

How To Stop (Some) Facebook Data Leaks

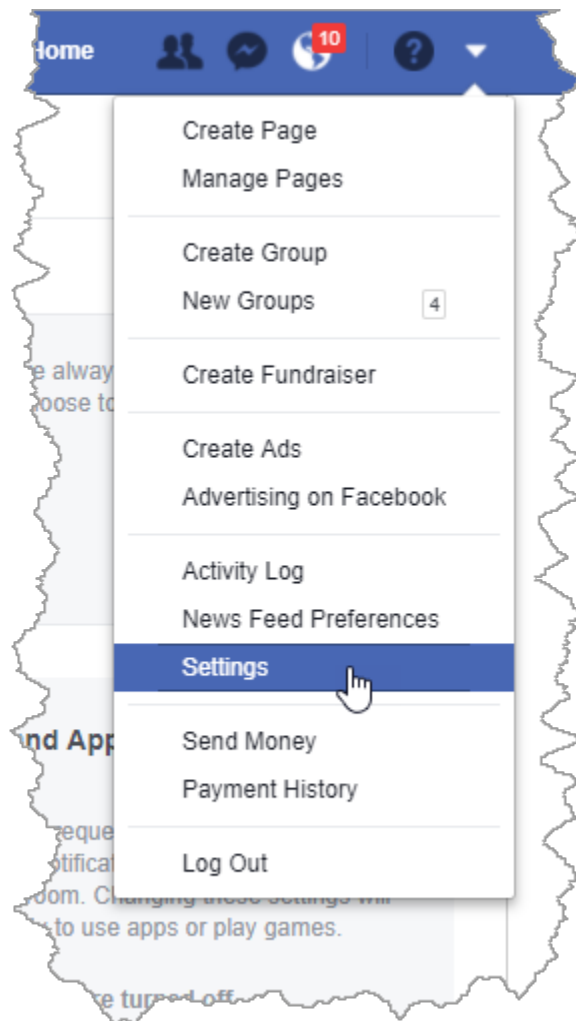
By Bob Cusick

Facebook's been in the news a LOT since the revelation of last week's "data leak" came to light.

In the next few pages I'm going to show you some simple steps you can take to help plug **some** of the data leaks.

This short guide is **not** meant to be the be-all-end-all tome of Facebook security settings – it's really just an introduction – but I'll bet you find you're voluntarily giving away **a lot** of your personal information.

