

## Security and Privacy on MySpace

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Is there security and privacy on MySpace? This can be a difficult question to answer because there are many possible answers. There can be a certain degree of security and privacy available on MySpace but as with any online community there is also the potential for unsafe situations and violations of privacy. However, there are a couple of ways MySpace members can ensure they are receiving the highest levels of security and privacy possible. This includes being familiar with the terms of service, taking active measures to protect yourself and making use of the privacy features included in the software.Â

### **Read the Terms of Service Carefully**

Reading the terms of service carefully can give users an understanding of the amount of security and privacy available on MySpace. These terms of service provide members with useful information for the types of activities or content which are prohibited on MySpace. Understanding these regulations will help members to understand whether their actions or the actions of other members are in violation of the terms of service. While the MySpace administrators do not have a policy of policing the community for content violations, they will respond to allegations by other members of violations and will take appropriate actions if the members are in fact found to be in violation of the terms of service. These actions may include deleting the members account and taking appropriate legal actions.

The MySpace privacy policy is referenced within the terms of service and this reference incorporates the entirety of the privacy policy into the terms of service. As a result members who join the MySpace community and agree to the terms of services are also, by default, agreeing to the privacy policy. Therefore, members should carefully review the privacy policy and familiarize themselves with the terms of this policy.

### **Protect Yourself on MySpace**

Members of MySpace do have a small degree of protection afforded by the administrators of MySpace but they can provide themselves with a great deal of additional protection by being aware of how the Internet works and using common sense. Generic safety tips for protecting oneself on the Internet also apply to the MySpace community. Just like it is not wise to give out sensitive information such as your address or social security number on online discussion boards, it is not wise to list this type of information on a MySpace profile either.

MySpace members may think the information they post on their profile is only being viewed by their friends and the members of their extended network but this is not true. There can be many individuals on MySpace who are lurking and viewing membersâ€™ websites all the time. Some of these lurkers may be completely innocent but others may be harvesting information.

### **Making Profiles Private**

MySpace does have some features which can give members an increased amount of protection. The ability to make a profile private is one of these features. Most MySpace profiles are public and

are viewable by both members of the community and nonmembers. However, those who wish to keep their website private can make it only available to those on their friends list. Members of MySpace also have the ability to remove members from their friends list or block other members from sending them emails or instant messages. Only members in your friends list can post comments on your website so if there are members who are leaving malicious comments, you can remove them from your friends list to avoid future problems. Also, if you are receiving harassing emails or messages you can block users to prevent them from contacting you in the future.