



IMPORTANT SOCIAL MEDIA WARNING

WARNING: What is in your Facebook profile, webpage, or blog site could damage your personal injury claim and cost you money.

Perhaps you have read about employers and/or potential employers using social media websites such as Facebook as a component of background and reference checks. Well, they are not the only ones who may use social media and other types of internet websites to learn about your life. Insurance companies are catching on to the fact that these sites are full of valuable personal information.

For professional "fact-gatherers" such as insurance adjusters, claims handlers/adjusters, insurance defense attorneys and private investigators, the vast wealth of information that people freely volunteer on personal web pages, blogs and social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter and others can be a veritable goldmine. The same is true of publicly accessible photo sharing sites and video sites such as YouTube, Flickr and more.

An investigator assigned to conduct surveillance of an accident victim will also conduct internet "surveillance".

Particularly in the context of a personal injury claim, the information contained in a these web pages, blog sites or social networking profiles may be highly relevant to matters at issue in litigation.

Insurance companies can look at this public information to:

- confirm or disprove the severity of a person's injuries;
- confirm or disprove ability to resume normal activities and sports;
- confirm or disprove ability to work;
- Confirm or disprove ability to interact normally with family members, etc.

The information in blogs, video and photo sharing sites, and social networking profiles can make or break a case.



Protect Yourself

To protect your privacy and your legal claim we STRONGLY suggest that you follow these social media guidelines during the duration of your case. Do not post status updates/photos/videos that mention or show:

- the incident or accident scene
- medical treatment
- you are talking to lawyers
- paperwork given by an attorney, paralegal, or law office staff
- anything related to a deposition, mediation, trial, court appearances or someone's testimonies
- the at-fault person or business
- the anniversary of your accident
- news coverage of your case
- judges or jury members
- your participation in pre-injury hobbies or activities. Avoid 'Flashback Friday' or 'Throwback Thursday Photos.'

In addition to being more cautious about what information you share on social media, please take a few moments to check the privacy settings of your social media accounts. You may use the instructions in this guidebook to secure your privacy settings for Twitter, YouTube, Google+, Facebook and Instragram. Or you may also use these instructions to completely deactivate/delete your accounts **if you choose**, the choice is up to you.



Privacy on Twitter

1. Click on the **gear icon** at the top right of the page and **Settings** from the drop down menu.
2. Scroll down to the **Tweet Privacy** section and check the box next to **Protect my Tweets**.
3. Click the blue **save** button at the bottom of the page. You will be prompted to enter your password to confirm the change.

Tweet privacy Protect my Tweets

If selected, only those you approve will receive your Tweets. Your future Tweets will not be available publicly. Tweets posted previously may still be publicly visible in some places. [Learn more.](#)

When you choose to protect your Tweets, the following restrictions are put in place:

- People will have to request to follow you; each follow request will need approval
- Your Tweets will only be visible to users you've approved
- Other users will not be able to retweet your Tweets

How to Delete a Tweet:

1. Visit your **Profile** page
2. Locate the Tweet you want to delete.
3. Hover your mouse over the message and click **Delete**.
4. Your Tweet has now been deleted.

How to Deactivate Your Twitter Account:

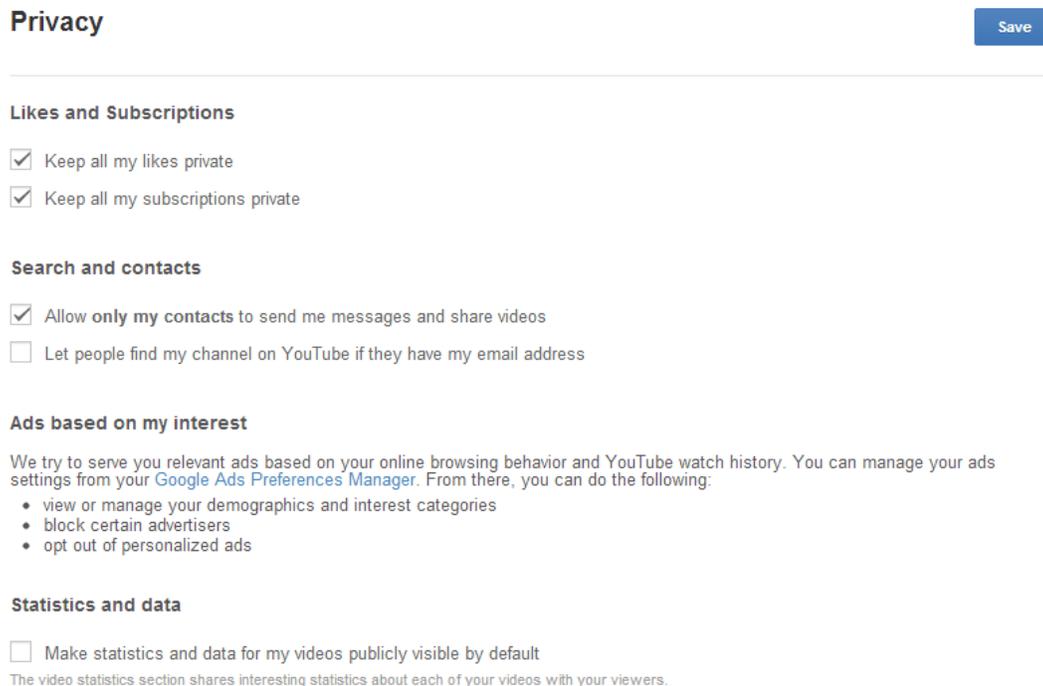
1. Go to your **Account settings** and **click on Deactivate my account** at the bottom of the page.
2. **Read** the account deactivation information. Click **Okay, fine, deactivate account**.
3. **Enter your password** when prompted and verify that you want to deactivate your account.

