GET SET UP FOR SAFETY

Staying connected

Learn the basics of social media platforms and how to adjust privacy and security settings to socialise online safely.

Whether you're new to social media or more experienced, it's important to understand how to stay safe so you can get the most out of your connections online.

Topics

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Social media essentials

Social media refers to websites or apps on your phone or tablet where people can socialise by creating, sharing, and connecting online through text, images, videos, and other content, known as 'posts'.

It's a popular way to keep connected with friends, family, or even people you don't know - if you choose to. It also has other applications such as shopping, catching up with news, entertainment and being part of online communities, where people with shared interests come together to discuss, collaborate, and support one another.

Communities are built up through friend requests, message requests, and invitations to join online groups. People can follow you, or add you as a friend, meaning they can see what information or content you share.

The good news is social media platforms offer a range of privacy and security settings which you can adjust according to your preferences.

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Netsafe's general social media advice

There are many platforms and apps we can use to connect with people online. The considerations and actions below apply, no matter which platform you are using.

Secure your account
- Use strong passwords and passphrases.
- Enable two-factor authentication.

Check your privacy settings
- Keep your profile private.
- Choose your audience for each piece of content you share.

Choose your 'friends' carefully
- Only add people you know in real life and check with them offline to make sure the request is really from them.
- Delete requests you're not sure about.

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Think twice about what you share

- Once online your content can be shared, downloaded or edited by others.
- Ask yourself:
  - Does it share your personal information? (i.e. address)
  - Is it real? Be aware to the possibility that it may be a hoax; check your sources.

Remember you're in control!

You decide what content and who you want to interact with.

- 'Like' it, share it with others, or simply scroll past.
- Accept, ignore, block messages and friend requests.
- Hide or delete harmful comments on your page and report or block accounts.

If you experience online harm contact Netsafe for advice and next steps.

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Practice safer social media habits

Just like other places online, anything you share on social media can be used to build a picture of you as a person. This is known as a digital footprint. When using social media, think carefully about what content you are sharing online.

Be mindful of your digital footprint and your loved ones too.

- Is this something you are comfortable with strangers seeing, now or in the future?

- Could it impact your personal or business relationships or reputation?

- Could it be used to gather sensitive personal information?

- Does it give away personal information of friends or family members?

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Choose your location settings

Location settings allow apps or websites to access and use your device's geographic information for purposes such as GPS navigation, Google Maps, and 'find my phone'. You can choose to turn this function off, **but be aware that the functions listed above will not work if you do.**

Each platform will differ slightly with how to do this, generally:

Open your device's "Settings" app.

Scroll down and tap on "Location" or "Privacy & Location" (depending on your device).

Select "Off" to disable location services.

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Popular social media sites

Facebook is probably the most widely known social media site. Over three billion people use this site to connect and interact with friends and family and share all sorts of things such as personal news, links to favourite recipes or photos of holidays.

