

VSCO Safety Guide for Survivors of Tech Abuse

Compiled by Tech Safe BC



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This document is a guide of in-app safety strategies to combat common tech abuse that may be perpetrated by a current or former partner on Visual Supply Company (VSCO).

VSCO does not endorse or sponsor this digital resource. This may look like receiving harassing and threatening messages, having harmful or inappropriate content made about you, or experiencing identity impersonation. It may also include monitoring or controlling behaviors, such as locking you out of your account, pressuring you to delete or post certain content, or having your account accessed without consent.

By following this guide, you can learn how VSCO's features can support your safety. But remember, making changes to your account could increase risks to your safety if your current/former partner is notified or recognizes the changes. If you are concerned, consider consulting with a support worker at an anti-violence organization beforehand.

If something in this guide is no longer up to date and/or difficult to understand, please reach out to techsafe@bcsth.ca with your concerns. If you are having trouble with any of these safety steps, go to [VSCO's Safety Centre](#).

Symbols and What They Mean In This Guide:



Course of action may be visible to your former or current partner.

You may want to consult with a staff of an [anti-violence program in your community](#) before removing your former or current partner's access.



Evidence documentation checkpoint. Take [screenshots](#), pictures with a different device, or [screen recordings](#) of your former or current partner's unauthorized access.

Definition of Words in This Guide:

Discussions: VSCO's way of commenting on a post.

Global Menu icon: Looks like equal symbol or two lines stacked on top of each other.

iOS: iPhone Operating System.

Options icon: Looks like ellipsis (...) or three dots in a line.

Profile icon: Looks like a happy face emoji.

VSCO: Visual Supply Company.

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If You Suspect There is Unauthorized Access to Your Account



□ Reviewing Log-Ins

VSCO **does not have an in-app function to review login activity**. However, you can download your account data as a file through a browser and look for your login history. Note that this could take up to two hours. Once the file is ready, VSCO will send it to the email connected to your account.

Safety Tip:



If your former/current partner has access to the email that is connected to your VSCO account, an email will be sent to the connected email account with the file off your account data. You may want to consult with a support worker as it could notify your former/current partner and potentially increase your risk to violence. Additionally, if you find unauthorized log-ins, be sure to take screenshots/recordings and documentation. Before removing unauthorized access, consult with a support worker as it could notify your former/current partner and potentially increase risk to violence.

To review your account data:

1. Log into VSCO on your browser.
2. Open **ACCOUNT**.
 - a. On a small screen: on the top right, tap/click **Global Menu icon** (= symbol).
 - b. On a large screen: on the bottom left, tap/click **ACCOUNT**.
3. Scroll down to find 'Download my data' heading.
4. Tap/click the **Access snapshot** button.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

□ Changing Passwords

If your former/current partner is logged into your VSCO account, changing your password will log all devices out of your account. You will need to know your current password to change to a new password. If you do not know your current password, refer to [Account Recovery](#). To make a secure password, refer to [How to Create and Maintain Strong Passwords](#).

Safety Tip:



If your former/current partner has access to the email that is connected to your VSCO account, an email will be sent to the connected email account stating that your account has changed password. You may want to consult with a support worker as it could notify your former/current partner and potentially increase your risk to violence.

1. In the app, at the top left, tap the **Global Menu icon** (= symbol).
2. Tap **Privacy & Data**.
3. At the bottom, tap **Change my password**.
4. Input your current and new password.
5. On the top right, tap the **Checkmark symbol**.
6. In the 'Are you sure?' pop-up, tap the **Checkmark symbol** on the right side.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

□ Account Recovery

Account recovery is a way to access your account through either your email or phone number when you have been locked out. If your former/current partner has access to the email or phone number connected to your account, the following steps will notify them. If you aren't sure which email/phone number is secure, it may be safer to create a new account using a different email/phone number that only you have access to.

If your former/current partner has access to your email or your phone number's messages, a code will be sent to those accounts in order to give you recovery access back to your account. It will notify them that your VSCO account is requesting a verification code. Similarly, changing your account password will also notify the connected email which can alert your former/current partner of these changes if they have access to the email that is connected to your account.

To recover your VSCO account when you are logged in and know your current password, refer to [Changing Passwords](#).

Safety Tip:



Changing your account password will notify your former/current partner of these changes if they have access to the email that is connected to your VSCO account.

To recover your VSCO account when you are logged in and do not know your current password:

1. Make sure you have access to the email connected to your account before logging out.
2. Log out of your account and refer to the following section.

