# Ваша информация на Facebook…<br>er,<br>Your Information on Facebook:<br>Controlling What Social Media Shares About You

Maxwell Memorial Library's Technology Class
Thursday, July 26, 2018

*Credit:* Privacy *by* *Owen Moore* *(Home Water Softener Reviews)*
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## Motivation

As has become all too clear over the past year-and-a-half, what you share or view on social media platforms is probably being shared with more people that you think you've authorized, and it is being used to affect what sorts of ads and other publicity get fed to you.

This month's tech program will look at

- How to change various settings to gain some measure of control over what you see and what you share,
- Safe habits to cultivate online, and
- Critical examination of memes and articles that might otherwise get you to hit Reblog before you've thought about it.

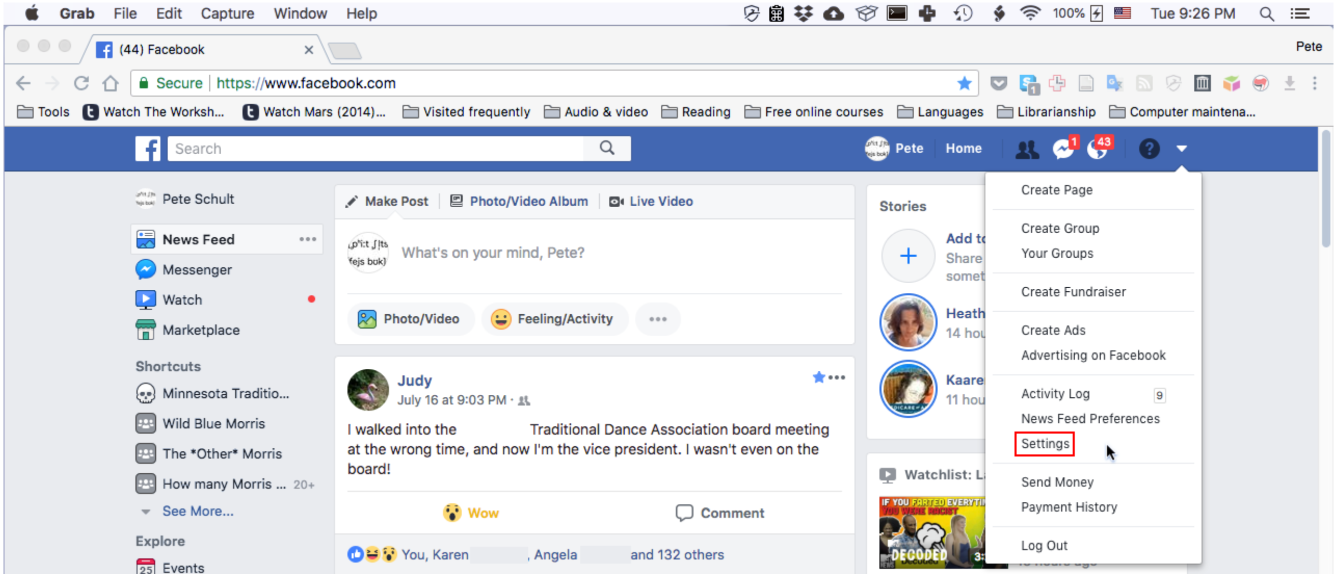
# Introduction

There are 2 sorts of privacy that you should be concerned with on social media: who can see what you post and whose content will show up in your feed. That is (to be a bit overly simplistic), who can read what you write and who can "force" you to read what they write.

Different users of social media will have different views on how restrictive they want to be with respect to these 2 groups, and they will have different views on the weight they give to the 2 kinds of privacy. The 4 "corners" of the privacy universe would be the person who wants to see everybody's content and to share theirs with the world, the person who only wants to see and be seen by their friends, the person who is open to seeing anything but only wants to share with their friends, and the person who wants to share with everyone but not to read what they have to say.

Facebook's various settings allow you to tweak both kinds of privacy so that it more-or-less matches your preferences. Be warned, though, that you can't reduce the amount of "sponsored content" (ads) that Facebook inflicts, you can only influence what sorts of ads get inflicted on you. Also, Facebook is continuously changing its policies and settings, so if privacy is a concern, you will need to do occasional checkups and to learn new sets of settings.

# Facebook settings

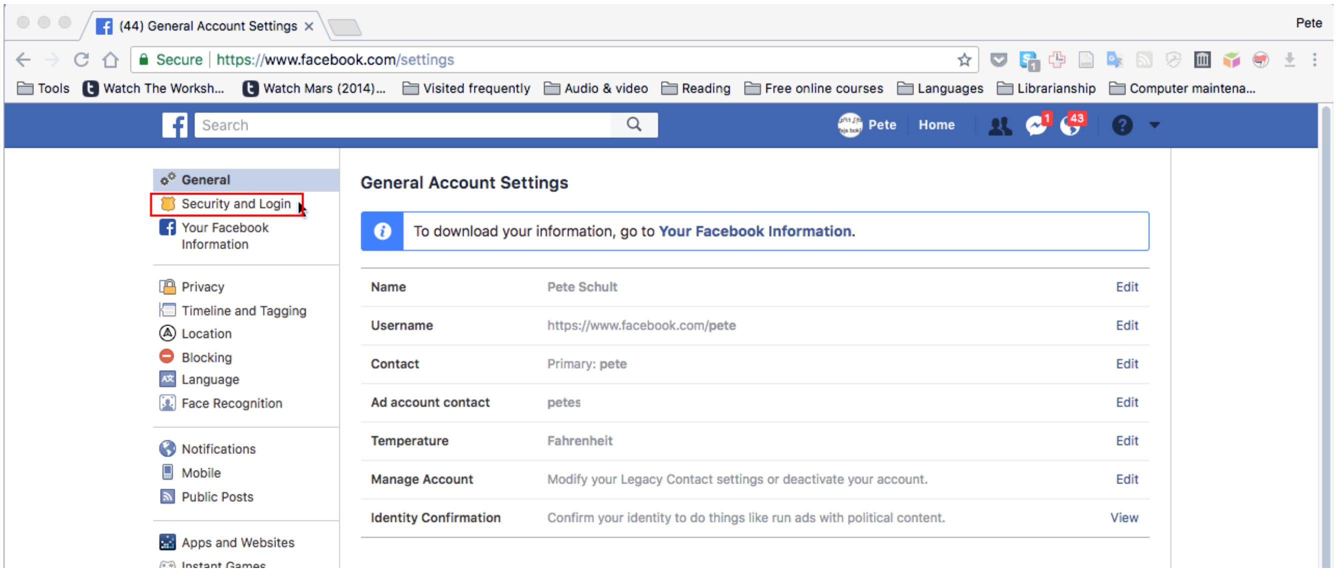


Judy
July 16 at 9:03 PM ·

I walked into the Traditional Dance Association board meeting at the wrong time, and now I'm the vice president. I wasn't even on the board!

You, Karen , Angela and 132 others

Here you see an example of a Facebook Home page. To get to the settings that I need to review and possibly change, I've clicked on the downward pointing arrowhead to get the utility dropdown menu. Then I click on **Settings** to get to the page that coordinates all settings.