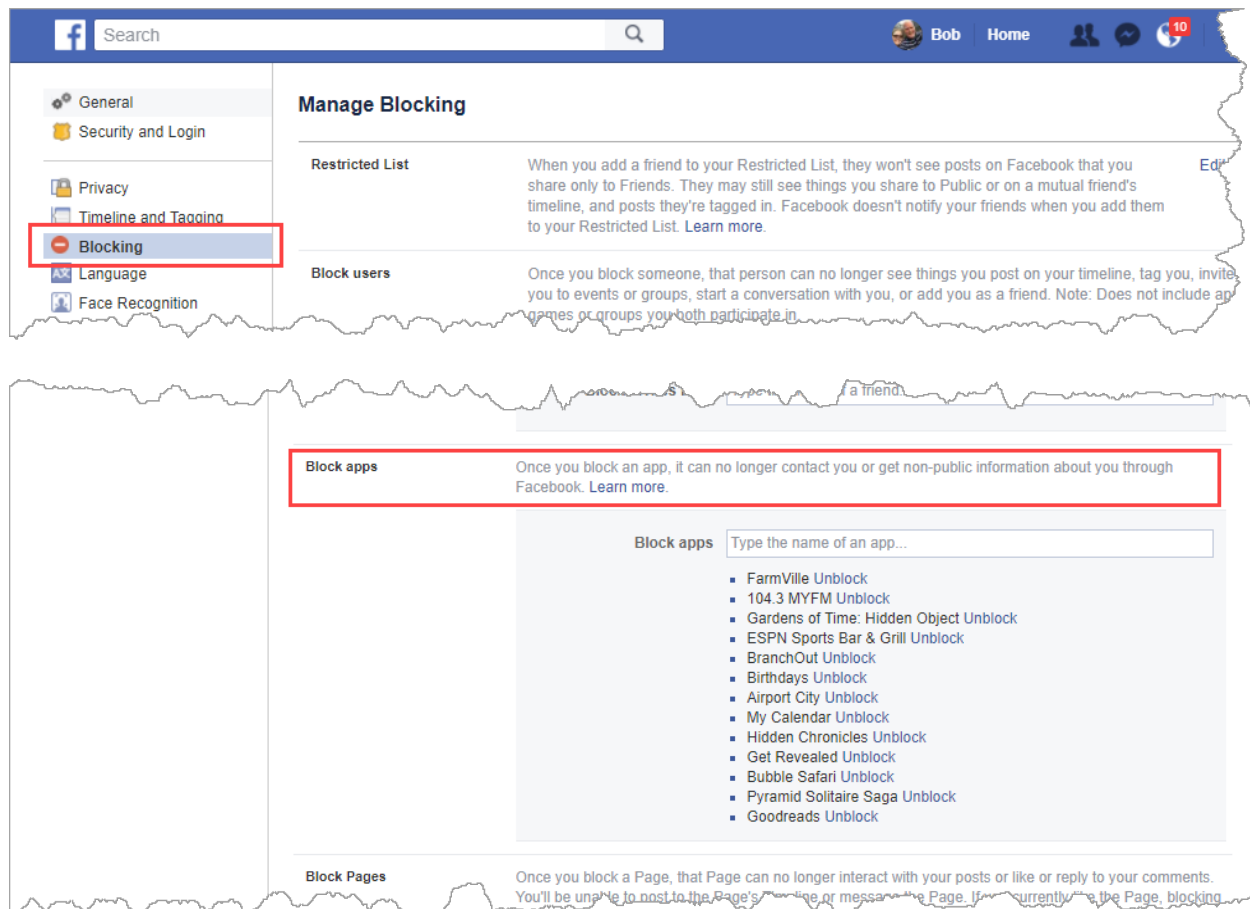
To get started – log into your Facebook account **on a computer** (not a mobile device) and click the "down icon" to the right of the "?" link and choose "Settings":



Blocking

Did you know that you can block individual people from seeing your posts, block messages from them, block app invites from your grandma and more? The Blocking section has a TON of really interesting settings – but the one I want to focus on is “Block apps”.

Click the “Blocking” section on the right and scroll down until you can see “Block apps”:



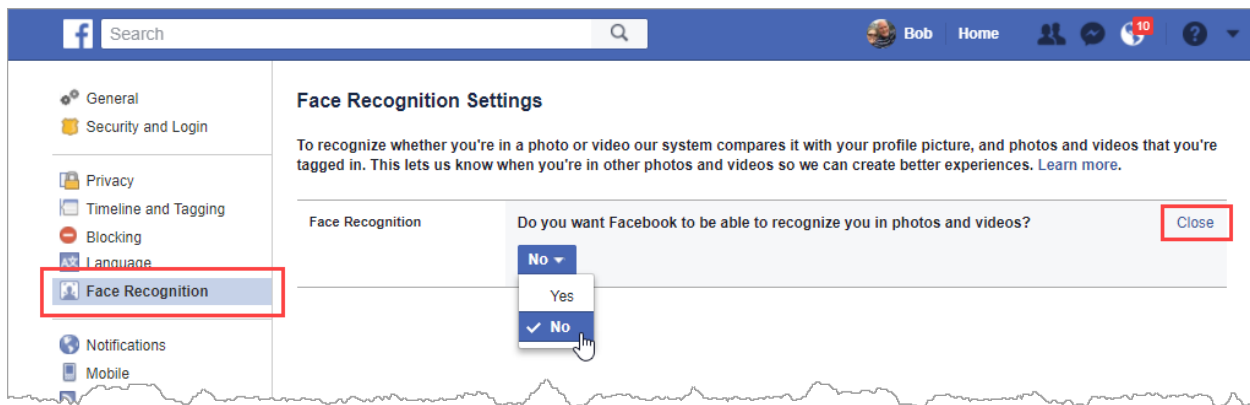
If you’re NOT blocking apps (or games) from getting your data – this is the place you can stop that data leak (from this point forward). Just type the name of the game (as you type it will suggest games) – then click it and you’re done.

