

Facebook Account Setup Safety Checklist

Use this checklist as you set up your Facebook account to ensure you've completed all the important security and privacy steps.

Creating Your Account

- ☐ Created a strong password (at least 12 characters with uppercase, lowercase, numbers, and symbols)
- ☐ Used your real name (or the name friends and family know you by)
- ☐ Entered your birth date (required for account creation)

Immediate Privacy Settings (Do This First!)

- ☐ Clicked the downward arrow in top right corner
- ☐ Selected "Settings & Privacy" then "Settings"
- ☐ Clicked "Privacy" on the left side menu
- ☐ Changed "Who can see your future posts?" to "Friends"
- ☐ Changed "Who can see your friends list?" to "Only me"
- ☐ Changed "Who can look you up using email/phone?" to "Friends" or "Friends of Friends"
- ☐ Turned OFF "Do you want search engines to link to your profile?"

Birthday Privacy Settings

- ☐ Went to your profile page by clicking your name
- ☐ Clicked "About" then "Contact and Basic Info"
- ☐ Found your birthday and clicked "Edit"
- ☐ Changed full birthday visibility to "Only me"
- ☐ (Optional) Set month and day (without year) to visible to "Friends"

Safe Friend Connection Practices

- ☐ Reviewed suggested friend requests carefully before accepting
- ☐ Checked profiles for warning signs of fake accounts:
 - ☐ Very few photos or professional model-looking photos
 - ☐ Very few friends (under 20)
 - ☐ Recently created profile
 - ☐ Suspicious immediate messages about money or romance

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- ☐ Searched for specific family members and friends using the search bar
- ☐ Verified profiles are real before sending friend requests (check photos, mutual friends, location)
- ☐ Ignored or declined suspicious friend requests

Information Safety Rules

- ☐ Committed to NEVER sharing full street address
- ☐ Committed to NOT posting about vacations until after returning home
- ☐ Committed to keeping financial information private (bank names, account numbers, credit cards)
- ☐ Committed to keeping health information private (medical conditions, medications, appointments)
- ☐ Committed to avoiding posting about daily routines and schedules

Safe Posting Practices

- ☐ Located the privacy selector dropdown when creating posts
- ☐ Checked privacy setting before clicking "Post" on each update
- ☐ Decided to ask permission before tagging people in photos
- ☐ Remembered to verify unusual messages from friends before clicking links

Scam Awareness

- ☐ Know to contact friends by phone if their messages seem suspicious
- ☐ Know that investment opportunities through Facebook messages are scams
- ☐ Know that duplicate friend requests from people I'm already friends with are fake profiles
- ☐ Know to call family members directly if they message about emergencies needing money

Additional Security Steps (Highly Recommended)

- ☐ Reviewed who can send you friend requests (Settings > Privacy > "Who can send you friend requests?")
- ☐ Checked "Timeline and Tagging" settings to control what appears on your profile
- ☐ Enabled two-factor authentication for extra account security (Settings > Security and Login)
- ☐ Reviewed apps and websites connected to your Facebook account (Settings > Apps and Websites)

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Getting Started with Facebook

- ☐ Found and connected with at least one trusted family member or friend
 - ☐ Explored News Feed to see how posts appear
 - ☐ Tried posting a simple update to friends only
 - ☐ Shared this checklist with a friend who's also setting up Facebook
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Remember: Take your time with Facebook. There's no rush to accept every friend request or share something immediately. Your privacy and security come first!

For more guidance, visit Cyber Smart Seniors for articles on:

- Spotting Fake Profiles on Social Media
- Privacy Settings for Other Popular Platforms
- Recognizing and Avoiding Online Scams

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