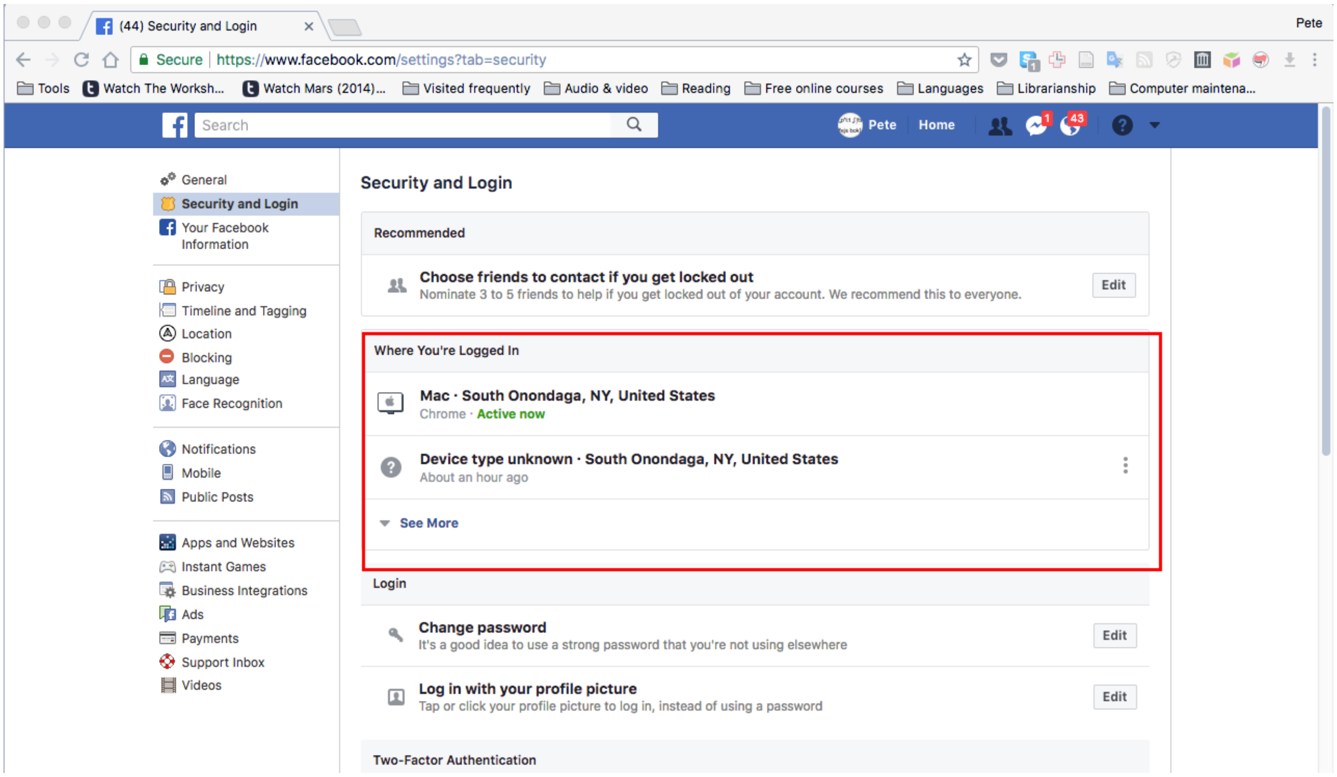


General Account Settings

To download your information, go to **Your Facebook Information.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Name | Pete Schult | Edit |
| Username | https://www.facebook.com/pete | Edit |
| Contact | Primary: pete | Edit |
| Ad account contact | petes | Edit |
| Temperature | Fahrenheit | Edit |
| Manage Account | Modify your Legacy Contact settings or deactivate your account. | Edit |
| Identity Confirmation | Confirm your identity to do things like run ads with political content. | View |

That took me to the General Settings page. I’m not concerned with the general settings, so I’ll click on **Security and Login** in the left-hand sidebar to get to those settings.



Security and Login

Recommended

**Choose friends to contact if you get locked out**
Nominate 3 to 5 friends to help if you get locked out of your account. We recommend this to everyone. Edit

Where You're Logged In

**Mac · South Onondaga, NY, United States**
Chrome · **Active now**

**Device type unknown · South Onondaga, NY, United States**
About an hour ago

See More

Login

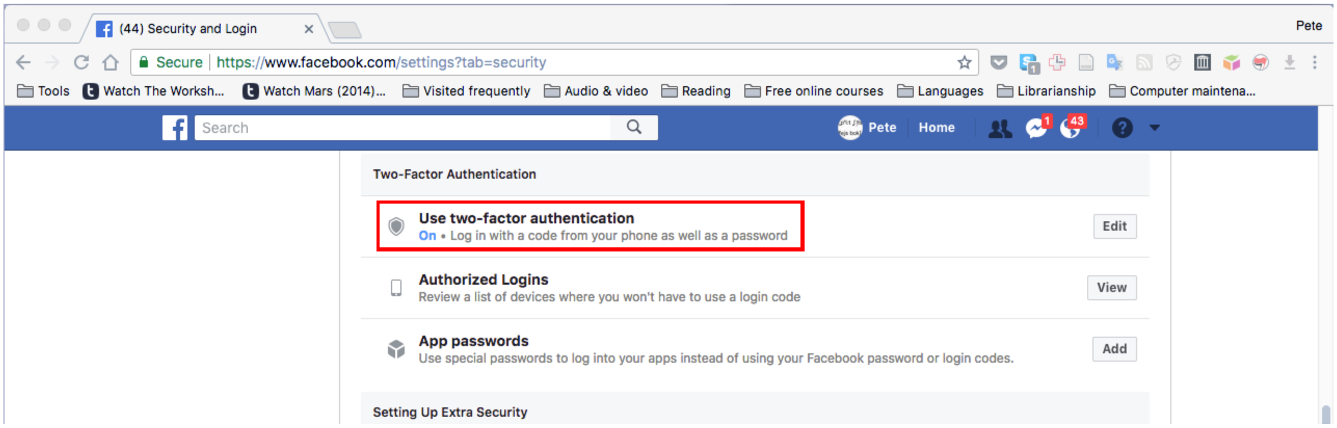
**Change password**
It's a good idea to use a strong password that you're not using elsewhere Edit

**Log in with your profile picture**
Tap or click your profile picture to log in, instead of using a password Edit

Two-Factor Authentication

The settings here are more related to keeping an account from being hacked than to privacy as such, but everyone using Facebook should know about them. In the top part of the page, you see a section called Where You’re Logged in. If any of the devices listed here are unfamiliar, you should click on the vertical ellipsis (⋮) on the right-hand side to look into it. If it’s unfamiliar or on a device that you no longer use for Facebook (or, especially, a device you have given/sold/otherwise transferred to someone else), you should deauthorize it.

When in doubt, deauthorize. If it turns out you were wrong and you still use that device for Facebook, the worst that this will do is make it so you have to log in again on that device.



Two-Factor Authentication

**Use two-factor authentication**
On • Log in with a code from your phone as well as a password — Edit

**Authorized Logins**
Review a list of devices where you won't have to use a login code — View

**App passwords**
Use special passwords to log into your apps instead of using your Facebook password or login codes. — Add

Setting Up Extra Security

Scrolling down this page a bit, you'll see a section headed Two-Factor Authorization. Two-factor authorization is very commonly used by all kinds of Websites, and it is a good way to add a layer of security to your accounts. The way it works is that when you log into a Website that you've set it up on, the site simultaneously sends a code to you (generically as a text to your phone, but other options are also available) and takes you to a page where you must enter that code before you can finish logging in.

That process raises some natural questions:

1. Will I have to go through this every time I want to log in?

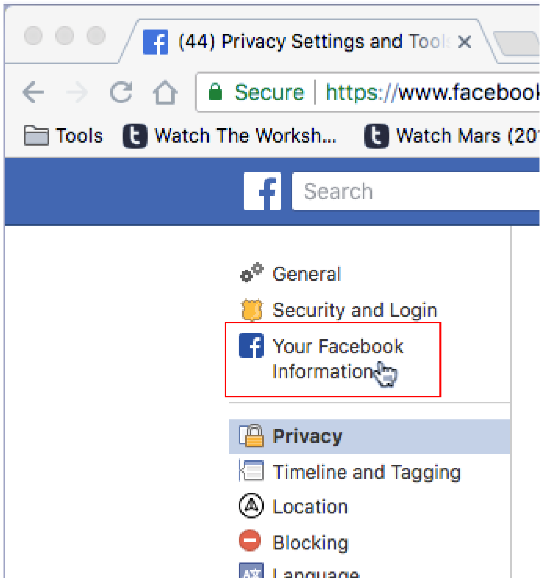
   Not necessarily. In the course of logging in, you can choose to authorize the device you're logging in on for logging in without a two-factor code. The Authorized Logins item in this section will show all the devices/apps you've chosen to allow.