You can block **as many as you want** – so get at it (especially if you play a lot of games).

Face Recognition

Did you know that Facebook scans **every** picture that is uploaded and tries to automatically identify all the people using facial recognition? Yeah, I'm not really sure I like that. You **can** opt-out of the whole facial recognition thing very easily.

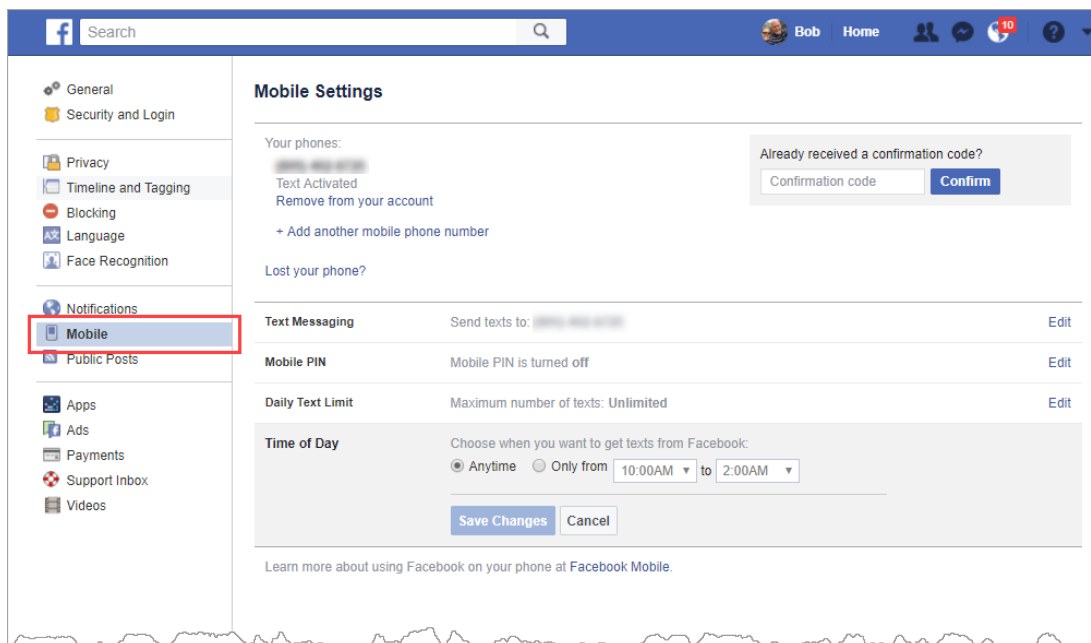
Click "Face Recognition" and then click the "Edit" link on the right (in the screenshot below it changed to "Close" after you click "Edit"):



Mobile

Do you ever get texts from Facebook in the middle of the night? Annoying – right? Well, you can limit the hours that Facebook will send you texts.

Just click on "Mobile" and click "Edit" next to "Time of Day":



