you post – you are, in effect, having a conversation in a crowded room where everyone is listening in. It is very easy to forget, what would normally be, your personal protection reflex from the comfort of your armchair

Engage your personal filter before posting anything – how do you want people to see you? And what information do you want to share?

You may be passionate about the *slugs in your garden* – but if you post 50 entries about how to get rid of the little swines, one after the other, then your friends and anyone who has the misfortune to make the mistake of commenting or even just liking your entry will soon raise their eyebrows in frustration. Mono-topic Facebookers soon find their friend list dwindling.

These dos and don'ts can help:

Do

- Keep your status updates brief. Everyone is busy, and the longer your updates the fewer people will read them.
- Consider what your friends might actually want to read rather than just what you feel like saying at the moment.
- Vary your posts. If you flood your page with dozens of posts about knitting patterns, vintage leaf rakes, or even dog videos, you're going to wear people out. Vary your content, and offer your readers an assortment of your own personal comments, information shared from other sources, images, and questions to spark discussion.
- Rant sparingly, if at all. There's nothing wrong with sharing the ups and downs of your life on Facebook, but remember your friends aren't there just to listen to you vent your spleen.
- Use discretion and good taste. Your most recent operation might be top of mind for you, but your friends don't need to hear the gory details.
- Take it easy with the politics and religion. Political/religious disagreements on Facebook can lead to hard feelings and can escalate to de-friending, which is

sad. By all means share opinions and issues that are important to you, but remember you're talking to real people on Facebook: watch your tone, don't shout, and don't be nasty.

- Proofread. It takes just a few seconds, and it can make the difference between a status update that makes sense and one that doesn't.

Don't

- Don't post anything confidential or private anywhere on Facebook. If you're not comfortable sharing your update with literally everyone on the planet (including your boss, your co-workers, and prospective employers), don't post it.
- Don't post pictures of you on a sunny beach enjoying a pina-colada while you are still there – why would you want to tell the world that your house is empty and ripe for burglary? Wait until you get home – then share the wonderful time you had – viewers may get jealous, but at least you are home to stop them coming around and throwing bricks through your windows
- Don't share anything about friends or family on Facebook that they would not want known publicly. You're responsible for protecting their privacy as well as your own. This includes an innocent question asking "Are you still on holiday" – the effect is the same as the point above. By all means use Private Messenger in Facebook for that type of thing – that is just between you and them – the burglars won't see them.
- Don't be mean. Unkind remarks about other people and nasty comments on other people's updates can make Facebook an unpleasant place to be.
- Mind your language. Whilst someone you are talking to in a direct comment may be fine with the odd (or maybe not so odd) expletive, remember that your audience is wider than just that person. Would you stand in a room full of aunts and grandparents, and whilst speaking to your ex-plumber mate take out a megaphone each time you cussed and bellowed it for the whole room? That is what swearing is in Facebook.
- Don't overshare. Your friends may be glad you're excited about antique teapots. They probably like you, and they don't want to unfollow you, but seriously, seven consecutive posts about antique teapots is too many. If you're really passionate about something, consider starting a special page devoted to that interest rather than subjecting all your friends to serial posts about the same kind of thing.

- Don't post pictures of your house that will identify where you live. You may be rightly proud of what a wonderful job you did of making it "chocolate-box" pretty, but if the picture proudly displays the house number and the street sign then those nasty burglars are on the front foot already
- A bit of a personal bugbear here – Would you order a meal in a restaurant and when it arrives, pick up your plate and run around to all your friends houses saying "Look at what I am eating!". I doubt it. If it is a real work of art, then take just one picture and when you get home post the picture and do a critique of the whole experience. Unless you are in a Facebook Group that is full of gourmets, your friends couldn't care less about every course you have in every restaurant you visit.
- All the "Rubbish" in Facebook tends to be in the column just left of centre of the page. To avoid going to pages that have a hidden agenda (pages with phishing or virus or trojans in them) simply ignore that column – no matter how tempting the subject might be. Facebook try to filter out such rubbish, but they are not 100% successful.

Everyone has opinions about the best way to use Facebook. You can't please all the people all the time, but you can use some care in writing your status updates to make them as pleasant as possible for your friends and followers.