2. Doesn't authorizing a device/app defeat the purpose of two-factor authorization?

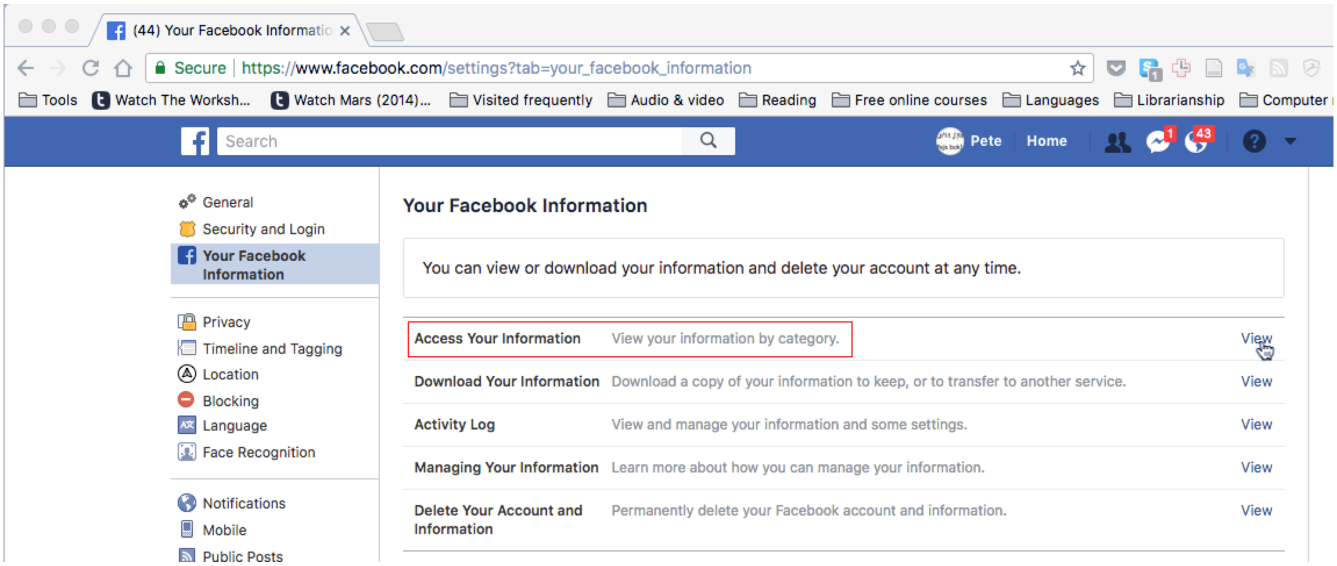
   Kind of. If the device doesn't leave the house much (for example a desktop or a laptop that usually stays home), then the risk is minimal. Particularly since you can deauthorize the device as we saw earlier.

   On the other hand, you probably want to always require it on your smart phone or other any other device that you take with you a lot.

# Facebook Information



Going back to the left-hand sidebar, I click on Your Facebook Information to look at various overviews of my information.

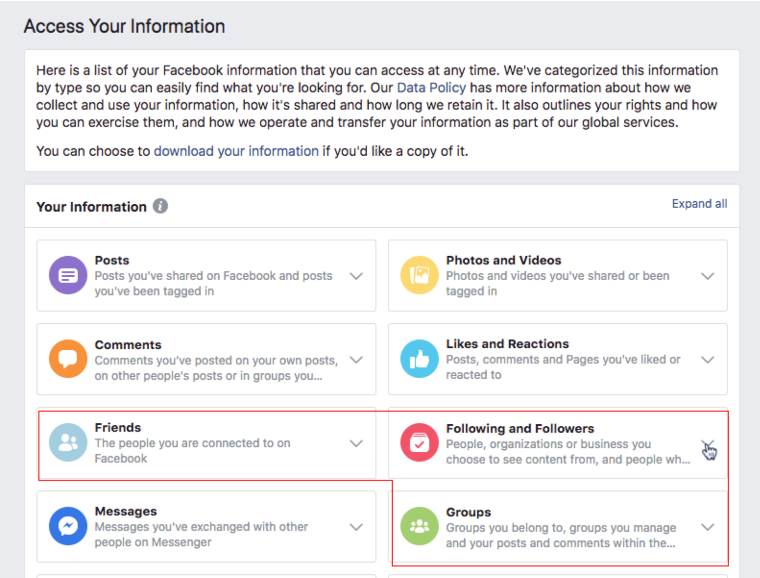


Your Facebook Information

You can view or download your information and delete your account at any time.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Access Your Information | View your information by category. | View |
| Download Your Information | Download a copy of your information to keep, or to transfer to another service. | View |
| Activity Log | View and manage your information and some settings. | View |
| Managing Your Information | Learn more about how you can manage your information. | View |
| Delete Your Account and Information | Permanently delete your Facebook account and information. | View |

Click on **View** on the right-hand side of **Access Your Information** to get to the various categories.



Access Your Information

Here is a list of your Facebook information that you can access at any time. We've categorized this information by type so you can easily find what you're looking for. Our Data Policy has more information about how we collect and use your information, how it's shared and how long we retain it. It also outlines your rights and how you can exercise them, and how we operate and transfer your information as part of our global services.

You can choose to download your information if you'd like a copy of it.

Your Information

Expand all

**Posts** Posts you've shared on Facebook and posts you've been tagged in

**Photos and Videos** Photos and videos you've shared or been tagged in

**Comments** Comments you've posted on your own posts, on other people's posts or in groups you...

**Likes and Reactions** Posts, comments and Pages you've liked or reacted to

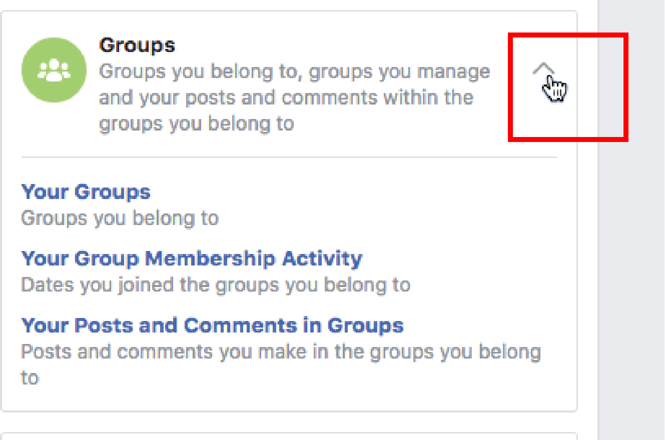
**Friends** The people you are connected to on Facebook

**Following and Followers** People, organizations or business you choose to see content from, and people wh...

**Messages** Messages you've exchanged with other people on Messenger

**Groups** Groups you belong to, groups you manage and your posts and comments within the...

There are several options here. You can look back at your previous posts, comments, likes, and so on. For the present purposes, though, **Friends**, **Following and Followers**, and **Groups** will be of most interest. Together, these are the entities that might be able to read your content or put content on your feed even if you have made it so that not everyone can, so it's useful from time to time to make sure that the people in these categories should be in them.



