How to Delete Your Facebook Account

June 3, 2020 5 min read

This story originally appeared on PCMag

Recent events, or just the general state of social media, might have you contemplating a break from Facebook. That’s not an option for everyone; in that case, tighten up your account settings. But if having your data mined for political purposes without your permission skeeves you out, there are ways to extricate yourself from the massive social network.

If you’re ready for a social media break, here’s how to delete Facebook.

Deactivating

Facebook gives you two options: deactivate or delete

The first couldn’t be easier. On the desktop, click the drop-down menu at the top-right of your screen and select **Settings**. Click General on the top left and Edit next to “Manage Account.” Scroll down and you’ll see a “Deactivate your account” link at the bottom. (Here’s the direct link to use while logged in.)

If you’re on mobile, navigate to **Settings & Privacy > Settings > Account Settings > Personal Information > Manage Account > Deactivate** on iOS or Android.

Facebook doesn’t take this lightly – it’ll do whatever it can to keep you around, including emotional blackmail about how much your friends will miss you.

“Deactivation” is not the same as leaving Facebook. Yes, your timeline will disappear, you won’t have access to the site or your account via mobile apps, friends can’t post or contact you and you’ll lose access to all those third-party services that use (or require) Facebook for login. But Facebook does **not** delete the account. Why? So you can reactivate it later.

Just in case that expected re-activation isn’t in your future, you should download a copy of all your data on Facebook – posts, photos, videos, chats, etc. – from the settings menu (under “General”). What you find might surprise you.

Account deletion

To fully **delete** your Facebook account forever and ever, go to facebook.com/help/delete_account. Just be aware that, per the Facebook data use policy, “after you remove information from your profile or delete your account, copies of that information may remain viewable elsewhere to the extent it has been shared with others, it was otherwise distributed pursuant to your privacy settings, or it was copied or stored by other users.”

Translation: if you wrote a comment on a friend’s status update or photo, it will remain even after you delete your own profile. Some of your posts and pictures may hang around for

as long as 90 days after deletion, as well, though just on Facebook servers, not live on the site.

There is a deletion grace period of 30 days now (up from 14). That means there is a month before Facebook gets rid of your account, just in case you change your mind. It's just one more way Facebook *cares*.

Deletion on behalf of others

If you want to notify Facebook about a user you know is under 13, report the account, you narc. If Facebook can "reasonably verify" the account is used by someone underage – Facebook bans kids under 13 to comply with federal law – it will delete the account instantly, without informing anyone.

There's a separate form to request removal of accounts for people who are medically incapacitated and thus unable to use Facebook. For this to work, the requester must prove they are the guardian of the person in question (such as by power of attorney) as well as offer an official note from a doctor or medical facility that spells out the incapacitation. Redact any info necessary to keep some privacy, such as medical account numbers, addresses, etc.

If a user has passed away, a legacy contact – a Facebook friend or relative who was designated by the account owner before they died – can get access to that person's timeline, once approved by Facebook. The legacy contact may need to provide a link to an obituary or other documentation such as a death certificate. Facebook will "memorialize" the page so the

deceased’s timeline lives on (under control of the legacy contact, who can’t post as you) or if preferred, remove it.

Designate a specific legacy contact person to handle your account after your passing. You can find that under **Settings > General > Manage Account > Your Legacy Contact**. Once you set one up, you’ll get a notification every year from Facebook to double check that the contact should stay the same, unless you opt out. You have the option to ensure that after you die, if the legacy contact does report you to Facebook as deceased, your account gets deleted – even if the legacy contact wants the timeline to be memorialized.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/351439