



EIS Guide to Facebook: Keeping Personal Life.... Personal

Like many people, athletes use social networking sites like Facebook to keep in touch with family and friends, store photographs and have a presence online. However, there are some useful tips for those wanting to keep their personal profile private and the below is a rough guide on some of those settings.

Privacy Settings

Facebook has some really useful privacy settings, however these need to be activated and set in order that they have an effect on the content you store. After the site came under criticism in 2010 for it's complex privacy settings, it's aimed to make these easier to change and manage. Here are a few pointers...

▼ [Your Personal Profile](#)

Your name, gender and profile picture are available at least to your friends and often others who search for you. Check your current privacy status by clicking on Account, top right of homepage, and choose *Privacy Settings*. Click on the *View Settings* link and select from the drop down list who can see information such as your hometown, list of friends and hobbies.

Some of this information can be made visible to the user only – select *Customise* and choose "make this visible to *Only Me*".



▼ [Use Friend Lists](#)

Facebook describes these as a features which allows "you to create private groupings of friends based on your personal preferences". So, you can create a *Friend List* for your training squad you meet regularly that you want to share specific information. A few key things about friend lists are;

- You can add each friend to more than one group
- Friend groups should be used like 'tags'
- They can have specific privacy policies applied to them

So, for example you might have 'Friends', 'Training Group', 'Professional' and 'Sport Friends' – so the photos from the party you were at last night, may only be shared with your training group, as opposed to the professional group which may have sponsors in or a wider group like sport friends, which could include fans, journalists etc. You can configure your friend lists by visiting the 'friends' area of your Facebook.

▼ [Block Lists](#)

You can block individual users using this, but bear in mind that they can still interact with you through some games and apps.

▼ [Sharing on Facebook](#)

This section of the privacy settings page controls who can see what you are up to on the site. It's recommended settings are very open so it's wise to select less exposure by picking *Friends Only*, or choose *Customise Settings* in very small blue writing at the bottom of the section – this allows you to lock up information such as who sees your email address, mobile phone and who's allowed to write on your message wall.

When you write a status update you only want certain people to see, click the padlock symbol under the status update box for more options.

▼ [Remove yourself from Facebook search results](#)

You can make sure journalists (and others) can't see you in search results and this is simple to turn off.

- Visit your '*search privacy settings page*'
- Under '*search visibility*' select '*only friends*'
- Click '*save changes*'

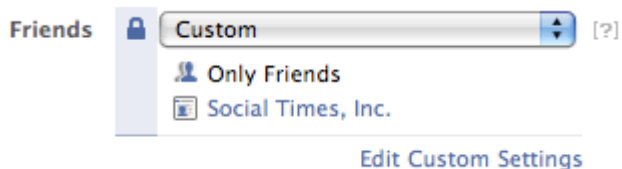
By default, facebook makes your presence visible to the network you are in, so for example if you were in the 'london network' or 'Loughborough University' network, someone can search your profile if they are in that network.

By selecting '*customize*' from your search visibility drop down, you can make your settings even more specific.

▼ [Keep you friendships to yourself](#)

Some of your other friends, be they other athletes, celebrities or close family, may not want their friendships with you public.

- Visit the '*profile privacy page*'
- Navigate down to the setting which says '*friends*' and then modify the setting to whatever is right for you



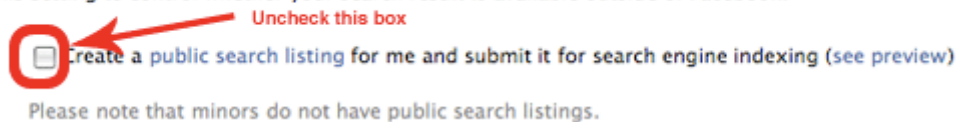
✓ Remove yourself from Google

Another privacy tip is ensuring that your profile can't be googled – which is where most people get spotted. Not all of your profile is displayed, but your limited profile – that's your profile picture, a list of your friends, a link to add you as a friend, a link to send you a message and a list of up to approximately 20 fan pages that you are a member of. Facebook does well in the rankings, so if you don't want to be found this way, or have your information so publicly available here's what to do...

- Visit the '*search privacy setting page*' again, you can control your public search listing which is visible to google amongst others.
- You can turn off your public search listing by simply un-checking the box by '*create a public search listing for me and submit it for search engine indexing*' (see below)

Public Search Listing

Use this setting to control whether your search result is available outside of Facebook.

