



This tip sheet has been prepared for general information purposes. It is not a legal document.

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#Privacy #Social Media

Data Protection Advice for Individuals

Things to keep in mind before you post to, or register for, a social media site:

- Be familiar with your privacy settings.** These settings control what is public and what remains private on any given site. If you are not comfortable with the default settings, change them to more appropriate levels.
- Do not provide any more information than is necessary** or asked for. When registering for a service the necessary fields are often marked with an (*) asterisk. Only fill out these fields.
- Be aware of who is collecting, using or disclosing your information** – just because you are on one site, doesn't mean your personal information will be restricted to that site. Third-party applications are more popular than ever, with more than 2 million sites that will let you log on with your Facebook credentials. Will your post go on Facebook? Or the other site? Or both?
- Speak in hushed tones** – you don't broadcast personal details on the street, so why broadcast them online. Ensure that your potential audience is appropriate to your message and no bigger.
- Personal details are not necessary to communicate personal experience.** Be general when appropriate (in a forum) and detailed when necessary (in a private message).
- Personal boundaries are just that – personal.** Protect the personal privacy of others by not posting their information, including: name, address, photo, phone number or anything else about them.
- Think of your family.** Are you about to post something? Who could see it? How long will it remain online? Think about what your mother will/would think about it, and about what your children/future children will think about it.
- Think of your password recovery questions.** Information commonly used to recover a password should be kept private. This includes your mother's maiden name, your pet's name, your favourite book or the street you grew up on.