To recover your VSCO account when you are logged out and do not know the password:

Safety Tip:



When you agree (i.e., tapping the checkmark symbol) to send a reset password email, a password change link will be sent to the email that is connected to your VSCO account. If your former/current partner has access to this email, they could be notified that you are requesting to change your VSCO password which is why you are recommended to input a mobile phone number/email/username that only you can access. Once you change your password, it will also send an email to the connected email stating this change.

1. In the app 'Sign in' page, tap **Forgot Password**.
2. In the 'Send reset password email?' pop-up, tap the **Checkmark symbol**.
3. Open your email connected to your account and tap **Reset your password**.
4. Enter your new password.
5. Tap **SUBMIT**.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

How to Secure Your Account from Your Former/Current Partner



If you currently have shared an account with your former or current partner, you can delete the account and/or create a new separate account. This would also include removing identifying information, such as your email address, your phone number, or your name on the account. Your former/current partner may realize immediately or quickly if you make these changes. If you are concerned that this will increase any risks to your safety, we recommend that you consult with a support worker at your transition home or a support organization beforehand.

□ 2-Factor Authentication (2FA)

VSCO does not currently have a 2-Factor Authentication system. Check this [resource](#) to understand why 2FA is important. However, you will receive an email notification each time a login occurs on your account. You may want to consider regularly monitoring your email for any unexpected login alerts to help keep your account secure.

□ Logging Out of All Devices

This function allows you to log out of VSCO on all devices that have your account logged in. Before logging out of all devices, make sure you know your password so that you can gain access back to your account. Additionally, if you think your account safety is compromised, refer to [Changing Passwords](#) to secure your account.

Safety Tip:



If you know there is unauthorized access, consult with your support worker as it could notify your former/current partner and potentially increase your risk to violence.

1. In the app, on the top left, tap the **Global Menu icon** (= symbol).
2. Tap **Privacy & Data**.
3. At the bottom, tap **Sign out of all devices**.
4. In the pop-up, tap **Sign out**.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

If You Suspect You're Being Monitored Through the App



□ Turning off Location Tracking

VSCO can use your precise location for posts. You can disable VSCO's ability to track your precise location with the following steps. However, it is important to keep in mind the photos/videos you share on your account as it could reveal recognizable locations.

To turn off location tracking in VSCO app:

1. In the app, at the top left, tap the **Global Menu icon** (= symbol).
2. Tap **Privacy & Data**.
3. Under 'Location' heading and 'Keep location data:' subtitle, tap **On image capture** to turn off this feature (i.e., circle on right side will be de-selected/unfilled).
4. Under 'Share location data when exporting' subtitle, toggle off all options.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

Additionally, you can also turn off the app's permissions to access your location by going into your device's settings and turning off permissions for VSCO.

To turn off location tracking on iOS:

1. Open the Settings app.
2. Tap **Privacy & Security**.
3. Tap **Location Services**.
4. Find and tap **VSCO**.
5. Turn location to **Never**.

To turn off location tracking on Android:

1. Open the Settings app.
2. Scroll to the bottom and tap **Location**.
3. Tap **App Permissions**.
4. Find and tap **VSCO**.
5. Under 'LOCATION ACCESS FOR THIS APP', tap **Deny**.

☐ Account Privacy

There is no feature on VSCO to private your account or posts. The safest option is to limit what you post to your account, or delete pre-existing content. You may also want to consider posting on another platform that allows you to private your content such as Instagram or TikTok instead.

☐ Read Receipts in Messages

There is no function to show the sender if the receiver has viewed the message on VSCO.

If You're Receiving Harassing or Threatening Messages



☐ Control Who Can Message You

To limit messages you receive to only those you follow:

1. In the app, on the top left, tap the **Global Menu icon** (= symbol).
2. Tap **Settings**.

3. At the bottom under 'Messaging', tap **Only allow messages from people I follow** to turn on (i.e., circle on right side is selected/filled in).

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

Ignore a Message

Ignoring a message in VSCO means this message will be removed from your inbox without notifying the sender.

How to ignore a message in VSCO on iOS:

1. In the app, tap the **Profile Icon**.
2. On the top left, tap on the **Global Menu icon** (= symbol).
3. Tap on **Messages**.
4. Tap on a specific message you have not responded to yet.
5. On the bottom middle, tap **Ignore**.

How to ignore a message in VSCO on Android:

1. In the app, on the top left, tap on the **Global Menu icon** (= symbol).
2. Tap **Notifications** to view all messages.
3. Tap on a specific message you have not responded to yet.
4. On the bottom middle, tap **Ignore**.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

Stop the conversation

If you'd like to stop the conversation in VSCO Messages, you have the option to block the VSCO user. Refer to [Blocking Accounts](#) for more information.