NOTE: If you at one time had public Tweets, those Tweets may still be public and searchable, even after you have change your account settings to be protected. Only Tweets made after updating your settings will be protected. If you have any public Tweets that may damage you case, we encourage you to delete the specific Tweets or deactivate your Twitter account overall. **These Tweets could damage the overall value of your case.**

DISCLAIMER: Twitter only retains your user data for 30 days from the date of deactivation, after which it is permanently deleted if it is not reactivated within these 30 days.

Privacy on YouTube

1. On the top right corner of your YouTube page, you should see your photo with a drop down arrow. Click this arrow and select **settings**.
2. You will be directed to a page that looks like this below:



Privacy Save

Likes and Subscriptions

Keep all my likes private

Keep all my subscriptions private

Search and contacts

Allow **only my contacts** to send me messages and share videos

Let people find my channel on YouTube if they have my email address

Ads based on my interest

We try to serve you relevant ads based on your online browsing behavior and YouTube watch history. You can manage your ads settings from your [Google Ads Preferences Manager](#). From there, you can do the following:

- view or manage your demographics and interest categories
- block certain advertisers
- opt out of personalized ads

Statistics and data

Make statistics and data for my videos publicly visible by default

The video statistics section shares interesting statistics about each of your videos with your viewers.

3. Please make sure your settings are marked to the above settings and click the blue **save** button.

To Delete Your YouTube Account:

1. Go to your **Advanced account settings**
2. Click **Close Account**.
3. You will be prompted to enter your username and password to verify that you wish to delete your account.

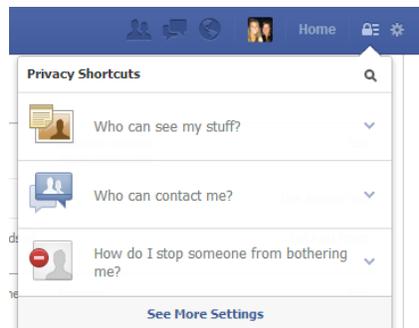
NOTE: Each video you post on YouTube individually needs to be marked as private. You cannot change these settings on your privacy page. Please make sure that the videos can only be shared with people you know. **Certain videos you post could damage the overall value of your case.**

DISCLAIMER: Closing your YouTube account will *permanently* delete your videos, channel, and profile. You will not be able to open a new account with the same username.



Privacy on Facebook

Facebook is the first place that the insurance adjustor will search to find information on you that may damage your claim. Make sure you know which privacy settings you have set in order to protect your information getting out to the wrong person. To begin, click the lock menu bar on the right-hand side of the toolbar.



Who can see my stuff?

- Begin by clicking “who can see my future posts?” Make sure you have chosen only **friends**.

Who can contact me?

- Next, click “who can contact me?” Make sure you chose the **Strict Filtering** setting.

How do I stop someone from bothering me?

- Finally, if any insurance adjustors have tried to add you as a friend, click the “How do I stop someone from bothering me?” and make sure to **add their name or email so they cannot contact you**.

Advanced Privacy Settings and Tools

You will also need to click on this icon next  located next to the menu lock icon to make your privacy settings even more secure. You will be directed to a page that looks like this:

Who can look me up?

