



MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, LiveJournal, and LinkedIn are all examples of social networking websites. Although they may be a great way to keep in touch with friends and kill time when you're bored, they are also an easy place for people to steal your personal information if you're not careful.

The 3 Ws

Who is going to see it?

What am I sharing?

Why do they need it?

Think before
you post!



What information should I keep private?

- Your address, phone number, school name, or any information that could give away your location
- Passwords, credit card numbers, PIN numbers, or any other type of secret codes
- Always be cautious when you do choose to share your full name or other personal information.
- Be careful about posting your current location or upcoming plans.
- Avoid letting people know if your parents or guardians are out of town.

Posting pictures online

While sharing pictures and posting albums may seem innocent, here are some tips you should keep in mind when deciding what pictures you share online.

- Anyone can see your pictures, so choose wisely.
- If you are under 21, posting pictures showing your use of alcohol is an easy way for you to get in serious trouble.
- Any pictures with illegal drugs are also ways to get caught and possibly arrested.
- If you're on a sports team, college scholarship, or if you are under 21, any "party pictures" can be held against you.
- Once something is shared or published on the Internet, it never truly goes away.
- Future employers may check out your websites or pictures before they decide whether to hire you.

Other helpful hints

- All networking websites have a privacy statement, —take the time to actually read it.
- Make sure your profile settings are set to private.
- Be careful of any links that send you to an outside site. These are often scammers trying to get your personal information.
- Don't accept pictures or messages from someone you don't know. They could be a scam artist.
- Never arrange to meet someone in person you met online. Stick to the friends you know.
- Always remember that whatever you post lives online forever. Be careful what you post!