Apps

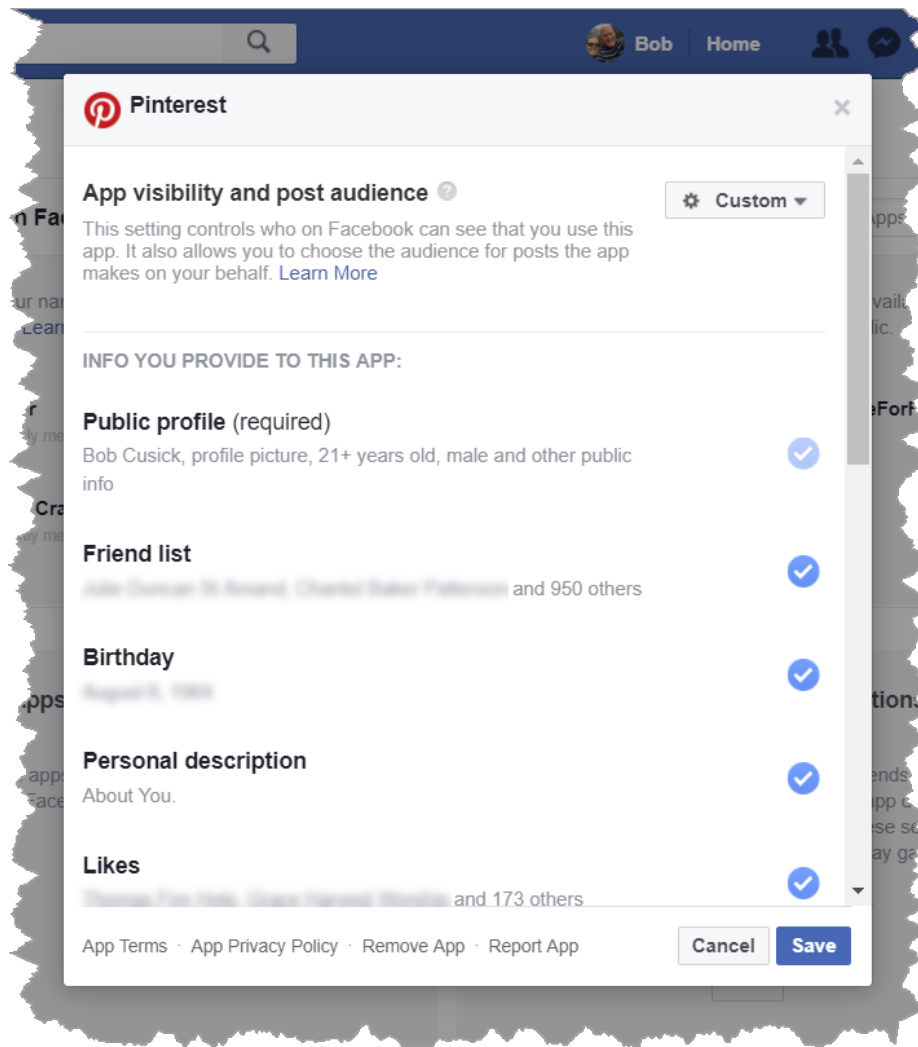
Apps (whether you know it or not) can consume **a lot** of information about you, your friends, your posts and more – without you realizing it.

Logged into Facebook

The first section “Logged in with Facebook” can leak your data like a **fire hose**. What is “Logged in with Facebook”?

You know every time you go to any site and it says “Login with Facebook” and you click that button – you are giving explicit permission to that vendor to give them a **ton** of information.

I was surprised to see just how many places I had logged in using Facebook (from even **years ago**). I’ve gone through and cleaned my out – but check out the kinds of information that **each login** can get – this example was from Pinterest:



They could see my entire friend list, birthday, everything I had ever liked, all my uploaded photos and much, much more.

You can limit the data the application can see (except for the “Required” section – every one of them requires access to your public profile).

Simply **click the blue checkmark** and the oval will be an empty circle. This means that the vendor will not have (any more) access to that data about you (if they haven’t harvested it already):