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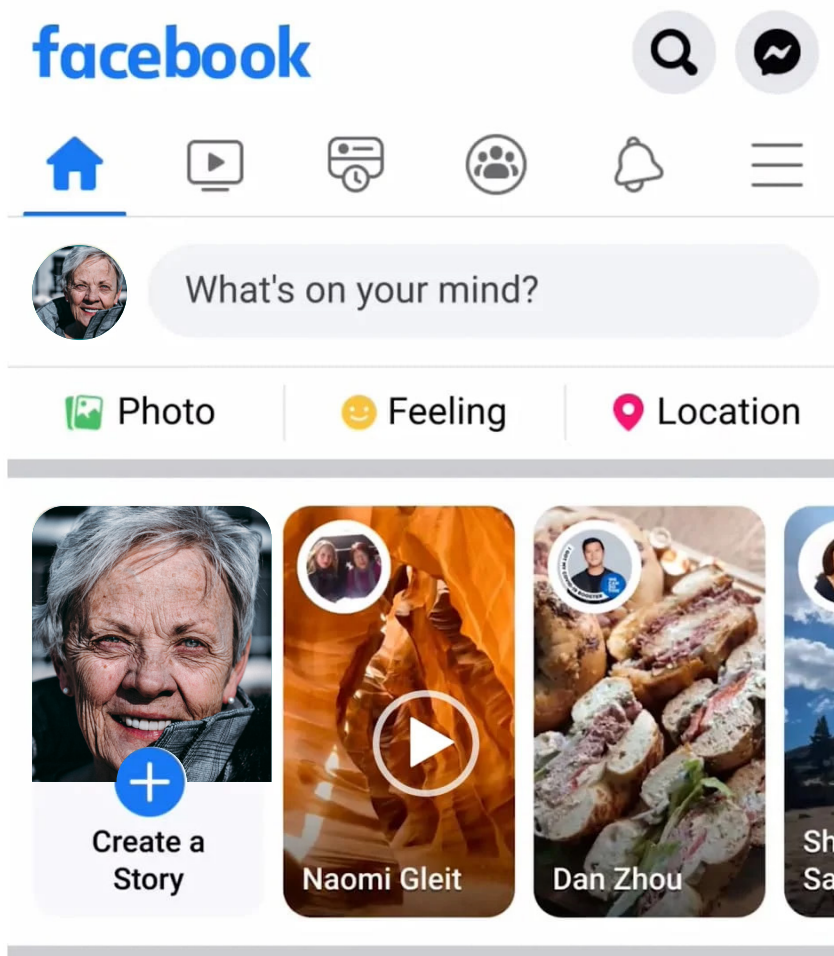
Facebook basics

A Facebook profile lets you build a network of connections to share posts (text, image or short videos).

You can invite people you know to be your 'friend' and 'follow' individuals and organisations.

Facebook feed

Your Facebook feed is the constantly updating list of posts in the middle of your home page. It includes things like status updates, photos, videos from people, pages, and groups you follow.

Facebook also adds in recommended content and adverts to your feed based on what you've liked, followed, or searched for (on and off Facebook).

This can create an online bubble or 'echo chamber' where you only see content that reflects your own views and interests.

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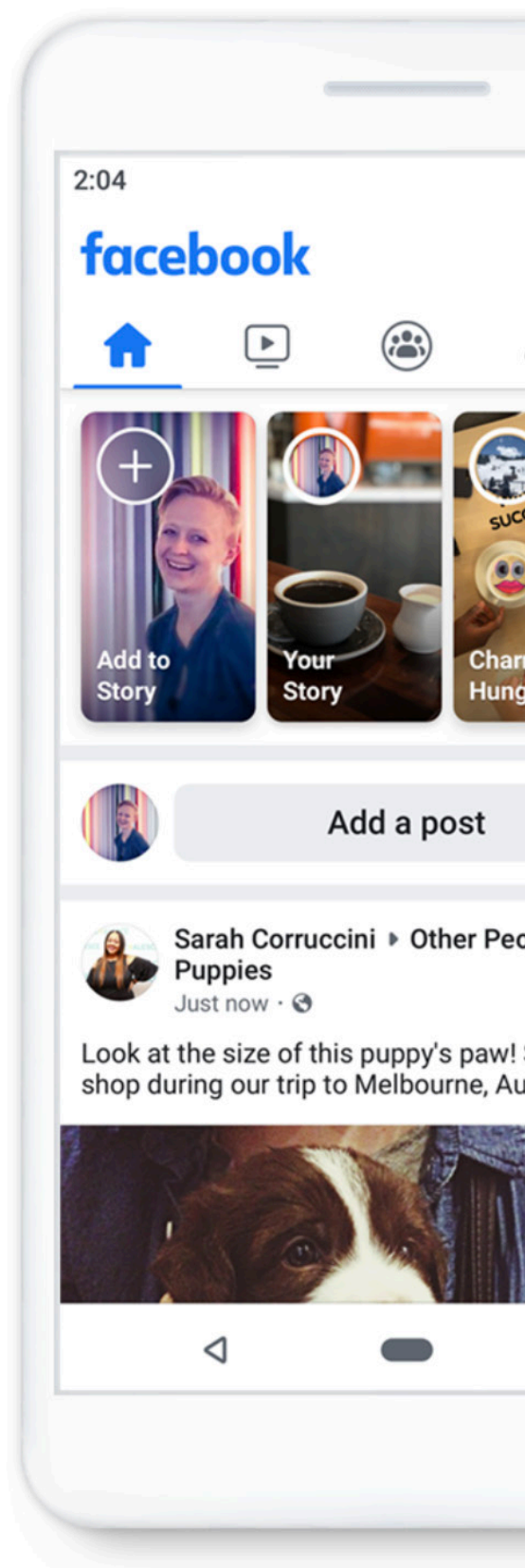
Adjust your Facebook feed preferences