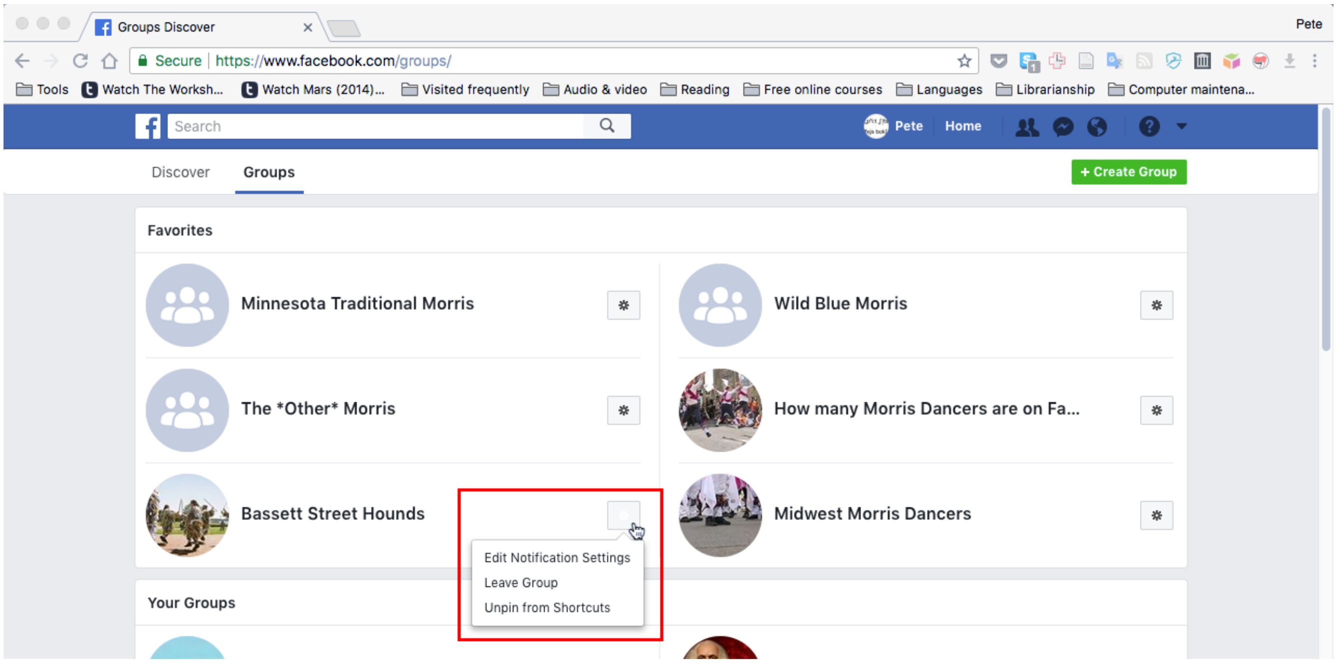
**Groups** Groups you belong to, groups you manage and your posts and comments within the groups you belong to

**Your Groups** Groups you belong to

**Your Group Membership Activity** Dates you joined the groups you belong to

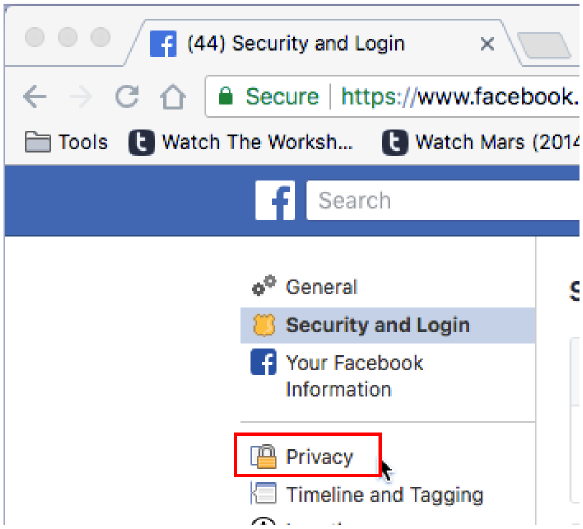
**Your Posts and Comments in Groups** Posts and comments you make in the groups you belong to

Using Groups as an example, I have clicked on the downward pointing arrowhead. It now points upward, and the choices for examining groups I'm a member of has appeared.

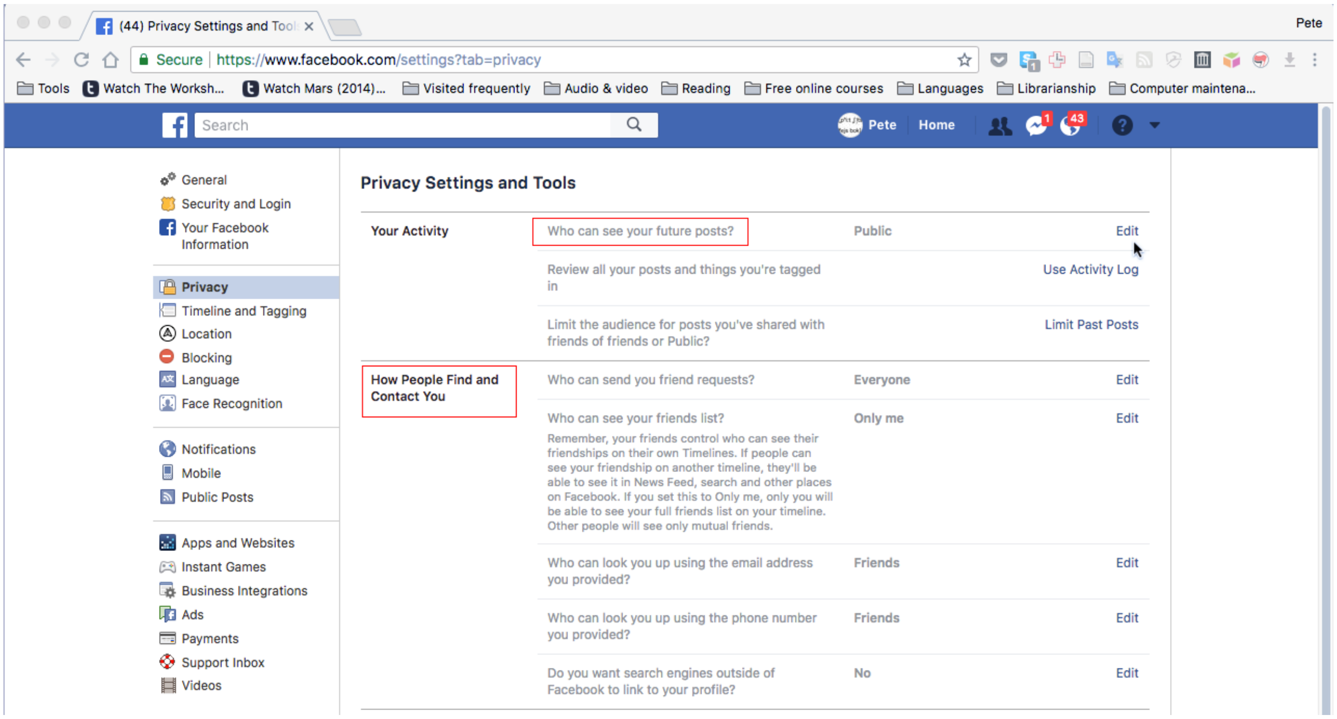


The relevant choices here are of editing how much I want to see from a group ("Edit notification settings") or to dropping out of the group.

## Privacy As Such



Now I go back to the left-hand sidebar to go to the **Privacy** settings.

