

Managing Your Digital Footprint

Your digital footprint is the record of everything you have ever done online. It includes:

- ▶ Social media activity, including photos or videos you've uploaded
- ▶ Personal blogs or websites
- ▶ Browsing history
- ▶ Online shopping and subscriptions
- ▶ Comments on forums and articles

If you are looking for ways to clean up your digital footprint, try these tips:

- ▶ Read the "Privacy" page before creating a username or account to ascertain how your information is being viewed, collected, stored, and shared. Review the privacy settings on new devices or apps and adjust them to meet your preferences.
- ▶ Make a list of all your online accounts and close any that you are no longer using. If you've discontinued using a social media account or blog, consider if it's time to delete it or transfer the archive to a more current format.
- ▶ Never post information that would help others steal your identity, such as your address and phone or credit card number. If you are traveling, omit details about your destination or exact travel dates.
- ▶ Consider if signing up for a "password keeper" service would help you streamline the process of managing multiple accounts.
- ▶ Do a search of your name, as well as any names you may go by online, to determine if there is information out there that needs to be updated or deleted.
- ▶ Before making a blog or social media post, ask yourself if it's something you would want others to have access to years from now. While it is possible to delete posts, others may screengrab your content and continue to pass it around. If you are angry or under the influence, it's best to stay offline until you're thinking more clearly.
- ▶ Delete your cache and clear your cookies often. In addition, make sure you delete the browser history after every use of a public computer, especially if you are using it to conduct personal business (such as banking or checking in for a flight).

Creating clear rules for what you do and don't do online may minimize problems later down the line. LifeMatters can help you with determining your boundaries for safe, appropriate behavior online, as well as help you address any incidents of identity theft. Call 24/7/365.



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