- Click your profile picture or the three horizontal bars ☰ in the top right of Facebook.
- Select **Settings and privacy,** then click **News Feed.**
- Click any of the following options to adjust your feed preferences:

Manage favourites to select people and pages that you want to prioritise. This means their posts will be shown higher in your feed, and you'll see their newest posts first.

Select unfollow to unfollow a person, page or group.

Reconnect to follow a person, page or group that you unfollowed in the past.

Be aware: Fun 'personality-style' quizzes can show up on your Facebook feed or be shared by contacts. These quizzes and similar games sometimes direct you to an external app or website to obtain personal information from you.

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Facebook Messenger

Facebook Messenger is connected to Facebook. If you follow someone and they follow you on Facebook, you can direct message each other - like texting. You can also share images, videos, video call each other, and set up group chats to connect with friends, family or with people from a shared interest group.

Be aware: Facebook users you have not accepted as a friend can still message you. If you haven't exchanged messages with this person before, it will come as a 'message request' which is found clicking the three bar symbol in messenger chat ☰ on mobile. For desktop, click the messenger symbol on the right hand side 💬 , then click the three horizontal dots ●●●.

Facebook Marketplace

Facebook Marketplace is a digital marketplace where users can buy, sell and trade items locally.

Be cautious: When purchasing items on Facebook Marketplace or community pages. While many people are genuine, some traders are not honest, so it's best not to exchange money before you have seen the item in person.

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Facebook privacy and security settings

Adjust your privacy settings to make your profile public, or visible only to connections.

Use **Facebook's Privacy Checkup** to determine which information you want to keep private and to learn how to change privacy settings.
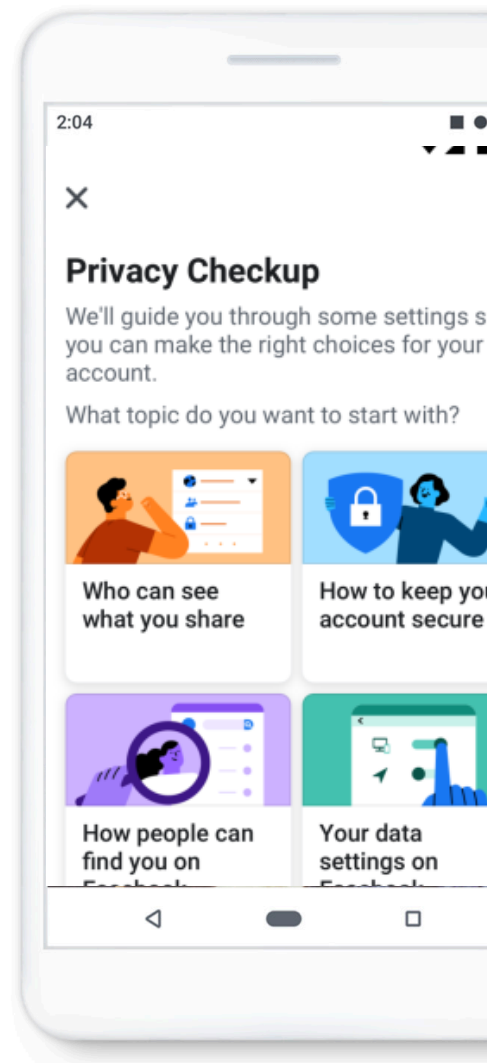
Click your profile picture (on desktop) or the three bars ≡ (on mobile) and find the menu/cog symbol.

