

A step-by-step guide to disappear from the Internet

Celebrities and public figures are not the only ones who get affected by their online publicity. We live in the digital age, and your online presence is starting to determine who you are even if you are not a public figure. Your online life sometimes affects what happens to you in the real one.

You may not think your online presence would be of interest to anyone, but you might be wrong. By merely googling your name, your friends, family, and co-workers might be able to find details about your life that you are not willing to voluntarily share with them. Clues about personal information could be found online – such topics may include your views on things like sexual orientation, political beliefs, religion, hobbies, etc. Your digital prints might be standing in the way of you nailing your next job interview before you even get there. Your old MySpace profile, or Twitter activity from 2009, might be readily available for evaluation by your current or future employer. While you might be proud of your past, do you want all this information readily available to anyone who expresses interest in you?

We have previously discussed that internet privacy is almost non-existent. Sometimes unknowingly, users leave so many digital prints all over the internet that removing it from the net might be a challenging task. However, it is not an impossible one. No matter what your reasoning behind wanting to delete yourself from the internet is, there are certain things that you can do to make your information and personal data not as easily accessible for everyone. We decided to prepare some of the best practices that might help you achieve the desired internet-free nirvana you've been dreaming about.

– Close all your accounts using www.Deseat.me

One of the best ways to start deleting yourself from the internet is a website called deseat.me. It is a tool that finds a vast amount of your online accounts and gives you instructions on how to delete your profiles on them, or helps you request sensitive data deletion from the webmasters. The tool comes with preset emails that help you maintain the professional tone.

– Remove your details from people-search websites

Deleting yourself from data broker websites such as White Pages and Radaris is a must should you want to decrease your digital presence. Sadly, tools such as phone reverse lookup make the life of every person interested in you very easy, as finding information about you is only a few clicks away. **As we've previously discussed**, getting the full name of the person who lives next door is an easy task even if you've never spoken to him/her. Data brokers have tools that allow you to find almost anything about anyone – sensitive information may include full name, DOB, previous addresses, employer, outstanding mortgage of a property, etc.

– Stop using social media

Your online presence is hugely dependent on your social media activity. The more active on social media you are, the harder it gets to delete yourself from the internet. And your presence sometimes affects your real life. If you vocally express specific political views that are not popular, and you've listed your relationship to a particular business, you may end up bankrupt or jobless as people know that they can harm you by leaving negative reviews on Yelp or forwarding your conversations to your manager.

– Delete email accounts

There is no true deletion from the internet if you still have email accounts. Email accounts are often associated with identity, and if you want to be genuinely out of the internet world, you have to delete your emails and close your email inboxes for good. Emails are indeed an easy way to communicate but also leave so much digital print – we bet this will be a tough one. Check our next tip if you are not ready to delete your emails.

– Unsubscribe from all these companies that bombard you with emails

If you are not prepared to give up on your email and www.deseat.me hasn't managed to find all your online accounts, you may want to start unsubscribing from the companies that still try to reach you. Manually unsubscribing can be a hassle but this is the only way you can make them stop bombarding your inbox. The path to total freedom is not easy.

– Start using VPN

If you've managed to delete all your accounts and you've taken down vast chunks of your online presence, now is time to start enjoying the anonymous type of internet you had 20 years ago. Even if there are some things about you left on the internet, getting a quality VPN service may be the beginning of the rest of your internet life as you will finally be able to browse anonymously, and avoid leaving more digital prints.

– Get sensitive personal information unpublished

There is a difference between personal data and confidential personal information. While your name, current address, and DOB might be a public record and is considered personal data, sensitive information such as SSN and bank account information that ends up published must be taken down. If the website administrator refuses to cooperate, you can send a legal request to Google to have it removed from the results.

Before you delete yourself from the internet, make sure that this is what you want. And if you are not 100% sure, create a backup of the information that you may need in the future. Taking impulsive decisions may result in forever lost images, contacts, and emails. Printing out essential emails and writing down the contact details of all your friends and family is also a must. Last but not least, most of the times deletion of accounts is definitive – be prepared to lose the 100% positive feedback on eBay that you've been building over the last decade. When you decide to get back online, you may have to start developing your accounts stats from scratch!