



information
and privacy
commission
new south wales

What do your privacy settings say about you?

Your personal information is important. When using social media it is crucial to remain vigilant and regularly check your privacy settings to keep it safe.

Social media is a popular way to keep in touch with friends and family, share photos and videos, and coordinate activities and events.

Recent reports tell us that 65% of Australians use social media, and on average, each user has 258 fans or followers with young people between the ages of 14 and 19 having an average of 453.* And depending on your privacy settings, your friends, friends of friends or even complete strangers can see your personal details.

So what does this mean?

- It means, that if you have your location services on, you are potentially telling hundreds of friends and strangers **where you are** at the time of any post (and where you are not)
- It means potentially hundreds of friends and strangers, present and future, know from your photos **what you look like** and what you have been doing and with whom. These stay on your profile indefinitely!
- It means every time you “like”, “share” or “re-post” something you are potentially giving hundreds of people a glimpse of **your habits, lifestyle, personality and preferences**
- It means potentially hundreds of **people can find out** your date of birth, where you’ve been, where you live, what you like, and possibly details of your family and friends.

At the NSW Information and Privacy Commission (IPC), we want your personal information to be as safe as possible. While social media is a wonderful way to keep in touch with friends and family, share photos with loved ones and find out news and information, it is important that we are all very careful about the type of information we put out on the web.

We’re not saying people shouldn’t use social media – but always be mindful of who might also access this information.

Fact sheet
May 2014

Tips for effective privacy online

You should be able to choose who can see your details through your privacy settings.



The padlock icon on the upper right-hand corner of your Facebook page takes you to the privacy settings section, where you can decide who can see what’s on your page, and what information is added to your timeline.



Twitter has the option to make your tweets “public” or “private”. When you sign up, it automatically defaults to public but you can change this in your account settings so only approved followers see your tweets.



LinkedIn is great for professional networking – all the more reason to be mindful of who can see your information. You can manage your privacy settings by clicking the small image of your profile picture on the top right-hand side of your profile home.



The last icon to the left at the bottom of your screen will take you to the Instagram “Edit Profile” settings. Here you can make your photos private. This means only the people you approve will be able to see them.

For more information

Contact the Information and Privacy Commission NSW (IPC):

Freecall: 1800 472 679
Email: ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.ipc.nsw.gov.au

* Statistics: *Yellow Social Media Report, about.sensis.com.au*

Visit Stay Safe Online website for more information on privacy settings: www.staysafeonline.org/data-privacy-day/check-your-privacy-settings/