

Empowering women to be safe online

A FACEBOOK & WOMEN'S AID PARTNERSHIP



facebook
women's aid
until women & children are safe

Empowering women to be safe online

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Welcome to our online safety guide

Women's Aid says...



The online world should be open and safe for everyone to use. Sadly, whilst it offers us incredible opportunities, it also provides perpetrators of domestic abuse many ways to control, threaten and intimidate their victims.

This guide will empower you to be in control of your own safety on Facebook so you can stay connected to the people and causes you care about.

Remember, if you or a friend are experiencing domestic abuse you can find support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from the **Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline** (run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge) on **0808 2000 247** or via **helpline@womensaid.org.uk**

Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline



0808 2000 247



helpline@womensaid.org.uk

To keep people safe, we work with experts from all over the world to create strong policies, called our Community Standards, tools such as reporting and blocking designed to empower people to stay safe, helpful resources such as this guide, and finally we have huge engineering teams – working 24/7 around the world.

We also work closely with experts in safety who help to inform our products, policies, community education programmes and safety guides.

Regarding crimes such as domestic abuse that disproportionately impact women, we work with women’s safety experts, academics and charities including Women’s Aid.

Together we will continue to work towards a safer online world for women.

We hope you find this guide useful.



What is online abuse?

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse is any incident, or pattern of incidents, of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence.

In most cases domestic abuse is perpetrated by a partner or ex-partner - but it can also be from a family member or carer. In the vast majority of cases domestic abuse is experienced by women and perpetrated by men. Domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual and financial forms of abuse, as well as stalking, harassment and coercive control. Any woman, regardless of her age, race, religion, sexuality or disability, can be a victim.

ONLINE ABUSE

Many women now often experience online forms of domestic abuse.

Perpetrators do not only need to live with or find a victim 'in the real world', but can abuse, harass and stalk them online too. For example, abusive partners and ex-partners frequently use social media to humiliate and threaten their victims, hack into their emails and accounts, and even use spyware to track them down. We know that perpetrators of domestic abuse often use Facebook to abuse partners or ex-partners, monitor their movements, and share intimate photos or videos of them without their consent. This abusive behaviour is unacceptable, and against Facebook's rules (Community Standards).

A real woman's story

How a perpetrator has made fake social media accounts to harass his victim, and her family:

“During the six years they were together he bullied her verbally and psychologically, controlling her every move. He denied her any money, even for deodorant or clothes and food. He would push, shove, and strangle her at his most violent. After escaping to a refuge she moved into a house of her own, but he continually harassed her. He sent constant messages through Facebook, watched to see where she was going and would follow her. He used Facebook, among other things, to track down her new addresses when she moved so he could harass her at her house.”

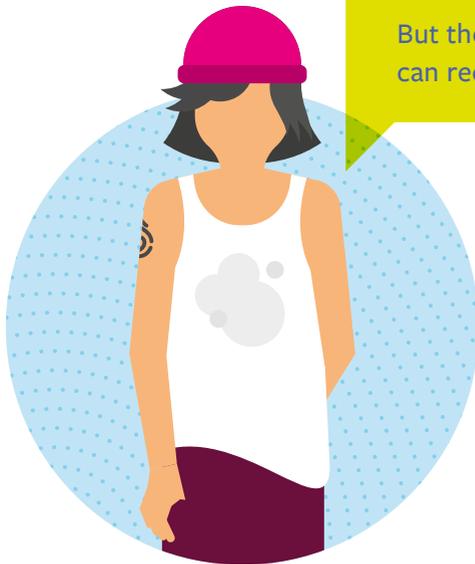
But there are ways to stop this. By understanding the risks and tools you need to stay safe online you can become a Facebook safety expert.



Risks

Social media platforms provide perpetrators with plenty of opportunities to control and instill fear in their victims. They can monitor their victims, share their intimate photos or videos without consent, and send abuse directly too.

People are particularly at risk when their social media account is hacked.



But there are ways you can reduce these risks.

A partner or ex-partner may know, or can easily guess, your username and password. Once they have accessed your account they can contact or block your friends, change your settings, and access and make copies of your photos and videos before you even know you have been hacked.

We know that survivors are already experts at managing their own risk and safety. But there are specific steps you can take to protect yourself online. This guide has a lot of helpful tips - from how to report something that is abusive, to stopping an intimate, private or sexual image from being shared online - to help you become a Facebook safety expert.

