

Is It Dangerous To Be Too Smart?

Smart homes, smart phones, smart assistants and other smart devices have become common place in today's world. These devices track our personal preferences and habits to make our lives easier. While these conveniences are helpful, they also make protecting your privacy that much more complicated. Everyday day we each leave a digital trail of information about ourselves. Some of that data is willingly and knowingly shared, while other data collection is less readily apparent.

For example, posting photos of grandchildren or congratulating a coworker for a promotion on social media are activities that are willingly done and knowingly shared. On the other hand, the location services on your phone and mapping apps that pinpoint your location at all times are less apparent – until the reminder pops up about the number of minutes remaining on your drive to a regularly visited location.

Have you ever wondered how, after searching for a new pair of shoes online, ads begin popping up in subsequent days across a variety of sites for the shoes you were looking at?

The things we do throughout the course of a day give continuous information about us. Who our friends are, what interests we have and the activities we enjoy. Some media platforms use this data to deliver targeted ads, provide location related information such as the weather or display advertisements for nearby stores. Others might sell or share that information.

Laptops, tablets, smartwatches, cars and homes all have information about us. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has created a webpage titled [Protecting Your Online Privacy](#) that provides suggestions for online privacy, privacy on apps and privacy for children. This site also includes helpful guidance for securing voice assistant applications as well as proving tips on data privacy steps to take when selling your car or selling a "smart" home.

By making a few changes to your smart devices you can limit the use of your personal information, improve your privacy and still enjoy the conveniences those devices offer.

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