- The first option here is “Who can look you up using the email address or phone number you provided?” Make sure you only chose **Friends**.
- The next option is “Do you want other search engines to link to your timeline? **Make sure this option is turned off!**”

Privacy Settings and Tools

Who can see my stuff?	Who can see your future posts?	Friends except Acquaintances	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
Who can look me up?	Who can look you up using the email address or phone number you provided?	Friends	Edit
	Do you want other search engines to link to your timeline?	Off	Edit

Next on the left of the page, click **Timeline and Tagging** (it should look like this)

Timeline and Tagging Settings

Who can add things to my timeline?	Who can post on your timeline?	Friends	Edit
	Review posts friends tag you in before they appear on your timeline?	On	Edit
Who can see things on my timeline?	Review what other people see on your timeline		View As
	Who can see posts you've been tagged in on your timeline?	Friends	Edit
	Who can see what others post on your timeline?	Friends	Edit
How can I manage tags people add and tagging suggestions?	Review tags people add to your own posts before the tags appear on Facebook?	On	Edit
	When you're tagged in a post, who do you want to add to the audience if they aren't already in it?	Friends	Edit
	Who sees tag suggestions when photos that look like you are uploaded?	No One	Edit

Please make sure all of your settings on the page are set to only FRIENDS. Please copy the above settings on your profile. [Do not allow people to view your page that are not your friends.](#)

To Deactivate your Facebook Account:

1. Click the account menu  at the top right of any Facebook page
2. Select **Account Settings**.
3. Click **Security** in the left-hand column
4. Click **Deactivate your Account**.

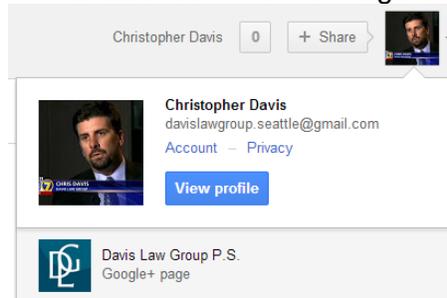
NOTE: Even if you have made these changes to your profile, please monitor what others are posting about you on their pages; this could also be searched by the insurance companies. [Facebook could damage the overall value of your case.](#)

DISCLAIMER: If you deactivate your Facebook account, you can reactivate it at any time. If you choose to *permanently* delete your account, all of your Facebook information, including your photographs and timeline, will be completely deleted.



Privacy Settings on Google +

1. Log onto your Google + account. You should see your picture in the top right corner of the page along with a dropdown arrow. It should look like the image below. Click **Privacy**.



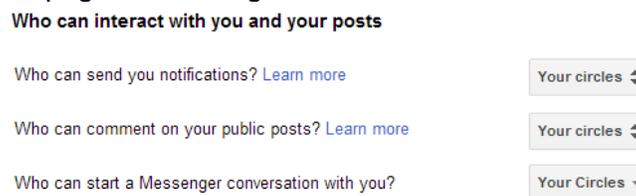
2. Once you are directed to your privacy settings, change your Public profile information by clicking the **Edit visibility on profile**. A window will pop up and it will say “Who can see this?” Make sure you have checked **Your Circles**.

Sharing Defaults:

- Each time you post content, you specify the circles and individuals whom you want to share that post with. New posts default to the last set of people you shared a post with, so make sure to change that setting if you want to change the audience for that post.

Who Can Interact With You and Your Posts:

- On the left side of the page, click Google+. You will be directed to a page that looks like this:



Please make sure all of your privacy settings are set to **Your Circles** only.

How to Disable Your Google+ Account:

1. Go to the Google+ page on the left tab.
2. Select **Disable Google+** here.
3. You will be given the option to delete the page, including your Google+ or your entire Google account.

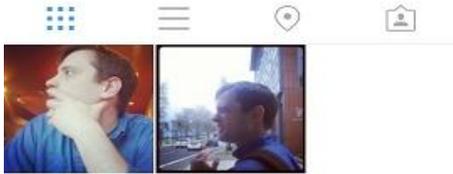
NOTE: Each post has an indicator that summarizes who the specific post is shared with. (Public, Limited, etc.). Remember, anyone a post is shared with can see all comments to that post, who else it is shared with, and share the post with others. Google+ could damage the overall value of your case

NOTE: The social media instructions in this book were last updated on 11/20/14. If the social media websites have changed their features after that day the instructions may not be entirely accurate.



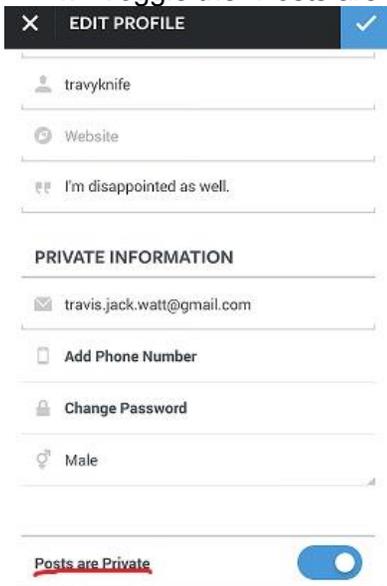
Privacy on Instagram

1. Open the app on your phone.
2. In the bottom right of the screen select the Profile button.



3. Select "Edit Your Profile"

4. Toggle the "Posts are Private" button



Turn privacy ON to approve follow requests.
Your existing followers won't be affected.

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