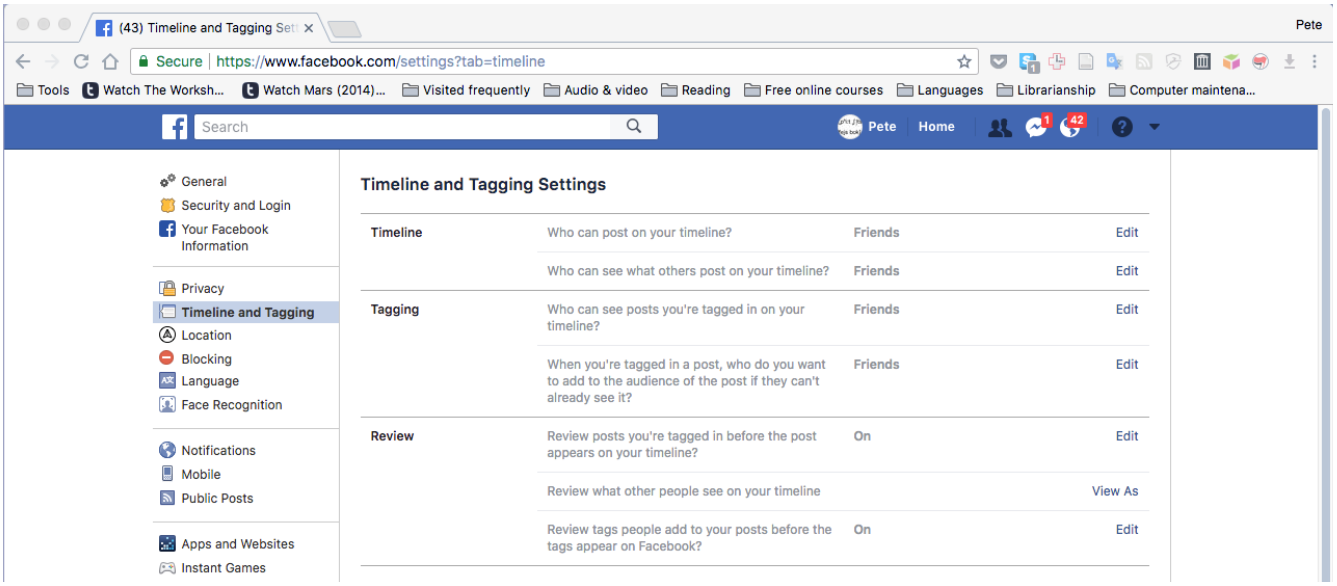


**Privacy Settings and Tools**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Your Activity | Who can see your future posts? | Public | Edit |
| | Review all your posts and things you're tagged in | | Use Activity Log |
| | Limit the audience for posts you've shared with friends of friends or Public? | | Limit Past Posts |
| How People Find and Contact You | Who can send you friend requests? | Everyone | Edit |
| | Who can see your friends list?<br>Remember, your friends control who can see their friendships on their own Timelines. If people can see your friendship on another timeline, they'll be able to see it in News Feed, search and other places on Facebook. If you set this to Only me, only you will be able to see your full friends list on your timeline. Other people will see only mutual friends. | Only me | Edit |
| | Who can look you up using the email address you provided? | Friends | Edit |
| | Who can look you up using the phone number you provided? | Friends | Edit |
| | Do you want search engines outside of Facebook to link to your profile? | No | Edit |

What I've done up to this point is to secure my account and to clean the lists of friends, groups, and followers/followed people up. The Privacy page is one of the places where I set the general guidelines of what categories of people (Friends, Friends of Friends, Everyone) can interact with me and how.

The other place that is relevant to these general guidelines is the Timeline and Tagging page (shown below).

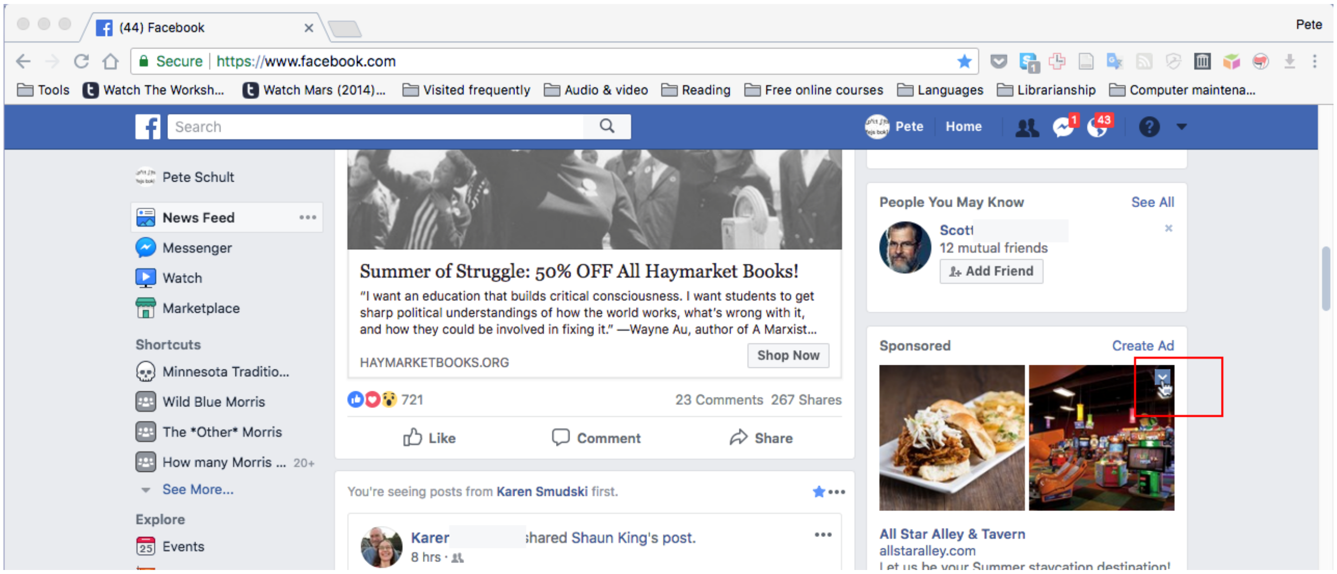


**Timeline and Tagging Settings**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Timeline | Who can post on your timeline? | Friends | Edit |
| | Who can see what others post on your timeline? | Friends | Edit |
| Tagging | Who can see posts you're tagged in on your timeline? | Friends | Edit |
| | When you're tagged in a post, who do you want to add to the audience of the post if they can't already see it? | Friends | Edit |
| Review | Review posts you're tagged in before the post appears on your timeline? | On | Edit |
| | Review what other people see on your timeline | | View As |
| | Review tags people add to your posts before the tags appear on Facebook? | On | Edit |

# Blocking

## Blocking types of ads



Summer of Struggle: 50% OFF All Haymarket Books!

"I want an education that builds critical consciousness. I want students to get sharp political understandings of how the world works, what's wrong with it, and how they could be involved in fixing it." —Wayne Au, author of A Marxist...

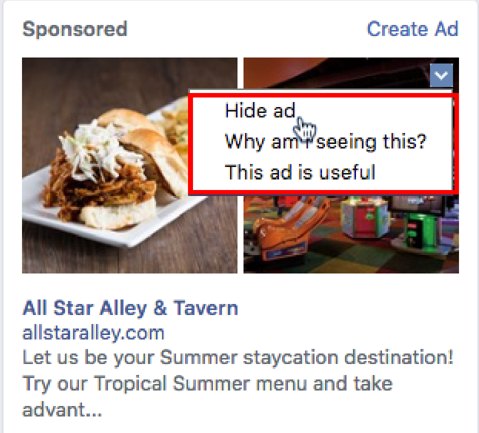
You're seeing posts from Karen Smudski first.

Karer [redacted] shared Shaun King's post.
8 hrs ·

Let us be your Summer staycation destination!

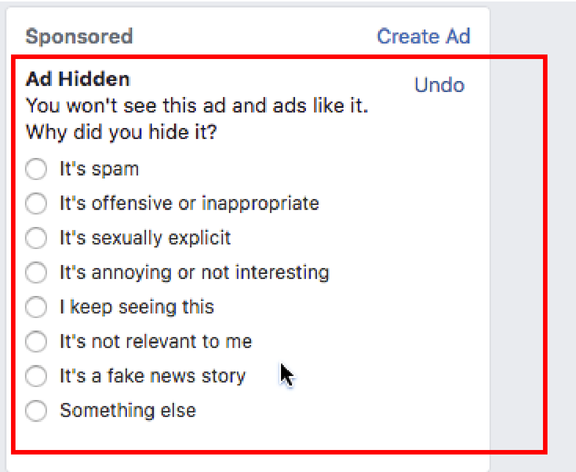
You may encounter ads you don't care to see or a friend of a friend may frequently comment on your mutual friend's posts with content or demeanor that makes Facebook not at all pleasurable. In such cases, you can block the offending person or type of ad (again note: you cannot reduce the number of ads you see, let alone eliminate them, but your preferences and blocks will influence the types of ads you see).