□ Removing Followers

There is no feature to remove followers on VSCO. However, you can block people from viewing your account under [Blocking Accounts](#).

□ Blocking Accounts

Blocking an account stops their ability to view your account and posts. They are also unable to message you, or be able to find your account through the search function. Keep in mind that blocking accounts removes their messages and comments from your account.

Safety Tip:



Before reporting the account, you may want to take [pictures](#), [screen recordings](#) and [documentation](#) of harassment or inappropriate content as you will not have access to the account once the company responds to the report. You can also refer to [Reporting Accounts](#) to report problematic content they have uploaded.

To block an account:

1. In the app, open and view the account you'd like to block.
2. On the top right, tap the **Options icon** (... symbol).
3. At the bottom, tap **Block**.
4. In the pop-up, tap the **Checkmark symbol** on the right side.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

□ Turning Off Discussions

This function allows you to turn off the Discussions feature on posts you upload to your VSCO. Note that this feature is [available for all VSCO Creators on iOS](#) and for [paid membership plans](#).

Safety Tip:



If there is already harmful or unwanted Discussion responses on your post, you may want to take [pictures](#), [screen recordings](#) and [documentation](#) of the responses.

To turn off Discussions:

1. In the app, select the photo you'd like to upload to your VSCO and disable Discussions.
2. Tap **Allow discussion** to turn it off (it should show an unchecked box).
3. When you're ready to upload the photo to your VSCO, tap **Save & Post**.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

❑ Deleting Discussions Responses

If you come across harmful, inappropriate, and/or unwanted Discussions responses on your VSCO posts, you can delete them. Note that you won't be able to undo this action once deleted. To disable Discussions on your post before you upload it to your VSCO, you can refer to [Turning Off Discussions](#).

Safety Tip:



Before deleting the Discussions response, you may want to take [pictures](#), [screen recordings](#) and [documentation](#) as you will not have access to the response after deleting them.

To delete a Discussion response:

1. In the app, find and tap the post you'd like to delete response from.
2. Long press on the Discussion response to show the options menu.
3. Tap **Delete response**.
4. In the 'Delete this response?' pop-up, tap **Delete** on the right side.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

□ Reporting Discussions Responses

If you come across harmful, inappropriate, and/or unwanted responses in Discussions on your VSCO posts, you can report them. To disable Discussions on your post before you upload it to your VSCO, you can refer to [Turning Off Discussions](#).

Safety Tip:



Before reporting the response, you may want to take [pictures](#), [screen recordings](#) and [documentation](#) as you will not have access to the Discussions once you delete the response the company responds to the report.

To report Discussion responses:

1. In the app, find and tap the post with the response you'd like to report.
2. Long press on the Discussion response to show the options menu.
3. Tap **Report response**.
4. Select the violation type.
5. Tap **Submit**.
6. In the 'Delete this response?' pop-up, tap **Delete** on the right side.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

If You're Having Harmful Content Made About You or Being Impersonated



□ Reporting Posts

If there is harmful content made about you, or you see inappropriate content related to nudity, impersonation, hate speech, or misinformation, you can report the post. This can anonymously notify VSCO to review the content and take action if it violates the app's [guidelines](#).

Safety Tip:



Before reporting the post, you may want to take [pictures](#), [screen recordings](#) and [documentation](#) as you will not have access to view the post once the company responds to the report.

To report a post:

1. In the app, find and tap post you'd like to report.
2. On the top right, tap the **Options icon** (... symbol).
3. Tap **Report**.
4. Select the reason(s) for your report.
5. Tap **Report**.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

□ Reporting Accounts

If there is an account impersonating you, or is repeatedly making harmful content, related to nudity, hate speech, or misinformation, you can report the VSCO profile.

Safety Tip:



Before reporting the account, you may want to take [pictures](#), [screen recordings](#) and [documentation](#) as you will not have access to view the account once the company responds to the report.

To report an account:

1. In the app, find and tap on the account you'd like to report.
2. On the top right, tap the **Options icon** (... symbol).
3. Tap **Report**.
4. Select the reason(s) for your report.
5. Tap **Report**.

Source: [VSCO Support](#)

If you are experiencing tech abuse, you are not alone. Find support in your community by connecting with a [BC Society of Transition Houses Member Program](#) or check out our other safety resources at techsafebc.bcsth.ca.