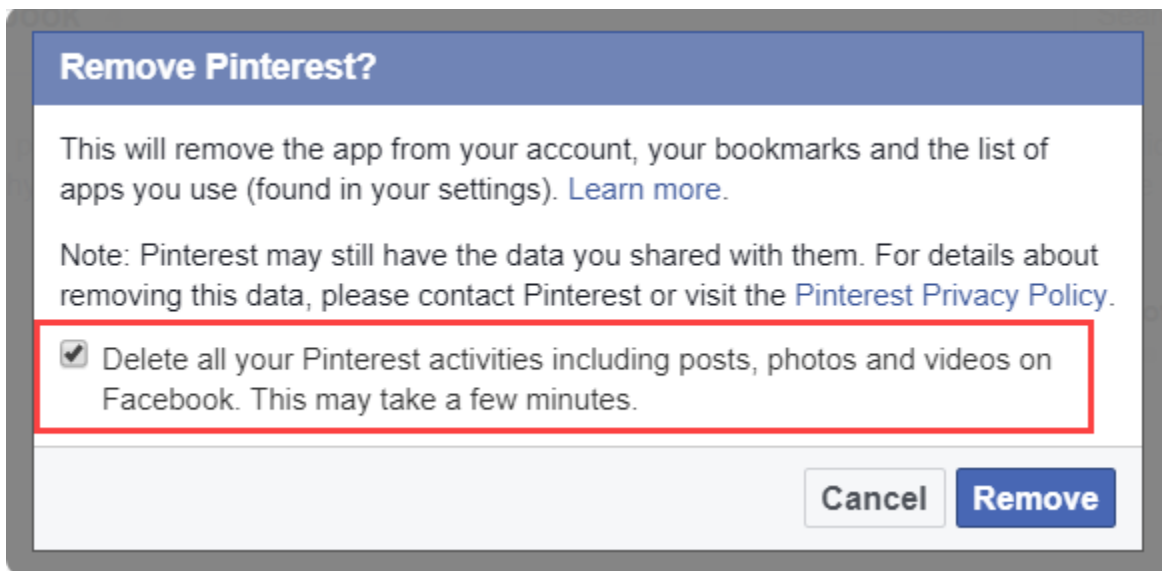
If you want the vendor to stop using data about you that it gathered – you need to **contact each of them individually**.

There are other interactions that you may have from other sites: for example, you may have connected your Pinterest account to Facebook (on the Pinterest side) so you could do single-click posting.

Convenient, yes. Data sieve? **Definitely.**

If you’re no longer using a particular app (or site or game) – then click the “X” and **delete it**.

You’ll see a remove confirmation. If the app / site / game was able to post for you (like automatically post from Pinterest to Facebook) – you’ll see a little checkbox giving you the option of deleting all that content as well:



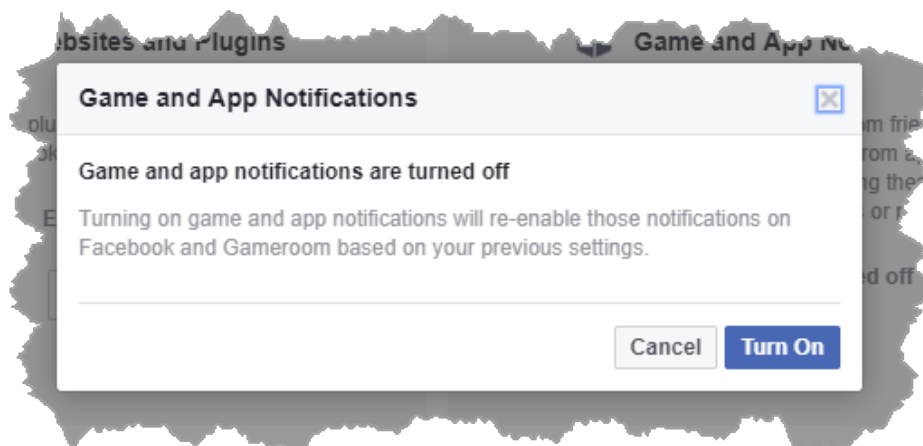
If you are still using it but you want to delete it from Facebook login do this:

- Go into each app, site or game and turn off (uncheck) as many of the items as you can;
- Go to that app, service or site and login;
- Go to the preferences of that site – and turn off “Login with Facebook” (it’s different for every app / site / game).
- THEN you can go back into Facebook and delete the app.

There are four other sections that also apply to apps – and we’ll go through them one-by-one.

