

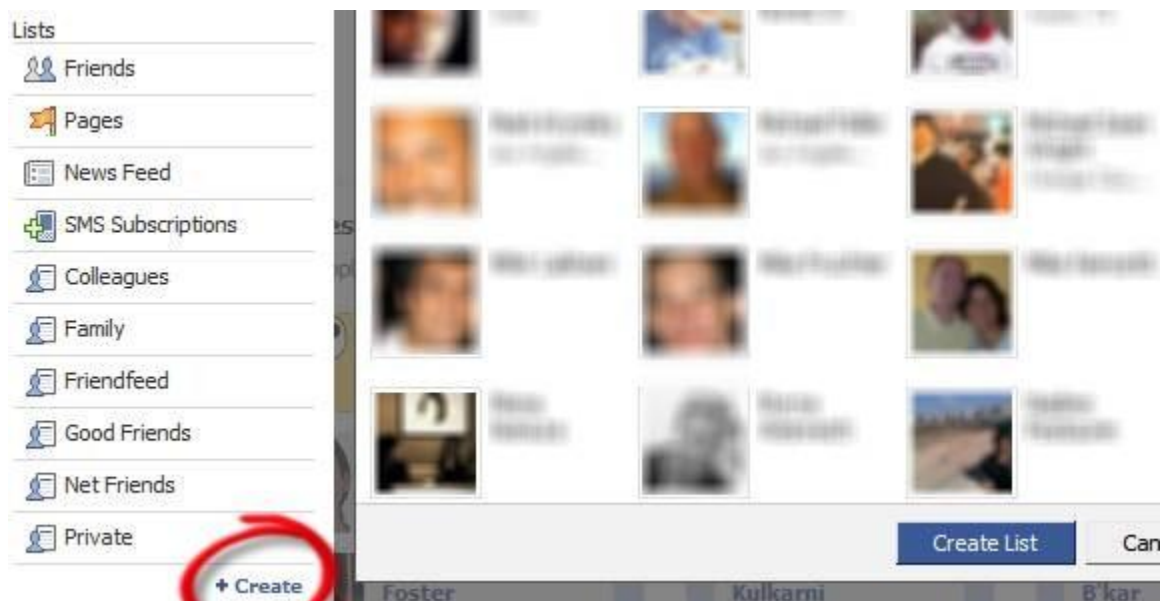
## 10 Solid Tips to Safeguard Your Facebook Privacy

Facebook statistics show that it has 250 million active users each with an average 120 friends. More than 1 billion photos are uploaded every month by its users, over 70% of whom use applications like games and quizzes in Facebook. Unfortunately, most users don't know the implications of entering personal information, making friends, and playing games on Facebook.

This guide will show what you can (and cannot) do to safeguard your Facebook privacy.

### 1. Organize Friends in Lists

What do you do when your boss, mother-in-law, or a casual web acquaintance sends you a friend request on Facebook? Use Friend Lists. Friend Lists are the foundation of your Facebook privacy settings. Select **Friends** from the top menu, and use the **Create** link to create friend lists like Co-workers, Family, College Friends, etc. Your friends can't see your lists, so you can name them whatever you like.



Tip: On your left sidebar, all your friend lists may not show up by default. Click **More** to see all of them, and drag and drop those you want above the separator.

## 2. Customize Profile Privacy









Click **Settings > Privacy Settings > Profile**. Select which parts of your profile will be seen by whom.

### **Privacy** ▶ **Profile**

#### **Basic** **Contact Information**

Control who can see which sections of your profile. Visit the [Applications](#) page in order to change settings for applications. Visit the [Search Privacy](#) page to make changes to what people can see about you if they search fo

See how a friend sees your profile:

<b>Profile</b>	 Only Friends 	[?]
<b>Basic Info</b>	 Only Friends 	[?]
<b>Personal Info</b>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Everyone</li><li>My Networks and Friends</li><li>Friends of Friends</li><li>Only Friends</li><li>Customize...</li></ul>	[?]
<b>Status and Links</b>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Customize...</li></ul>	[?]
<b>Photos Tagged of You</b>	 Only Friends 	[?]

If you choose **Customize** in the drop down, you can be more specific. This is where the Friend Lists you created before become really useful.

#### **Who Can See This?**





Everyone on Facebook


**Friends**

Friends of Friends  
My friends and their friends can see this.

Only Friends  
Only friends can see this.

**Some Friends**  
Choose specific friends who can see this.

-  Family 
-  Private 



Only me  
Only you and selected networks can see this.

Also go to the **Contact Information** tab and choose how you want your contact information to be shared on the Internet.