Click Settings & privacy. Then click **Privacy Checkup.**

To tighten your security settings, use **Security Checkup.**
- When logged in, go to <u>facebook.com/help/securitycheckup</u>.
- Click start Security Checkup.

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Reporting harmful content on Facebook

If you see something upsetting, abusive or unwanted in your feed:

- Look for the three dots ●●● more at the top of a post and hover your cursor over it to bring up a menu of options.

- From here, you can delete or hide comments, report content to Facebook and stop seeing ads or sponsored posts.

- You can also report another profile by clicking the three dots ●●● on their profile.

Visit https://www.facebook.com/settings/ for more privacy, security and safety options.

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Instagram is a popular social media platform where users can create profiles, share photos and videos, apply various filters and editing effects, and engage with content through likes, comments, and direct messages. It has become important for businesses celebrities and individual 'influencers' to reach and connect with their audiences.

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Instagram basics

As with other social networking platforms, Instagram users can like, comment on, and bookmark others' posts, as well as send private messages to their friends.

Users can add a caption to each of their posts and use hashtags (#) to index these posts and make them searchable by other users within the app.

Instagram also includes features like stories, which allows users to share temporary images and videos that disappear after 24 hours.

Instagram feed

Your Instagram feed includes posts from accounts you follow, suggested posts, and ads from businesses that may be interesting and relevant to you.

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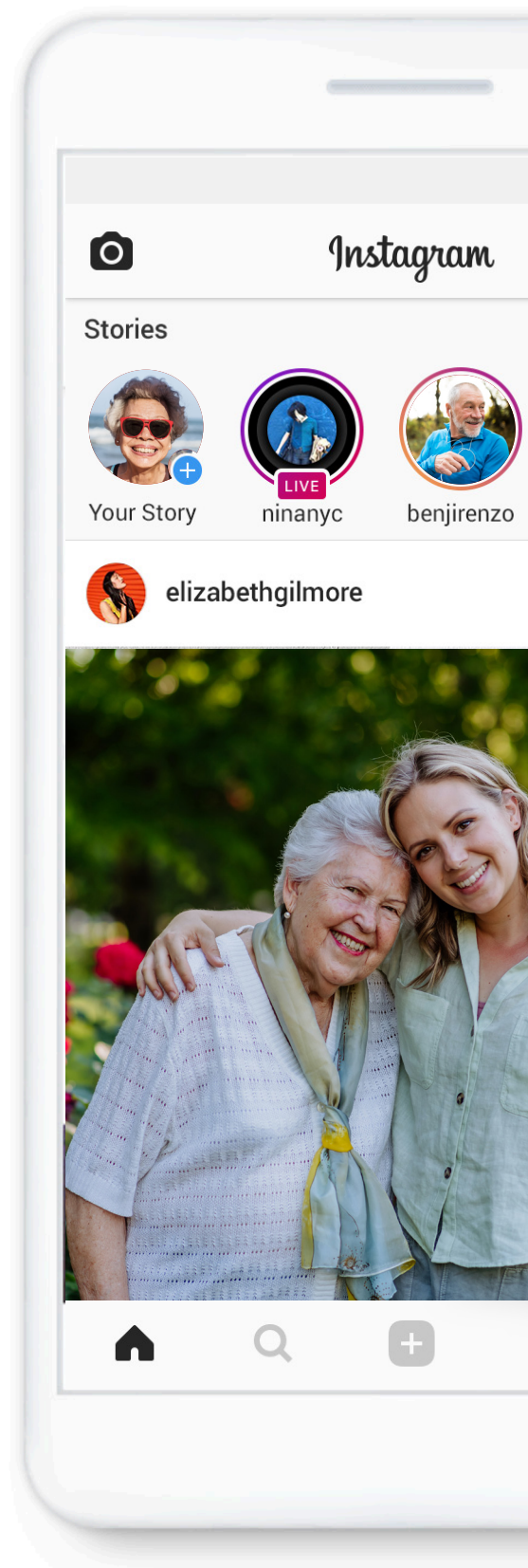
Adjust your Instagram feed preferences

Favorites and **Following** are new ways to catch up on recent posts from the accounts you follow.