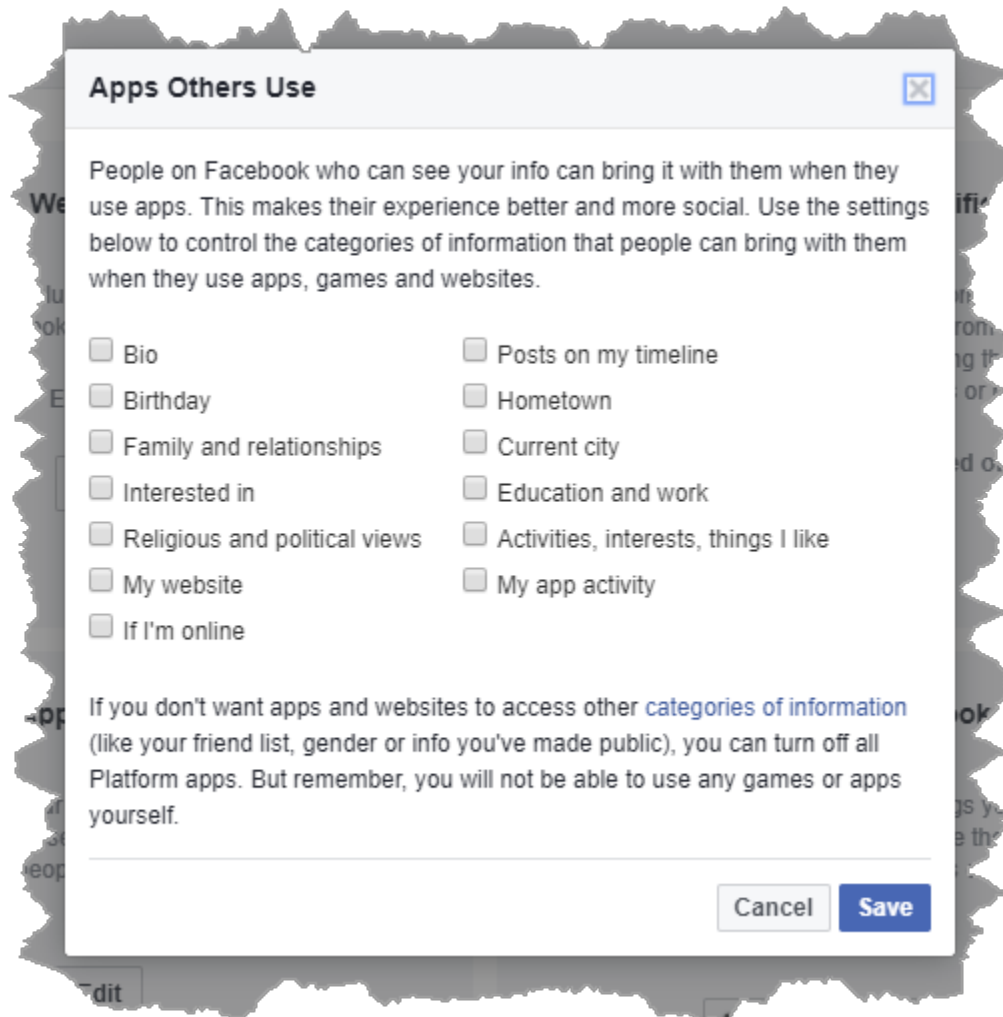
Games and App Notifications

If you’re tired of 100 different apps / sites / games sending you 100 notifications a day – you can just turn them off:



Apps Others Use

Data: it's the gift that just keeps on giving. Did you know that people on Facebook can actually bring in **your data** to the apps / websites / games **they interact with**. It's best to **uncheck all the fields**:



Apps Others Use

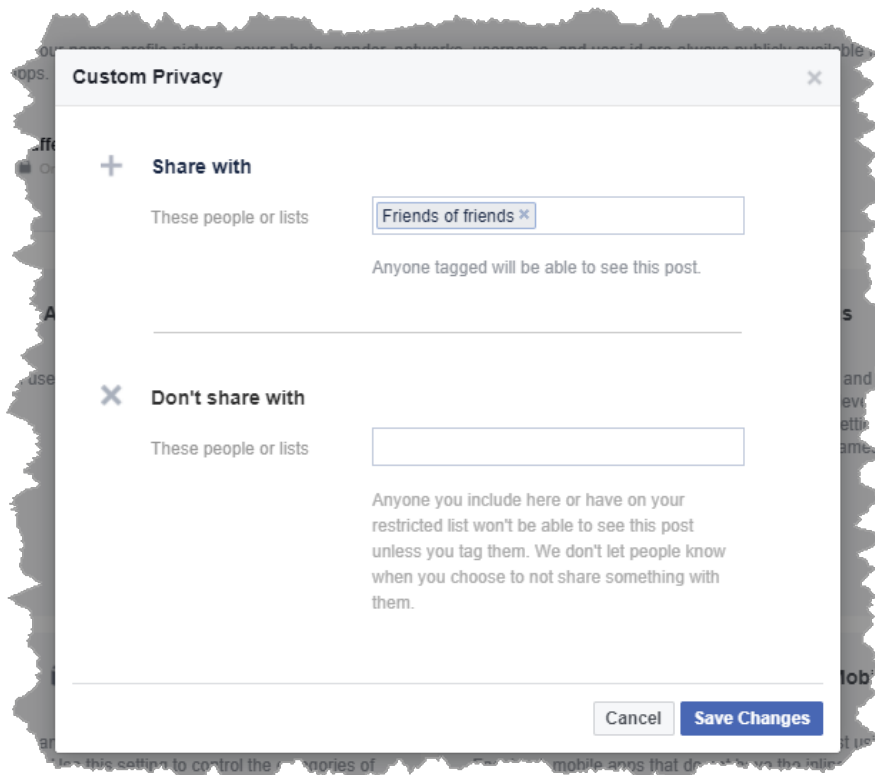
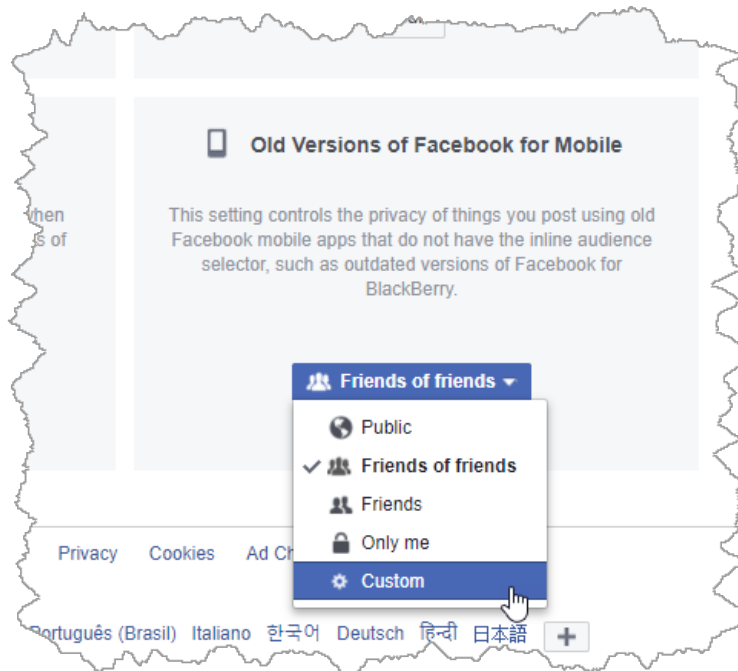
People on Facebook who can see your info can bring it with them when they use apps. This makes their experience better and more social. Use the settings below to control the categories of information that people can bring with them when they use apps, games and websites.

<input type="checkbox"/> Bio	<input type="checkbox"/> Posts on my timeline
<input type="checkbox"/> Birthday	<input type="checkbox"/> Hometown
<input type="checkbox"/> Family and relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> Current city
<input type="checkbox"/> Interested in	<input type="checkbox"/> Education and work
<input type="checkbox"/> Religious and political views	<input type="checkbox"/> Activities, interests, things I like
<input type="checkbox"/> My website	<input type="checkbox"/> My app activity
<input type="checkbox"/> If I'm online	

If you don't want apps and websites to access other [categories of information](#) (like your friend list, gender or info you've made public), you can turn off all Platform apps. But remember, you will not be able to use any games or apps yourself.