Become a Facebook safety expert

Here are some easy tips to keep you and your information safe.

PROTECT YOUR ACCOUNT

Keep your password safe



Don't use your Facebook password anywhere else online, and never share your password. You should be the only one who knows it. Avoid using personally identifiable information that can be easily discovered such as your name, phone number, birthdate, mailing address, etc. Your password should be difficult to guess.

You can find the following tools in your **Settings**, in the **Security and Login** section, to make your profile more secure:

- ➔ Get alerts about unrecognised logins if your account is being logged into from a new device
 - ➔ Use two-factor authentication as an extra layer of security, by entering a code, as well as your password, on new devices. There are 3 different ways you can retrieve your special security code:
-
1. We'll send you a text message (SMS - note: charges may apply) with a login code each time you need one.
-
2. You can use **Code Generator** if you have the Facebook app on your smartphone or tablet.
-
3. You can get 10 codes to print, write down, or save for when you need them.
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PROTECT YOUR INFORMATION

Manage your privacy

The following tools can help you further customise your privacy:

- ➔ Take the **Privacy Checkup** to make sure you are only sharing information and posts with the people you want.
- ➔ On your computer, you can organise groups of friends using lists. This will help control who can see what you share on Facebook.
- ➔ Visit the **Privacy section** under Settings to see who can see your posts, who can contact you, and who can look you up.
- ➔ Review activity on your Facebook profile by viewing your **Activity Log**, or if you're on a computer, see what others see when they visit your profile, by selecting **View As**, to the right side of your cover photo.

RESPONDING TO ABUSIVE CONTENT

Facebook's Community Standards aim to find the right balance between giving people a place to express themselves and promoting a welcoming and safe community for everyone. Here's what to do if you notice abusive behaviour from anyone on your profile or Page:



Report content

The best way to report abusive content or spam on Facebook is by using the Report link that appears near the content itself. We will review the report and take appropriate action.

Facebook is always working to optimise our reporting flows, for this reason, they are often updated. Please check facebook.com/report for the most up to date information on how to report comments or messages.



Document abuse

If you plan to report harassment to the police, take screen shots of any unwanted attention before blocking the harasser. After blocking someone, their prior engagement with you will no longer be visible.



Block harassers

Blocking someone will prevent them from friending you or starting conversations with you. They will not be able to see things you post on your Timeline. To block someone:

- ➔ Click on the “...” to the right of their name on their Facebook profile, scroll to the bottom of the menu, and select “Block”.
- ➔ Or, go to your Settings and click “Blocking”, enter the name of the user you would like to block.
- ➔ Users will not be notified when you block them.



Contact the police

Contact the police if you feel threatened. Remember that, if you are still living together or in physical contact, an abusive partner or ex-partner may not only be a threat online - but offline too.

SAFETY CONCERNS

In addition to your own personal safety, sometimes it can be difficult to know what to do when a post, news story, or photo provokes emotional sharing or concerning comments from your followers.

Here's how to notify Facebook if you're concerned someone may be a danger to themselves, and some additional resources that might be helpful:



Report intimate images shared without your consent

Facebook has tools to help people when intimate images are shared on the platform without their permission. When this content, often referred to as “revenge porn,” is reported to us, we can now prevent it from being shared on Facebook, Messenger and Instagram.

You can find more resources on how to report these images at fb.me/not-without-my-consent



Report self-harm

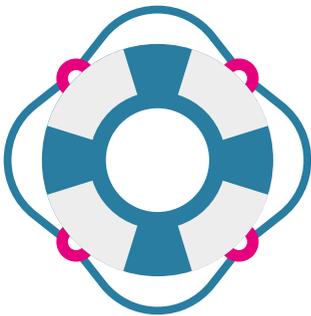
If you know or believe someone is in immediate physical danger, please contact your local police force or a suicide support service immediately. Facebook can provide resources to a person engaging in self-harm, suicidal thoughts, and eating disordered behaviour through the reporting tool. For instructions on how to report a comment or post that may indicate self-harm, go to facebook.com/report. Note that this option is sometimes found in an “other” category.