Favorites shows you the latest from accounts that you choose, like your best friends and favorite creators.

Following shows you posts from the people you follow.

To use **Favorites** and **Following**, tap on Instagram logo in the top left corner of your home page to choose what you see.

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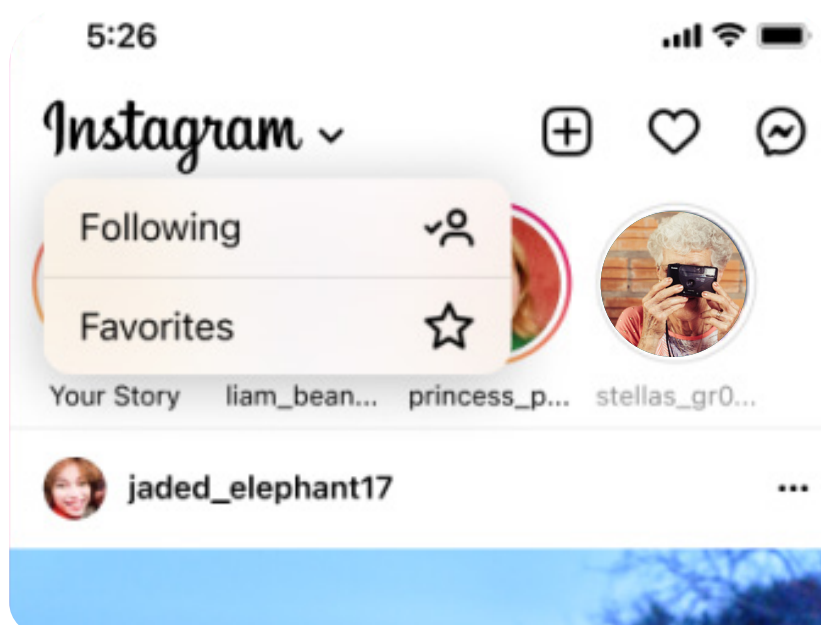
Instagram privacy and security settings

You can have a private or public profile. We recommend only using a public profile if you are using the platform to promote something.

• Instagram has privacy controls which can be adjusted clicking on the three lines ☰ at the bottom left of your profile (or top right on mobile).

Reporting harmful content on Instagram

• **To block and report other users on Instagram on your mobile,** click on their profile and then the vertical dots ⋮ at the top to see a menu of options.

• **To block and report other users on your desktop,** click their profile and then the horizontal dots ●●● to see a menu of options.

• **To report a post with upsetting content or abuse,** click the three dots ●●● next to the Instagram post you want to report.

Tip: You can delete comments by hovering your cursor over the comment that you want to delete, then click the three dots ●●●

Visit https://help.instagram.com/ for more privacy, safety and security options.

