



## Google privacy part 2

In a previous email blast, we talked about how Google tracks your activity any time you use a Google service (search, Gmail, Google Maps, etc.). In this article, we'll take a look at how you can take charge of what information Google can obtain about you.

To begin, it's helpful to know that there are two topics to deal with. The first is the amount of data Google collects about you, and the second is what Google does with that information. You probably realize Google doesn't collect your data for no reason. They would say that they do it to enhance your Internet experience, like being able to suggest a restaurant you might like. That's certainly part of it, but enhancing your experience makes them no money at all, so there must be more to it than that.

It would be reasonable to assume that Google sells your data to the highest bidder, but they don't. Instead, Google offers a tailored service to the people buying ad space. Let's say my company sells fishing supplies. Google can offer to place targeted ads for me, that are only shown on *devices* where someone has shown an interest in fishing in the past. Notice I said *devices* not people. Google actually disassociates your data from your personal identity as it's collected and processed. Instead, Google assigns you a *unique advertising ID* and Google keeps track of things that this ID searches for, listens to, gets directions for and purchases, all without storing data about you personally.

If we believe Google when they say that they don't share your data with anyone (after all, it's spelled out in their [privacy policy](#)), then what's to worry about? Maybe nothing, but if it bothers you to have everything you do online (or at least using Google services) cataloged, you can change what data Google collects about you.

### How To Find Your Google Activity Controls in Chrome

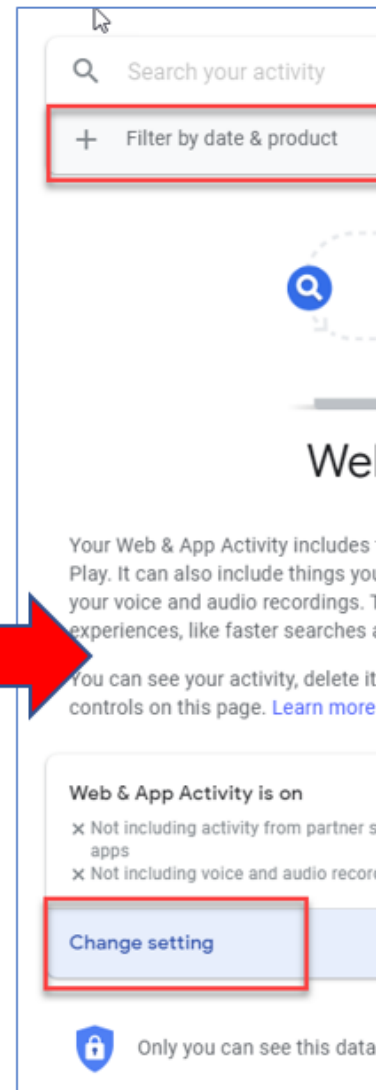
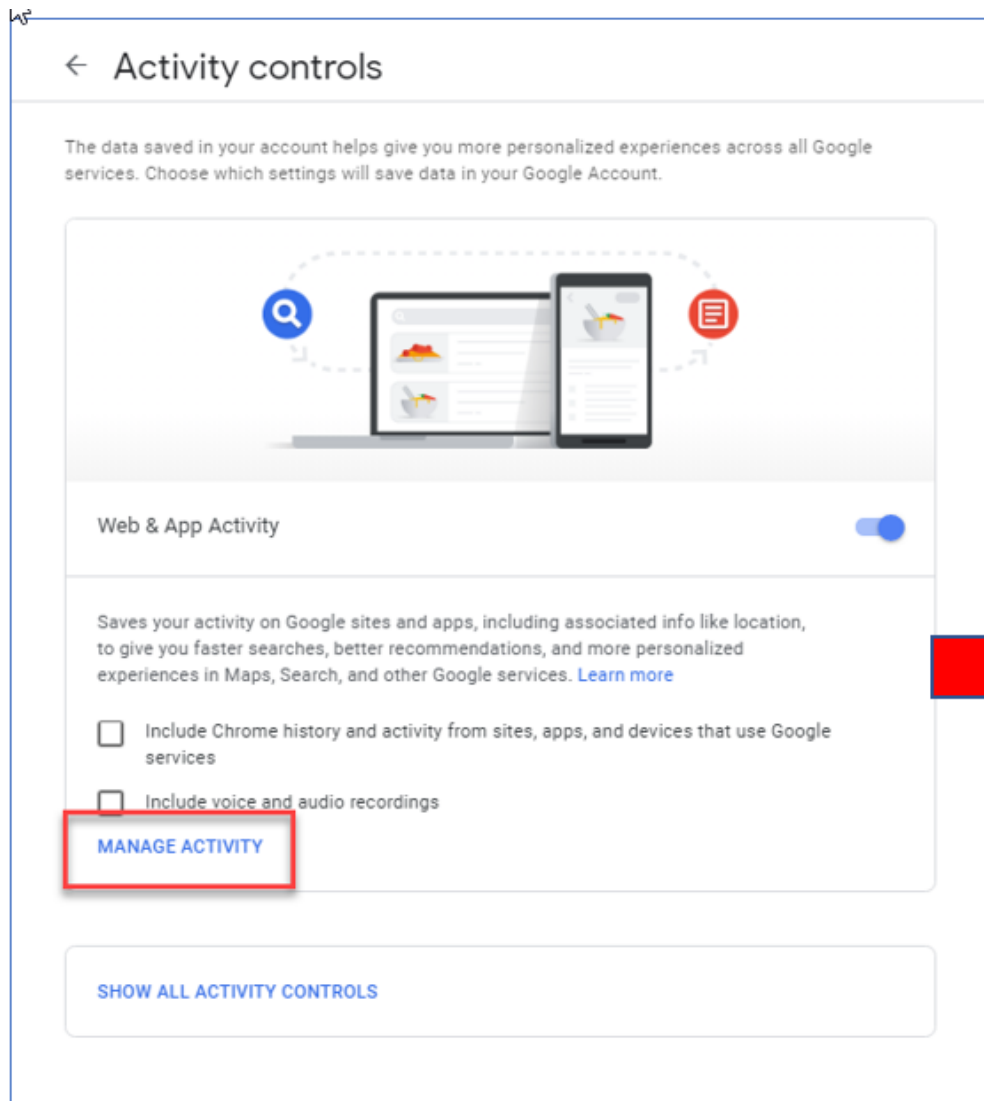
You can control how much Google knows about you. Here's how.