In the above image, I've boxed in the control I'd use to start the process of blocking this ad. Clicking on it yields the choices in the image below.



Let us be your Summer staycation destination! Try our Tropical Summer menu and take advant...

Notice that blocking ("Hide ad") is not the only option. Perhaps I found that this is the sort of ad I'd like Facebook to be showing me. In that case, I could choose "This ad is useful".



Sponsored Create Ad

**Ad Hidden** Undo

You won't see this ad and ads like it.

Why did you hide it?

○ It's spam

○ It's offensive or inappropriate

○ It's sexually explicit

○ It's annoying or not interesting

○ I keep seeing this

○ It's not relevant to me

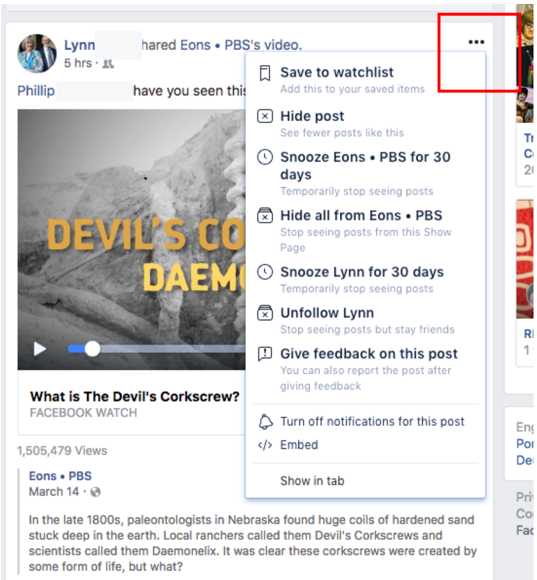
○ It's a fake news story

○ Something else

If I did want to block it, though, I'd be presented with the opportunity to let Facebook know why I blocked it. Some of the choices would result in queuing the ad for review by Facebook to see if it violated their advertising guidelines.

## Blocking people

Although I've used the heading "Blocking people", I'll be talking here about both blocking (barring from interacting) and reducing what you see from given individuals.



Lynn hared Eons • PBS's video.

5 hrs ·

Phillip have you seen this

What is The Devil's Corkscrew?

FACEBOOK WATCH

1,505,479 Views

Eons • PBS

March 14 ·

In the late 1800s, paleontologists in Nebraska found huge coils of hardened sand stuck deep in the earth. Local ranchers called them Devil's Corkscrews and scientists called them Daemonelix. It was clear these corkscrews were created by some form of life, but what?

**Save to watchlist**
Add this to your saved items

**Hide post**
See fewer posts like this

**Snooze Eons • PBS for 30 days**
Temporarily stop seeing posts

**Hide all from Eons • PBS**
Stop seeing posts from this Show Page

**Snooze Lynn for 30 days**
Temporarily stop seeing posts

**Unfollow Lynn**
Stop seeing posts but stay friends

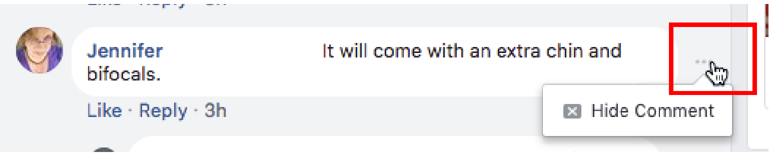
**Give feedback on this post**
You can also report the post after giving feedback

Turn off notifications for this post

Embed

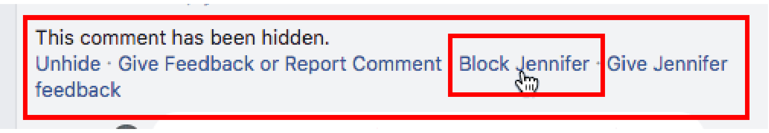
Show in tab

Clicking on the horizontal ellipsis in the upper right-hand corner of a post drops a menu down with several options. "Save to watchlist" allows you to make a list of posts you want to go back to later, so kind of the opposite of what would be motivating any sort of blocking. In this case, the person posting is a friend, so I wouldn't be blocking in an absolute sense (if I were, I would be unfriending back in the Information section). However, it might be that my friend's content just doesn't interest me, or it might offend me more often than I can tolerate. In such cases, I could Unfollow (we'd still be Facebook friends capable of directly contacting one another, and my friend would still see my content unless they'd unfollowed me!!!) Alternatively, I might just hide the posts they share from this source ("Hide all from [original poster of the content, here Eons • PBS]"). Or in either case, I could "snooze" them for a month.



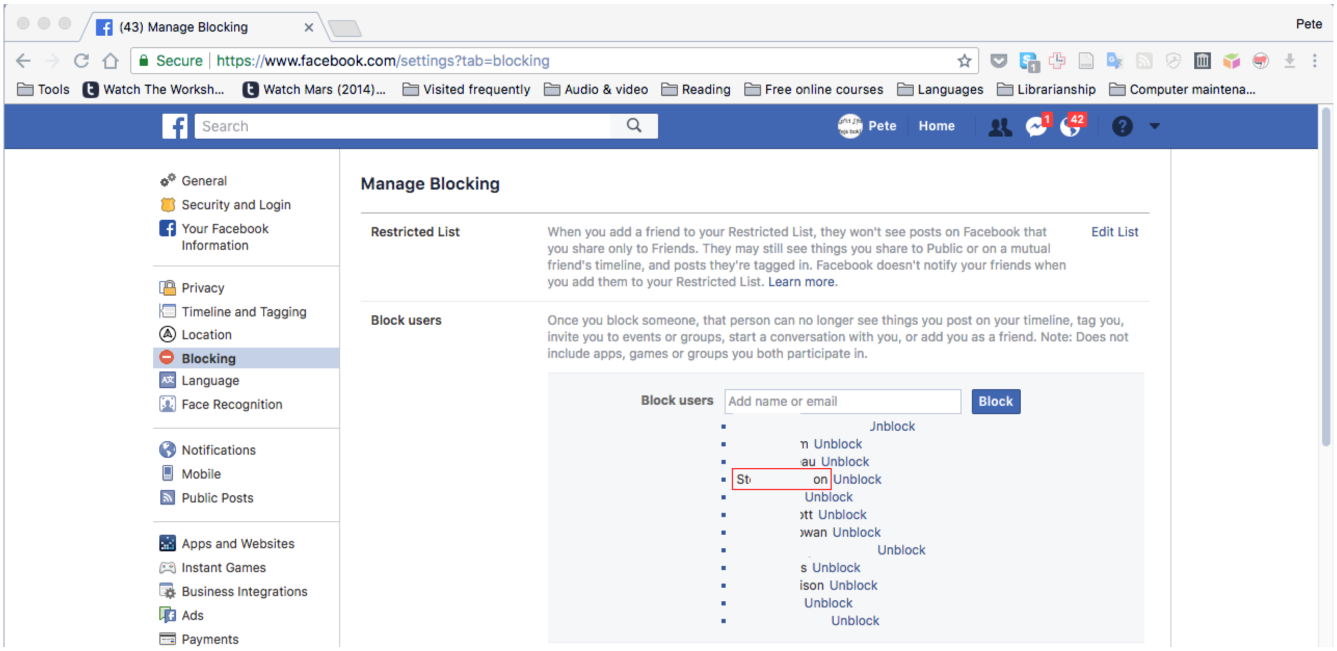
Jennifer [redacted] It will come with an extra chin and bifocals.

To block friends of friends, click on the horizontal ellipsis to the right of one of their comments. Then click "Hide comment." The specific comment will be hidden, and you will have the option of taking further action as shown below.



This comment has been hidden.