### 3. Set Facebook Privacy Level of Photo Albums

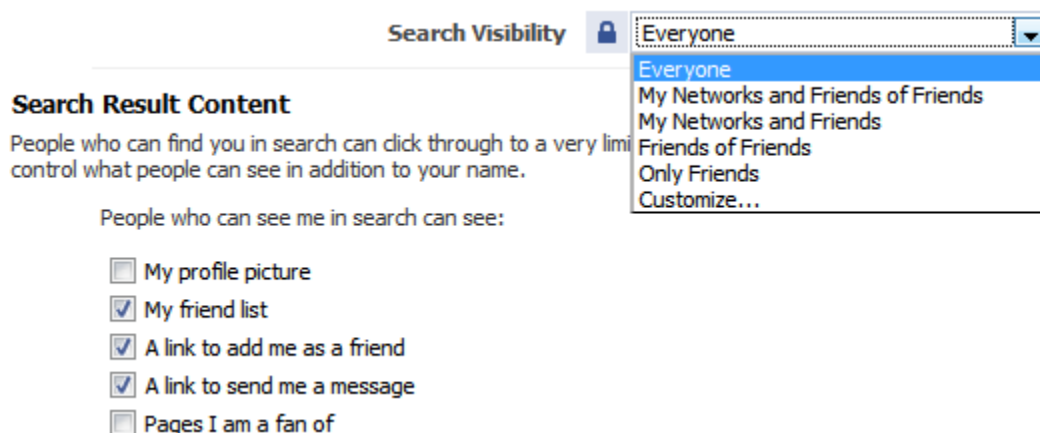
On the **Photos** tab of your profile page, click **Album Privacy**. Here again, you can use your Friend Lists to set the privacy for each photo album.



Note that your profile pictures go into a special album that is always visible to ALL your friends.

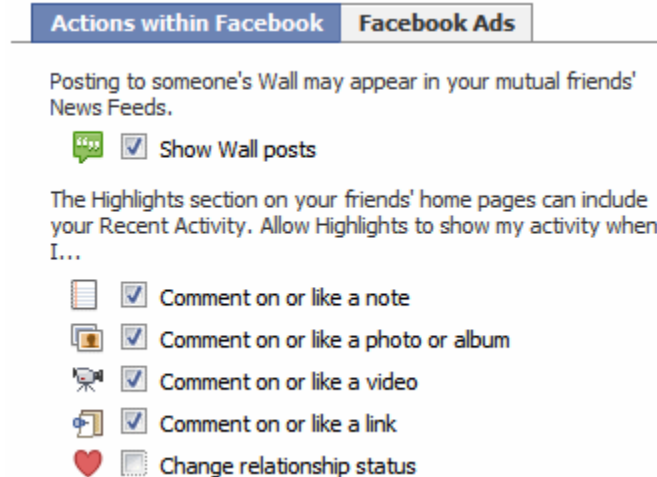
### 4. Restrict Search Visibility

Click **Privacy > Search** to set your visibility when someone searches Facebook for people. This is an important way to safeguard your Facebook privacy. You can also select what will be visible in the search results.



## 5. Control Automatic Wall Posts and News Feed Updates

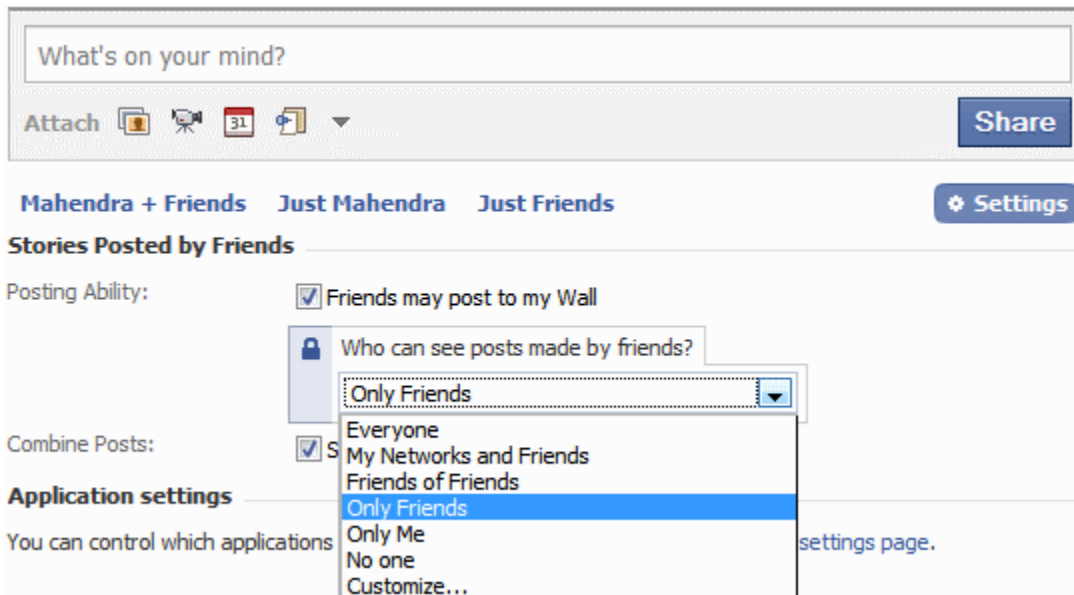
Your actions in Facebook such as comments, likes, appear as highlights on ALL your friends' home pages. You cannot use friend lists here, only turn them on or off.