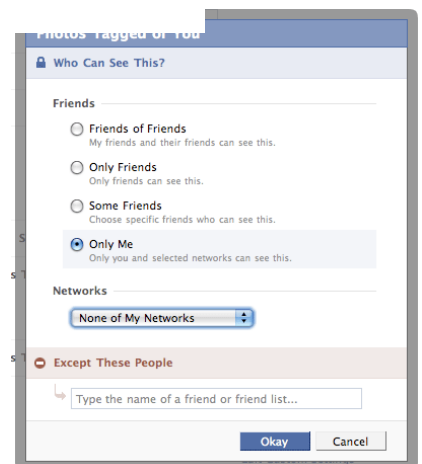


✓ Avoid photo/video tag mistakes

This is a typical issue with facebook... getting tagged in dodgy pictures/videos which are suddenly posted for all to view, not just your close friends who shared the moment with you. Tennis athletes back in 2007 got their funding suspended for a similar incident and there have been many who have lost their jobs over this...

How to prevent it happening to you...

- Visit your '*profile privacy page*'
- Modify the setting next to '*photos tagged of you*'. Select the option which says '*customise*' and a box like this will come up.
- Select the option '*only me*' and then '*none of my networks*' if you want to keep all tagged photos private.
- If you'd like to make tagged photos visible to certain users, you can choose to add them in the box under '*some friends*' and you can type individual friends or friend lists.



✓ Protect your photo albums

Even though you may turn off your tagged photo visibility, you have not protected your albums... you need to do this on an album by album basis.

- There is a specific '*photos privacy page*' on which you can manually configure the visibility of each album
- You can then store your photos on facebook indefinitely yet ensure that the only people who can view them are the ones you really want to

▼ Ensure your photos are not used for advertising

If your photos are not private, there's a good chance they could be used for advertising on the website.

- Go into both your '*profile settings*' and your '*search settings*'
- Make sure your photo settings are secure and you've not chosen '*everyone*' for your photos setting.

▼ Prevent stories showing up in news feeds

If you don't really want to share with every friend on facebook that you've just broken up with someone or that you've just got into a relationship, you may want to protect your updates....

There are a number of ways to control how your relationships status is displayed..

- The first thing most people should do is uncheck the box next to '*remove relationships status*' in the news feed and wall privacy page.
- Secondly, your relationships status falls within your '*basic information*' on your profile. You can control who sees this next to '*basic information*' setting on the '*profile privacy page*'.

Keep in mind that other relevant profile information like your gender, birth date, networks, and other settings are visible within your basic information setting. You don't necessarily need to make all of this private, but the relationship change is probably the most sensible to keep to yourself!

▼ Applications & Websites

Bottom left corner of the *Privacy Settings* page you'll find the area around applications. If you use applications and games such as Farmville click "*remove unwanted or spam applications*" to clean up your profile.

Also you are able to remove your profile from public searches by going into *Edit Settings* and un-ticking the box.

Often, when you add an application, a news feed item is immediately published to your profile in a bid to get more people to sign up to the application and often then can be embarrassing. It's therefore important to monitor the applications you put on when you install them. Once you install one, you should visit your profile to ensure that no embarrassing notification has been posted to your profile.

How to avoid these...

- Don't visit applications or scan your profile every time that you do
- Be careful of new applications

▼ Make your contact information private

You may have some people on there, from a professional perspective (fans, sponsors, journalists etc), that you don't have a close relationships and it is advisable to therefore protect your contact information.

- Go to 'contact information' area under the 'info' tab in your profile
- If it displays, you simply click 'edit'
- For each contact item you have in your profile, you should set custom privacy settings.

It's a small change but could stop you getting pestered by people you don't know well. Again, having friend lists can help group people together in terms of what level of information you need to share with them.

▼ Don't have embarrassing wall posts


Even when you take a more professional approach to using facebook, your friends may not! Facebook has provided the ability to customise your wall postings visibility. You can also control which friends can post on your wall. There are two places you can control these things...

- Adjust wall posting visibility

Stories Posted by Friends

Posting Ability:

Friends may post to my Wall

 Who can see posts made by friends?

My Networks and Friends

- Within your profile page, click on the 'settings' icon on your profile page. Find the box pictured above and adjust the setting which says 'who can see posts made by friends?' – use a similar strategy to the one around your contact information.
- Control who can post to your wall by visiting the 'profile privacy setting page' and the section labelled 'wall posts'. You can completely disable friends from posting on your wall if you need to and you can select specific friend lists who you will allow to post on there.

Staying Ahead

As with most social networking sites, Facebook changes all the time to compete with other sites and to retain it's 500m+ users. This means that privacy settings often change too. The best way to keep on top of these is to check out their latest guide to privacy settings.

You can access this via any page on facebook. At the bottom of each page is "[A guide to privacy on Facebook](#)."

Whilst you don't need to check this every day, do keep an eye out every few months and if you hear of a setting changing, be sure to check out their guide.