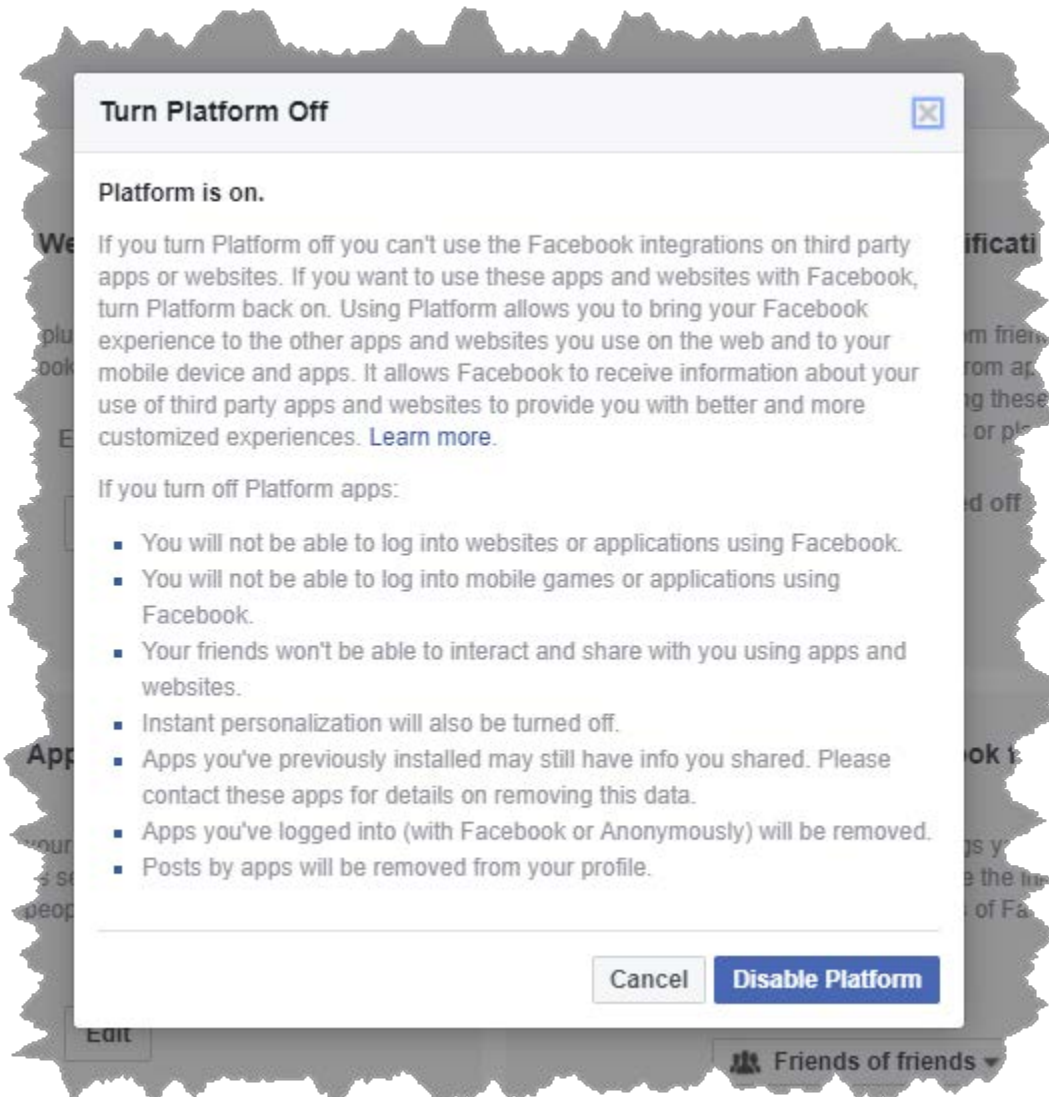
Old Versions of Facebook Mobile

If you're using the old version of Facebook mobile (or... *shutter* ... a BlackBerry) – you can control who sees your posts. You can simply choose from a dropdown – or set custom people or lists to share with (or hide from):



Apps, Websites and Plugins

This is the **nuclear option**. If you don't want **any** apps / sites / games to get your info – you can nuke all the access in one place:



Straight From The Horse's Mouth

You can read Facebook's **Official Data Policy** here:

<https://www.facebook.com/about/privacy/your-info#public-info>

I hope this guide has shed a little bit of light on ways you can stop (well, at least slow down) **some** of the data that Facebook harvests and then doles out to third parties.