Unhide · Give Feedback or Report Comment · Block Jennifer · Give Jennifer feedback



Manage Blocking

**Restricted List** When you add a friend to your Restricted List, they won't see posts on Facebook that you share only to Friends. They may still see things you share to Public or on a mutual friend's timeline, and posts they're tagged in. Facebook doesn't notify your friends when you add them to your Restricted List. Learn more. Edit List

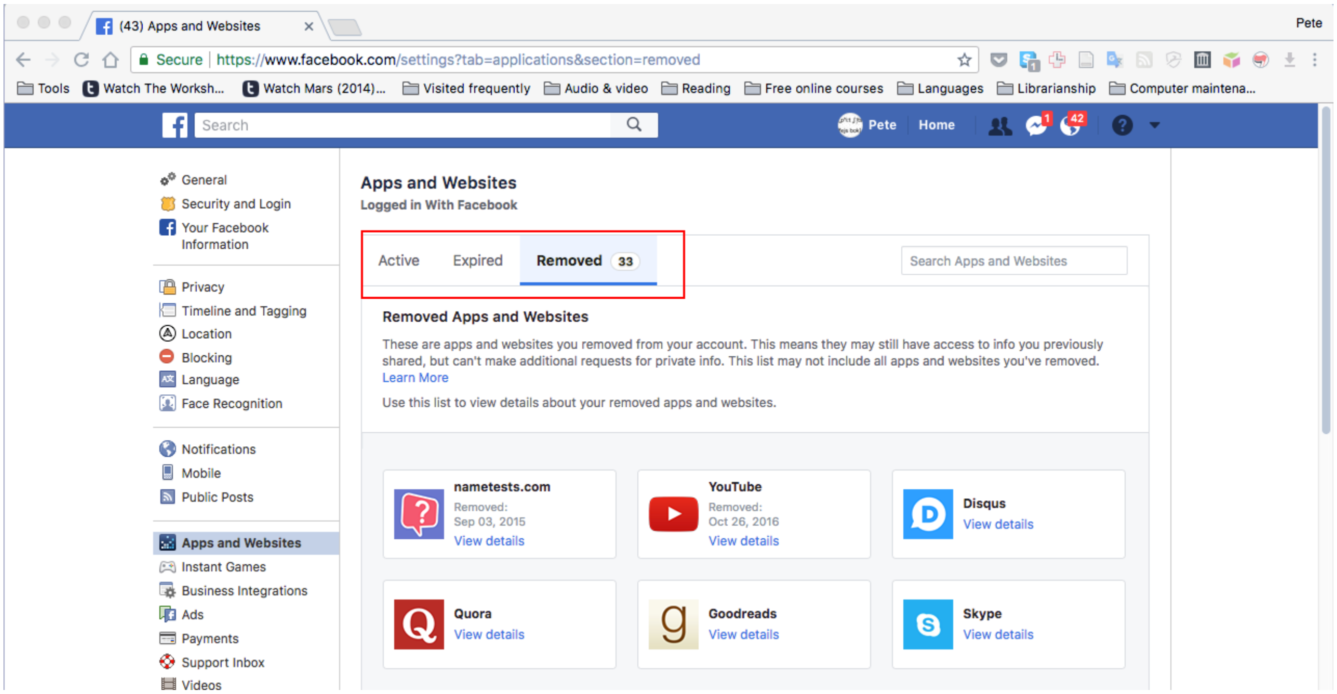
**Block users** Once you block someone, that person can no longer see things you post on your timeline, tag you, invite you to events or groups, start a conversation with you, or add you as a friend. Note: Does not include apps, games or groups you both participate in.

Block users Add name or email Block

- [redacted] Jnblock
- [redacted] n Unblock
- [redacted] au Unblock
- St [redacted] on Unblock
- [redacted] Unblock
- [redacted] ott Unblock
- [redacted] owan Unblock
- [redacted] Unblock
- [redacted] s Unblock
- [redacted] ison Unblock
- [redacted] Unblock
- [redacted] Unblock

If you return to the Settings page and then choose Blocking from the left-hand sidebar, you will see a list of those people who you have blocked.

# Apps & Ads



Apps and Websites

Logged in With Facebook

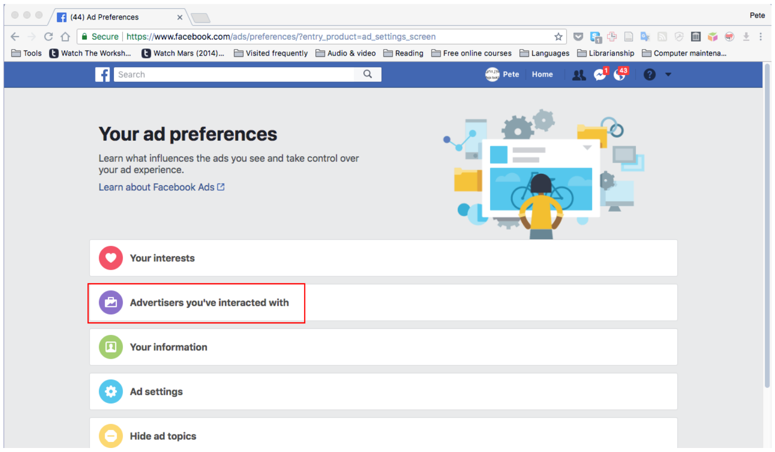
Removed Apps and Websites

These are apps and websites you removed from your account. This means they may still have access to info you previously shared, but can't make additional requests for private info. This list may not include all apps and websites you've removed. Learn More

Use this list to view details about your removed apps and websites.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| nametests.com<br>Removed:<br>Sep 03, 2015<br>View details | YouTube<br>Removed:<br>Oct 26, 2016<br>View details | Disqus<br>View details |
| Quora<br>View details | Goodreads<br>View details | Skype<br>View details |

Apps and Websites lets you edit the various Facebook apps you may have authorized (each of those Facebook games you play collects information on you) and Websites that have access to your data and content.