You can find a list of self-harm and suicide prevention helplines and resources here: fb.me/SuicidePrevention
facebook.com/help/suicidesupport

You can find eating disorder support helplines and resources here: fb.me/EatingDisorderSupport

Help from Facebook

Facebook has more help and resources including:



HELP CENTRE:

Here you can find additional information and resources - such as on harassment or non-consensual sharing of intimate images.

facebook.com/help

SAFETY CENTRE:

Helpful tips and tools about staying safe online, and what to do when you see threatening or abusive content.

facebook.com/safety

SAFETY PAGE:

You will find updates and developments on online safety, both by Facebook and our partners around the world.

facebook.com/fbsafety

CHECK UPS:

Facebook have created tools, such as a '**Privacy Check-up**' and the '**View As**' tool, so you can understand your privacy settings and control your safety as easily as possible.

Support from Women's Aid

Women's Aid is the national charity for women and children working to end domestic abuse. If you or a friend need help we are here to listen.



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- You can call the **National Domestic Violence Helpline** (run in partnership with Women's Aid and Refuge) on **0808 2000 247** or contact via helpline@womensaid.org.uk

 - Visit the **Survivors' Forum** - a safe, anonymous space for women (over 18) who have been affected by domestic abuse to share their experiences and support one another: survivorsforum.womensaid.org.uk

 - Find your local domestic abuse service: womensaid.org.uk/domestic-abuse-directory

 - Read the Survivors' Handbook for practical help and support: womensaid.org.uk/the-survivors-handbook

 - Find out if you are in an abusive relationship by answering these simple questions at: womensaid.org.uk/the-survivors-handbook/am-i-in-an-abusive-relationship/

 - Find out how you can help if you are worried about someone else at: womensaid.org.uk/the-survivors-handbook/im-worried-about-someone-else/
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Safety tips

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Can I get an alert when someone tries logging into my account?

Yes. When you turn on login alerts, Facebook will send you a notification when anyone tries to log into your account from a new computer, phone or tablet.

fb.me/LoginNotifications



Can I limit who sees what I post?

Yes. When you share status updates, photos and other things you post, you can select the audience. You can even limit the audience who see your content. Tap the arrow where it says 'to', and select the people you want to share with.

fb.me/AudienceSelector



If I don't want someone to contact me, can I block them?

Yes. You can block someone for any reason at all. They will no longer be able to see things you post on your profile, tag you, start a conversation with you or add you as a friend. Facebook does not notify the person that you have blocked them.

fb.me/Blocking



Can I report abusive things on Facebook?

Yes. Report something you think is abusive or inappropriate for Facebook by using the report link next to the photo, post or comment. We remove reported content that violates our Community Standards.

fb.me/Reporting



Can I do something if someone shares an intimate photo of me without my permission, or threatens to?

Yes. Please report it to us. Non-consensual sharing of intimate images is illegal and violates our Community Standards - as do threats to share those images. We remove photos or videos depicting incidents of sexual violence, or intimate images that are shared without your consent, and we will remove threats to do so too. Our new technology ensures that the intimate images or films that you have reported cannot be shared on Facebook again. Remember to always record evidence by taking a screenshot, and report the crime to the police too.

fb.me/NCII



How do I check my privacy settings?

To review and improve your security, select 'more', 'settings', 'account settings' and then select 'security.'

fb.me/PrivacyCheckup



What do I do if he is friends with my children on Facebook?

Abusive partners or ex-partners often try to keep in contact with children through social networks like Facebook in order to continue abuse. If contact with your child via social networks can be avoided, it should be. If your child insists on social media contact, then they should create a special account, with the highest privacy and security settings, in which they are only friends with their father - no-one else. Your child should block you, your friends and family as friends on this account. Finally, you should give them information about what they should and shouldn't share on this profile, and inform them that they should never open or download files from the father because it could be spyware.



I'm scared that he will hurt me if I change my password

You are the expert in managing your own risk and safety. If you feel that taking any of these actions will put you at further risk – for example if your partner would retaliate if you change your password – it is essential that you always put your physical safety first. Contact the police if you are in danger, and get in touch with the National Domestic Violence Helpline for advice and support with safety planning.

To learn more about protecting your privacy visit
[facebook.com/about/basics](https://www.facebook.com/about/basics)

facebook

facebook.com/safety

women's aid

until women & children are safe

womensaid.org.uk