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Protect your Personal Information

Protecting your Home Computer

Anytime anyone asks for your personal information, you should first ask yourself if the information should really be disclosed. Does the place you get your haircut really need to know your phone number? Does the video rental store need your Social Security number (SSN)? Sometime entities really do need your SSN, such as your employer, insurance company, or anyone that legally must report your information to the IRS. However, many other entities will require it as a condition of doing business with them. In those situations, you should carefully consider the trustworthiness of the entity. Consider checking the trustworthiness of any site with the [Better Business Bureau](#) [1].

Online predators may be able to piece together a plethora of information about any individual. Think carefully before posting information about yourself online, especially via social networking sites. Even though many sites offer some privacy settings, you should consider everything you post on the internet as being accessible to everyone. If you are comfortable with the entire world knowing your hobbies, then feel free to disclose them. But remember, even if you attempt to remove the information, people may have saved the content to other servers or it may have been cached by search engines and internet archivers. Do not post information about your day-to-day schedule. Remember that the more information you provide, the better the chance an online attacker or predator would be able to attack successfully.

Consider creating a special email address for online purchases and another email address for information posted online. This will hopefully keep SPAM out of your mailbox and help you determine the legitimacy of certain emails. If you get emails that should not arrive at a particular address, you know right away that they are scams attempting to trick you.

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Links:

[1] <http://us.bbb.org/>