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Messaging platforms

WhatsApp is a free messaging platform for text, voice, and video communication. Users can send messages, make calls, and share photos and videos. With end-to-end encryption, only the sender and recipient can read messages. It's commonly used for international communication with friends and family.
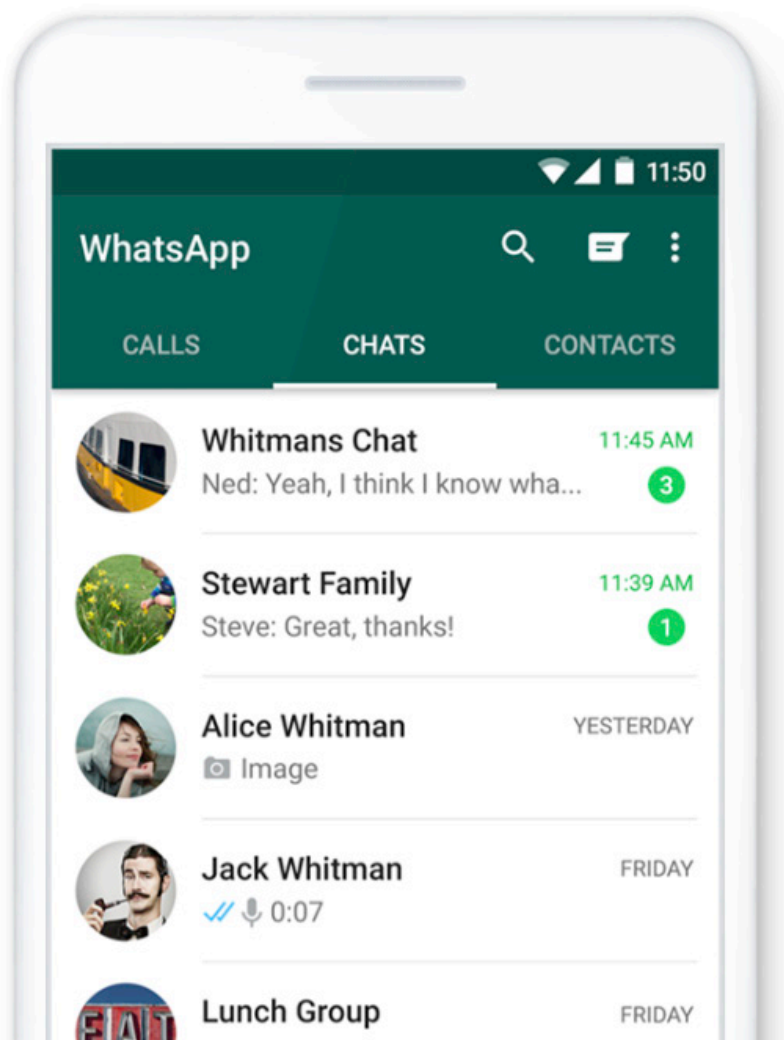
WhatsApp privacy and security settings

- To adjust your privacy and security settings in WhatsApp click the 3 vertical dots ⦙ at the top of your account then click 'settings'.

Blocking and reporting on Whatsapp

You can stop receiving messages, calls, and problematic spam or content from certain contacts and unknown numbers by blocking them.

- Open WhatsApp and look for settings or 3 vertical dots ⦙ at the top of your account.

- Tap Privacy > Blocked.

- Tap Add.

You can also report or block unknown numbers directly in a chat. Open the chat with the user you wish to report and either tap contact name then tap Report OR look for 3 vertical dots ⦙ tap More then tap Report.

Visit https://faq.whatsapp.com/ for more privacy, security and safety options.

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Online dating advice

Online dating sites and apps have become a popular method for people of all ages to connect romantically with others. There are now a multitude of different sites you can join.

