

# Surveillance Self-Defense

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## Key Areas for Surveillance and basic ways to protect ourselves

Everyone using the internet leaves traces behind. There is up-to-date no way to achieve absolute security. It is however possible to protect ourselves from the most basic forms of surveillance. This paper is aimed at common internet users who are concerned about their right to privacy. So the suggestions here are still simple-to-use but cannot offer high-grade protection for those with a higher risk of surveillance. A lawyer, investigative journalist, or activist needs stronger security measures than the average internet user. If you are in a position with a higher risk you have to follow more secure and also more complex strategies. But for everyone else, this list offers a couple of key areas for surveillance, the main threats in each area and possible yet simple-to-use defenses. The defenses are split into bad or no 😞, middle 😐, and good 😊 solutions.

### Computer/Laptop Systems

*Main Threats: Windows and Apple receive and use data about us, government back doors, security flaws*

- 😞 (Pirated) Windows
- 😐 Better privacy settings for Windows and Mac (see Guides)  
Antivirus Software: [Avast](#), [Kaspersky](#) ...  
GNU/Linux Systems like [Ubuntu](#), [Mint](#) ...
- 😊 [Tails OS](#), [Parabola](#)

### Mobile Systems for Smartphones/iPhones

*Main Threats: Voice Recording, Localization, Apps*

- 😞 Android or iOS on default settings
- 😐 Better privacy settings (see Guides)
- 😊 [Lineage OS](#), [Replicant](#)

### Internet Browsing

*Main Threats: IP-address, Cookies and Trackers, Google Search*

- 😞 Internet Explorer, Edge, Google Chrome, being logged into Facebook or Google
- 😐 [Firefox](#) or [Opera](#) with better privacy settings (see Guides) and addons: [PrivacyBadger](#), [HTTPS everywhere](#), [uBlock origin](#)  
  
Better privacy settings for Facebook and Google (see Guides)  
  
Change Default Search Engine to [duckduckgo](#) or [ixquick](#)
- 😊 [Tor Browser](#), [Epic Privacy Browser](#), using a VPN ([Windscribe](#), [hide.me](#))

### Guides to privacy settings

Windows 10: <https://blog.emsisoft.com/en/18770/the-truth-about-windows-10-spying-on-almost-everything-you-do/> (Scroll to Win 10 privacy settings to look into)

### Chat & VoiceCall

*Main Threats: Recording of abstracts (who with whom, how long, from where, ...) and content of our communication*

- 😞 Facebook Messenger, Skype, Twitter, Phonecalls, SMS
- 😐 [Pidgin](#) with [OTR-Plugin](#) (Off-the-record)
- 😊 OTR messengers like [Signal Private Messenger](#)

### Mail

*Main Threats: Recording of abstracts (who with whom, subject, from where...) and content of our communication*

- 😞 Gmail, all free commercial mail providers
- 😐 Secure/encrypted mail provider: [riseup.net](#), [protonmail.com](#) ...
- 😊 End-to-End-Encryption with [PGP/GnuPG](#)

### Sensitive Data Encryption

*Main Threats: Hacking, government sniffing, stealing*

- 😞 Unencrypted
- 😐 Encryption of sensitive files with [VeraCrypt](#), [7zip](#) ...
- 😊 Encryption of whole hard disk with [BitLocker](#) (Win 10), [FileVault2](#) (Mac), [DMCCrypt](#) (Linux)

### Passwords

*Main threats in all different areas are weak passwords*

- 😞 Names and words, short, same password in different places
- 😐 At least 12 symbols; capital and low-case letters, numbers and signs combined; unique
- 😊 Password Manager like [LastPass](#)  
Two-factor authentication

Mac: <https://www.dummies.com/computers/mac/security/how-to-select-privacy-settings-on-your-mac/>

Android: <https://gizmodo.com/how-to-fix-your-privacy-on-android-1780733516>

iOS: <https://gizmodo.com/how-to-lock-down-your-privacy-settings-on-ios-1779406136>

Firefox: <https://myshadow.org/how-to-increase-your-privacy-on-firefox>

Opera: <https://www.askvg.com/tips-tweak-opera-web-browser-settings-to-improve-your-privacy/>

Facebook: <https://www.techlicious.com/tip/complete-guide-to-facebook-privacy-settings/>

Google: <https://uk.pcmag.com/how-to/94244/how-to-manage-your-google-privacy-settings>

For further reading visit the Electronic Frontier Foundation: <https://www.eff.org/>