Go to **Privacy > News Feed and Wall** and choose whether you want your boss or ex-girlfriend to know that you're in a relationship.

## 6. Set Facebook Wall Privacy

Go to your profile page, click **Options > Settings** under the status box.



Here you can control whether your friends can post to your Wall, and who can see the posts made by your friends.

## 7. Avoid Appearing in Advertisements

Facebook has two types of advertisements: third-party and Facebook. Third-party advertisements are *currently* not allowed to use your pictures, but there is a setting to disallow it *if it is allowed in the future*. Go to **Privacy > News Feed and Wall > Facebook Ads** tab to turn this off.

### Ads shown by third party applications

Facebook does not give third party applications or ad networks the right to use your name or picture in ads. If this is allowed in the future, this setting will govern the usage of your information.



The Facebook ads shown to your friends are about 'social actions' like becoming a fan of something. You can turn this off at the bottom of the page.

## 8. Protect Yourself from Friends' Applications

Go to **Privacy > Applications**, and click the **Settings** tab and uncheck all the boxes. These settings control what information about you is visible to applications installed by your friends. By default, these are set to visible. This means that your religious, sexual, and political preferences, pictures, etc. are readily available to one of the million worldwide Facebook application developers, each time any of your friends takes a quiz, plays a game, or runs any other Facebook app. This is obviously a Facebook privacy issue.

### What Other Users Can See via the Facebook Platform

When a friend of yours allows an application to access their information, that application may also access any info your friend can already see. [Learn more.](#)

You can use the controls on this page to limit what types of information your friends can see about you through ; that this is only for applications you do not use yourself:

- Share my name, networks, and list of friends, as well as the following information:
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Profile picture                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Events I'm invited to |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic info <a href="#">What's this?</a>     | <input type="checkbox"/> Photos taken by me    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal info (activities, interests, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Photos taken of me    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current location (what city I'm in)         | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship status   |

This is the most [commonly misunderstood](#) aspect of Facebook privacy. These settings control what applications installed by your friends can see about you, *even if you don't install the application yourself*.

Why is this important? Because these settings will **not** change anything about what you are sharing with the applications you install yourself. For that, go to the next step.

## 9. Privacy from Your Applications

There is no way to control what applications see about you; it is an all-or-nothing affair. Take [this quiz](#) developed by the [American Civil Liberties Union](#) to check what anonymous application developers can know about you and your friends each time you take a quiz.

The Burton Group's [Identity Blog](#) features the Facebook [Privacy Mirror](#), an application that you can use to find out what applications know about you and your friends. If you really want to see exactly what profile data of each of your friends is visible to application developers, [Privacy Mirror](#) shows it in detail.

The only thing you can do is to authorize only those applications you require and trust. Go to **Settings > Application Settings** from the top menu. Change the drop-down from **Recently Used** to **Authorized**. Here you can see all the applications you have authorized to get access to ALL your profile information. Remove the ones you no longer need.



Also check the list of applications **Allowed to Post** and **Granted Additional Permissions** to remove unwanted ones.

## 10. Quitting Facebook? Delete, Don't Just De-Activate Your Account

You can easily deactivate your account in Facebook from the **Settings** page. But deactivation will retain all your profile information within Facebook, including pictures, friends, etc. If you want to permanently delete your Facebook account, [click here](#) to submit a deletion request. Note that:

1. There is an unspecified delay between submitting your delete request and actual deletion.
2. If you login to Facebook, your deletion request is automatically cancelled.
3. There doesn't seem to be any way to confirm that your request was completed.
4. Even after permanent deletion, [Facebook says](#) that copies of your photos may remain on their servers for technical reasons.

Also, note that once in a while, there is news of a Facebook hack or leak that can expose your information on the Internet. It is better to be safe than sorry by avoiding using Facebook for anything that may embarrass you.