For example, Find Someone, Singles Over 60.co.nz, Elite Singles, Bumble and Tinder are some of the online dating services available in New Zealand.
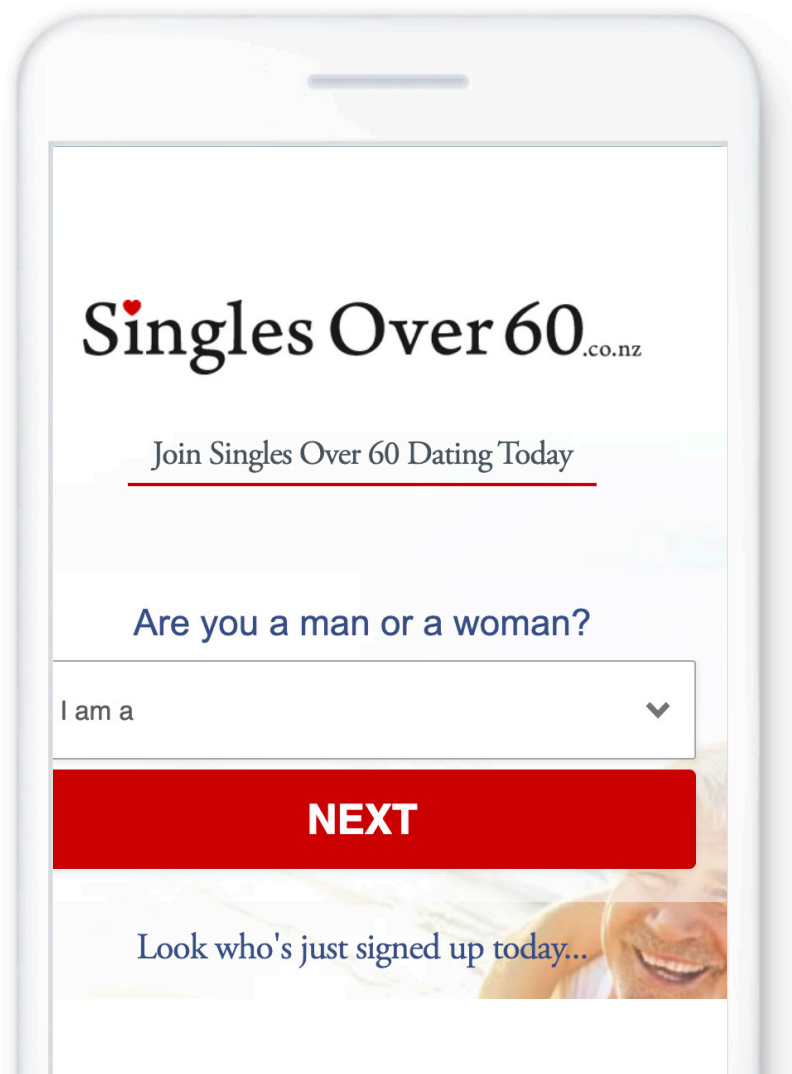
When meeting someone new, online or offline, consider the following precautions and remember you can always say no.

- **Avoid sharing excessive personal details** (like your full name, address, phone number, email address and financial information) publicly, or with someone you've just met online.

- **Do not share your location** or post any photos or videos which give away your location (advice on how to turn off location settings under social media basics safety advice above).

- **Don't share any information or images of, or about your family or grandchildren**. Keep your family safe.

- **Never send money or financial information** to anyone you meet online, especially if they are overseas.

- **Choose a public space, bring a friend, or let someone know your whereabouts** if you decide to meet in-person.

Report suspicious or abusive behaviour to the site. Look out for red flags:

▶ You feel like your boundaries aren't being respected

▶ Excessive friendliness

▶ Online only relationships

▶ Use of pre-recorded content

▶ Something seems off

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Additional resources

Now you have some tips to help you find communities with common interests and keep in touch with others. Learn more on other Get Set Up for Safety topics by visiting **netsafe.org.nz/olderpeople**, including:

- **Secure your devices**
  Set up your devices (phones, tablets, PC's, etc.) for safety, to give you peace of mind when online.

- **A user-friendly device**
  Set up your device so it's easier and safer for you to use.

- **Safer shopping, banking and investing online**
  Learn how to avoid scams and what to do when things go wrong.

- **Spot a scam**
  A scam is a made-up story to trick people out of money or steal their information. Learn how to check for red flags.

- **Glossary**
  Stay up-to-date with digital terms using Netsafe's glossary, designed to be used with the other resources to explain the terminology.

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If you're unsure about a situation or need further advice, you can visit the help centre for each platform or find more information on the Netsafe website netsafe.org.nz.

We're here for you. If you require assistance or experience online harm, contact Netsafe.

Call 0508 638 723

Visit netsafe.org.nz

report.netsafe.org.nz