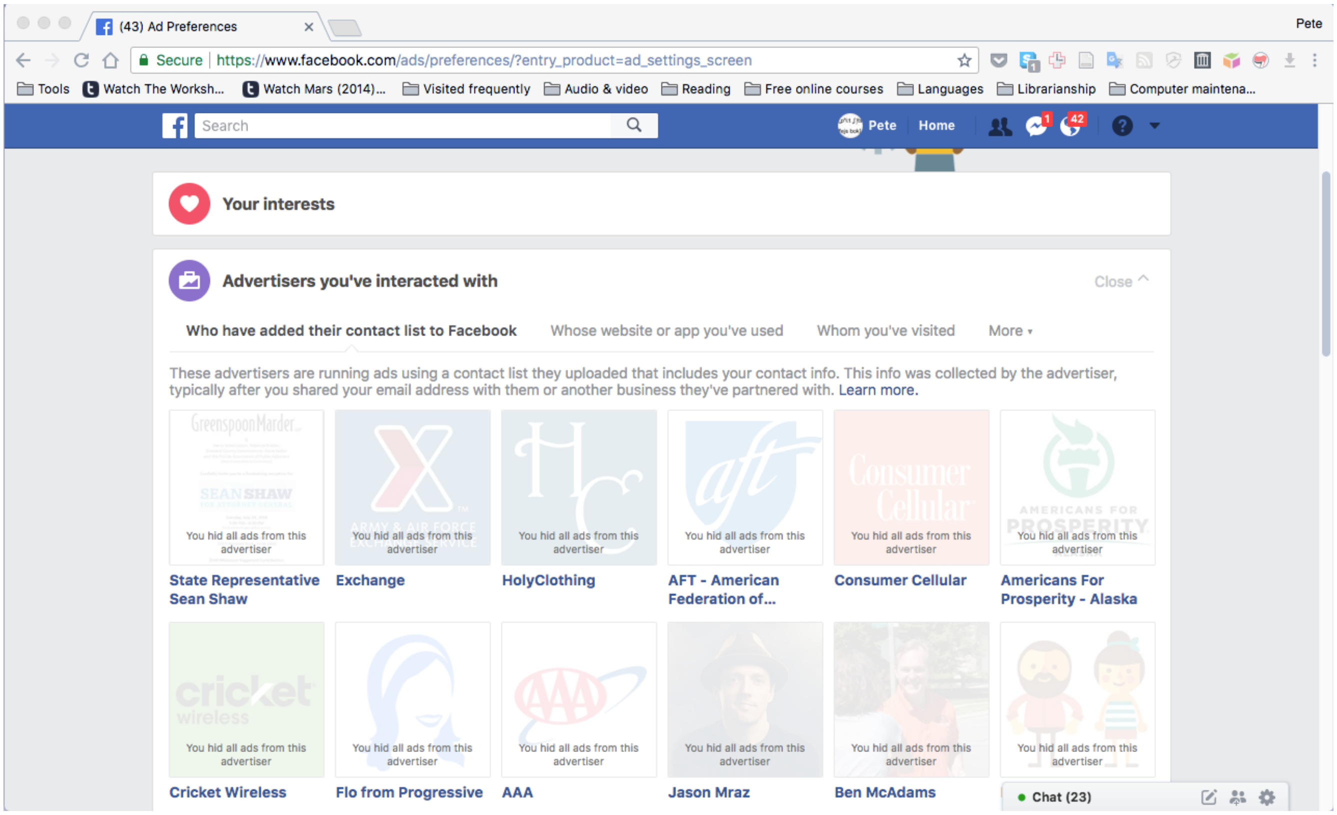
## Your ad preferences

Learn what influences the ads you see and take control over your ad experience.

Learn about Facebook Ads

- Your interests
- Advertisers you've interacted with
- Your information
- Ad settings
- Hide ad topics

Still on the Settings page but further down in the sidebar is Ads. Again, you can’t get rid of ads, but this is where you can fine tune what sorts of ads you’d like Facebook to show you.



Your interests

Advertisers you've interacted with

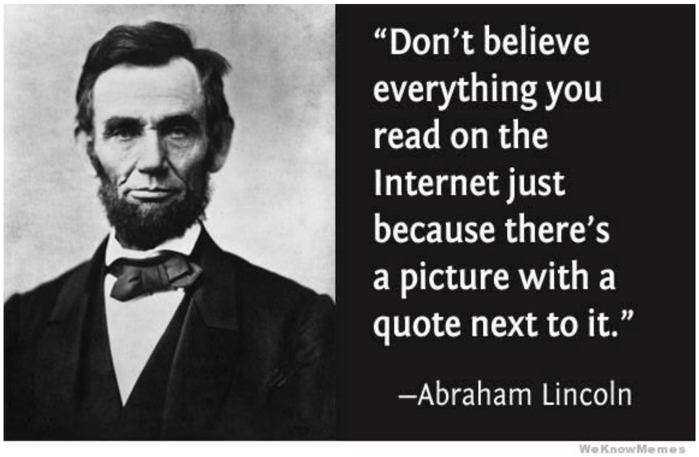
Who have added their contact list to Facebook | Whose website or app you've used | Whom you've visited | More

These advertisers are running ads using a contact list they uploaded that includes your contact info. This info was collected by the advertiser, typically after you shared your email address with them or another business they've partnered with. Learn more.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>State Representative Sean Shaw | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>Exchange | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>HolyClothing | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>AFT - American Federation of... | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>Consumer Cellular | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>Americans For Prosperity - Alaska |
| You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>Cricket Wireless | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>Flo from Progressive | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>AAA | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>Jason Mraz | You hid all ads from this advertiser<br>Ben McAdams | You hid all ads from this advertiser |

Here’s the list of advertisers whose ads I’ve hidden. There are other subcategories of advertisers I’ve interacted with, and this page is a one-stop location for reviewing them all.

# Online Hygiene


"Don't believe everything you read on the Internet just because there's a picture with a quote next to it."
—Abraham Lincoln
WeKnowMemes

The online world has made it much easier and quicker to share information than it used to be, and that has had many benefits, among them the ability to remain in close contact with friends and relatives who live far away geographically. However, that speed takes away one of the checks that we used to have on the trustworthiness of information: time. In the snail-mail days, if you wanted to share an article, you had to address an envelope, write a note to go with the article, find the stamps, and so on. All of that process gave you the time for any doubts you might have had about the article's truthiness or biases to bubble up so that by the time you were about to stamp the envelope you might have decided to double check things before going any further. Even to share a rumor, you'd have to get on the phone and engage in conversation with someone who might raise questions that got both of you questioning the rumor.

Now, though, sharing an article or meme is as quick and easy as clicking a button (hence the expression "hitting the reblog button"). Little to no thought is required.

There is no silver bullet for separating truth from rumor, propaganda, and fiction, but here are some things to look for:

1. How trustworthy is your source?

   In this context, you may have to go backwards along the chain. So you know that your friend wouldn't lead you astray, but what if they got misled? Where did they get the information from?

2. Related to the first point, is the source known to be satirical or a propaganda organ?

   Below are a few popular sites that produce satirical articles that have the look and feel of serious articles[1]. Generally, such sites will have a disclaimer somewhere on their articles that they are a

[1] Source: Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_satirical_news_websites). The list at Wikipedia has several

satirical site, but this disclaimer is easy to overlook. A good rule of thumb is that if a story seems completely over the top, it's wise to dig around for other sources to determine whether it's true or just as it seems: over the top.

- The Borowitz Report
- ClickHole
- Cracked
- The Daily Currant
- The Daily Mash
- The Daily Squib
- The Daily WTF
- The DailyER
- The Onion
- Topeka News
- Weekly World News
- World News Daily Report

The "List of fake news websites" at Wikipedia[2] is a useful resource list of deliberately misleading sites. If you look at the list, you will notice that many of the sites have names that are almost the same as legitimate sites. That brings us to the next point:

3. Does the site's URL (the "web address" in the box at the top of the browser control section) look close to a real site's but with some differences?

As an example, the URL for ABC News is https://abcnews.go.com/. Companies will often buy URLs that are similar to their names and reroute them to their official site, so http://abcnews.com works to get you to the legitimate ABC News site.

Someone bought the deceptively similar URL of http://abcnews.com.co (note the extra .co) to direct traffic to their site which stole the look and feel of ABC News but pushed false stories. If you visit that site, you'll see that it is now a **Parked Domain**[3]. Presumably when it became widely known that the site was fake, the operators had to change tactics. That sort of process is why it is less useful to memorize any list of fake sites than to be in the habit of looking for other signs of whether or not it's legit.

4. Even if the source is legitimate, is it giving you the whole story?

more entries, but these are the ones I see the most.

[2] Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fake_news_websites

[3] A URL for a domain that someone holds but doesn't use. The content at such URLs often consists of links to sites of dubious quality.

There are many more than 2 sides to most stories, so reporting should consider the input and points of view of various parties to a story. This does not mean that legitimate stories have to remain agnostic about what the truth of a situation is, but it does mean that they will give a fair hearing before taking their position.

A useful term to know here is **Confirmation bias**. Confirmation bias is our tendency to give more credence to stories that align with our own opinions and biases than to stories that are either independent of them or that tend to contradict them. Two results of confirmation bias are that we tend to do less work to check the truth of stories we agree with, and we resist longer before accepting stories we disagree with initially.

The trick here is what blogger Julia Galef calls **Steel-manning**. Steel-manning contrasts with the more commonly known phenomenon of **Straw-manning**. Straw-manning is the tendency to use a weak form of views you disagree with and to use that as your imagined debating opponent. Since the argument you develop on behalf of the opposition is weak, you can then easily defeat it in your story and, thus, seem to have shown the validity of your position.

In Steal-manning, on the other hand, you actively look for your opponent's strongest arguments, the ideas being that

a. You will better represent other views than you would naturally tend to, and

b. If your analysis is still better than your opposition's, then you certainly have a more solid argument.

On this point, then, the summary would be to be aware of your own confirmation bias when reading material that you feel "must be shared" and to look critically at articles that seem too neat and clean to see if they're straw-manning viewpoints that might contradict their narrative.