1. [Sign into your Google account](#), if you're not already signed in.
2. Go to your [Google account settings](#).
3. Click **Data & Personalization**. You'll find this in the menu on the left.
4. Scroll down to **Activity Controls**.
5. Click **Manage Your Activity Controls**. Toggle the various controls on or off.
6. If you want to do this on an iOS or Android device, [look here for instructions](#).

The screenshot shows the Google Account interface. At the top left is the 'Google Account' logo and a search bar. A left-hand navigation menu includes 'Home', 'Personal info', 'Data & personalization' (highlighted with a red box and a red circle containing the number 3), 'Security', 'People & sharing', and 'Payments & subscriptions'. The main content area is titled 'Data & personalization' with the subtitle 'Your data, activity, and preferences that help make Google services more useful to you'. The first section is 'Take the Privacy Checkup', which includes a 'Get started' link. The second section is 'Activity controls' (highlighted with a red box and a red circle containing the number 4), with the text 'You can choose to save your activity for better personalization across Google. Turn on or pause these settings at any time.' Below this are three rows of activity controls: 'Web & App Activity' (On), 'Location History' (Paused), and 'YouTube History' (Paused). At the bottom of the 'Activity controls' section is a link 'Manage your activity controls' (highlighted with a red box and a red circle containing the number 5).

Since the top two sections, labeled **Web & App Activity** and **Location History**, are the big ones, they are listed by themselves under **Activity Controls** (step 4 above), but they can also be accessed by clicking **Manage your activity controls** (step 5).

**Web & App Activity**, which is—as you might guess from the name—everything you do on the web while signed into Google, and everything you do inside Google's apps. Click the **Manage activity** link under **Web & App Activity** to see the sort of detail Google is collecting about you. You'll see webpages you've visited, web searches you've run, and apps you've opened. Click on **Filter by date & product** at the top to see all the apps this tracking covers. Use the **Change setting** and **Choose to delete automatically** controls to modify what is being collected and to delete the records you choose.



The second section, **Location History**, which largely gathers data from your phone, works a little differently. Again you can follow the **Manage activity link** to see and edit the data Google has stored, but in this case the records are shown on a map—you can see the little red dots marking places you've been to, and use the drop-down menus to the top left to look at a more specific range of dates. It's important to note that you can be logged into Google on multiple devices (PC, phone, tablet, etc) and all the data collected from those devices is associated under a single unique advertising ID, so it's easy for you to see your location history on your PC, when the PC never left the house.

To erase this data from Google's records, click the **trash can icon** down in the lower right corner—this will appear whether you're viewing a single day or your entire location history. To wipe one individual place from the record, click the **three dots** beside it and choose **Remove stop from day**.

## YouTube History

As the name suggests, your YouTube History includes the YouTube videos you watch and the things you search for. You can opt out of either or both of these by clicking the **Change Setting** option. You can also click the **Choose to delete automatically** link to have Google automatically delete your history after 18 months, 3 months, or until you delete manually.

## People & Sharing

In the People & sharing section, you can control what information you share with your contacts, including where you are located. Whether you have an Android or iOS device, you can now permanently share your location with another person and have them do the same for you. Before anyone can share their location, both people need to have a Google account and be in one another's contact list. This will happen automatically if either of you have ever sent each other an email or Hangouts message. It's not apparent from the People & Sharing controls, but in order to share your location, you have to add that person through the Google Maps app. [Here's how.](#)

The screenshot displays the 'People & sharing' settings page. On the left sidebar, the 'People & sharing' option is highlighted with a red box. The main content area is titled 'People & sharing' and includes a sub-header 'People you interact with and the info you make visible on Google services'. Below this, there are several sections:

- Contacts**: Organize your Google contacts so you can connect with people on Google services, like Gmail. It shows 5 contacts and '+ other contacts for autocomplete suggestions'.
- Contact info saved from interactions**: Set to 'On'.
- Contact info from your devices**: Set to 'Off'.
- Blocked**: No blocked users.

Below the 'Contacts' section, there is a 'Location sharing' section with the text 'You aren't sharing your real-time location with anyone on Google'. A red box highlights the 'Manage location sharing' link. To the right, a 'Choose what others see' section is partially visible, with a red box highlighting the 'About me' option.

If you need assistance with anything discussed here, please call or email us. We are eager to help.

## Referrals

TekResults owes much of our success to our loyal and enthusiastic clients. It's those of you who tell your friends about us that keep our company growing, and we'd like to say thanks. Just telling someone about us is all it takes. Just let us know you dropped our name and we'll drop a gift card in the mail for you to enjoy a great meal at a [Dante's restaurant](#). See... who said talk is cheap!

The TekResults Team

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814-206-0000 Option 1

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