

# Snapchat Safety Guide for Survivors of Tech Abuse

Compiled by Tech Safe BC



**Last Updated:** February 3, 2026

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 Snapchat. 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. This resource is not endorsed nor sponsored by Snapchat.

By following this guide, you can learn how Snapchat’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, or you have any questions, please reach out to [techsafe@bcsth.ca](mailto:techsafe@bcsth.ca) with your concerns. If you are having trouble with any of these safety steps, go to [Snapchat Support](#).**

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## 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.

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## Definition of Words in This Guide:

**Snapchat App:** An app made for Snapchat account holders to access their account on compatible devices.

**Snapchat for Web:** A person's Snapchat account that can be accessed online.

**Friend:** Someone that you have added and has also added you back.

**Snap:** A video or photo sent to a friend or chat. Snaps are designed to be viewed once. Sometimes, you have the option to replay the Snap if the sender enables it. Replaying a Snap will notify the user.

**Charms:** Regularly updated icons that represent your interactions and relations with your friends.

**Chats:** Written text that is sent in messages. Chat messages can only be viewed once and disappear once the chat closes.

**Story:** A video or photo your friends can see for 24 hours on your account.

**Private Story:** A video or photo that specific friends can see for 24 hours on your account.

**Memories:** Videos and photos saved to your Snapchat account that is only available to you. It is like a photo gallery accessible through Snapchat only.

**My Eyes Only:** Videos and photos saved to your Snapchat account that is only available to you and can only be accessed with a password.

**Snapscore:** A numerical value that records your activity on Snapchat by counting the number of snaps you've sent, the number of snaps you've received, and the number of posts on your stories. Your snapscore is visible to all your friends.

**Snap Map:** A map that shows your physical location based on the last time you were active on Snapchat.

**Save in Chat:** After opening a Snap or a Chat, you can save the content to your chat. This stops it from disappearing after you close the chat. However, doing so will notify the sender.

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# If You Suspect There is Unauthorized Access to Your Account



## Reviewing Log-Ins

If you suspect someone has logged in to your account without your consent, review your login history. Keep in mind that Snapchat only allows one device to be signed in at a given time. Therefore, if someone else has logged into your account on another device, then you will be logged out of your account on your device.

### Safety Tip:




Be sure to take [screenshots/recordings](#) of the unauthorized log-ins. 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 login history in the Snapchat app

1. In your device, open the Snapchat app.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Tap **Session Management**.
4. Review all the devices and browsers you are currently signed in and tap **X** next to each device/browser you want to sign out of.

5. Confirm each selection.

### To review your login history from Snapchat for Web

1. On your computer, open [accounts.snapchat.com](https://accounts.snapchat.com) and sign in.
2. Click **Session Management**.
3. Review all the devices and browsers you are currently signed in and click **Log Out** next to each device/browser you want to sign out of.
4. Confirm each selection.

Source: [Snapchat Support](#)

## Changing Passwords


If your former/current partner has or is logged into your Snapchat account, changing your password can prevent them from logging into your account again. If you do not know your current password, refer to [Account Recovery](#).

### Safety Tip:



If your former/current partner has access to the email that is connected to your Google account and connect recovery email, an email will be sent to the connected email account(s) stating that your Google 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. To make a secure password, refer to [How to Create and Maintain Strong Passwords](#).

### To change your password in the Snapchat app

1. In your device, open the Snapchat app.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Tap **Password**.
4. Follow prompts to change your password.

## To change your password from Snapchat for Web

1. On your computer, open [accounts.snapchat.com](https://accounts.snapchat.com) and sign in with your username or email.
2. Check for your verification code sent by Snapchat, then input.
3. Follow prompts to change your password.

Source: [Snapchat Support](#)

For additional support: [Snapchat Support Login and Password Help](#)

## □ 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 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 Snapchat account is requesting a verification code. 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. 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.

### Safety Tip:



When you click the “Submit” button, a password change link will be sent to the email that is connected to your Snapchat account. If your former/current partner has access to this email, they could be notified that you are requesting to change your Snapchat password which is why it is recommended to input a safe number/email/username. Once you change your password, it will also send an email to the connected email stating this change.

To change your password when your account is compromised from Snapchat for Web

1. On your computer, open [accounts.snapchat.com](https://accounts.snapchat.com).
2. Click **Forgot Password**.
3. Send a one-time login code to your email or phone number that is connected to your account.
4. Follow the prompts to change your password.

Source: Snapchat Support [Compromised Account](#) & [Reset Password](#)

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## How to Secure Your Account from Your Former/Current Partner



### Turning On Two-Factor Authentication

Turning on Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) can protect your account from future unauthorized logins. Check this [resource](#) to understand why 2FA is important.

#### Safety Tip:




Before enabling 2FA, make sure the phone number connected to your account is secure by keeping your phone away from your current/former partner. If 2FA is



enabled on an account your current/former partner has access to, they will be notified of attempted logins through verification codes.

## To turn on 2FA

1. In your device, open the Snapchat app or [accounts.snapchat.com](https://accounts.snapchat.com) and sign in.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Tap **My Account**.
4. Under 'Manage My Account', tap **Two-Factor Authentication**.
5. Tap **Continue**.
6. Tap either **SMS** or **Authentication App** for your verification method.

Source: Snapchat Support [SMS & Authenticator App](#)

For additional support: [Snapchat Support Two-Factor Authentication](#)

## □ Setting Up a 'My Eyes Only'

When you save photos and videos to your memories, the content can be viewed without any safety limitations. However, you can set up a 'My Eyes Only' which is an album you can save photos and videos to with a passcode lock.

## To set up a My Eyes Only in the Snapchat App

1. In your device, open the Snapchat app.
2. On a Snap, press and hold it to reveal a pop-up menu.
  - a. On iOS: Tap **More** then tap **Hide Snap (My Eyes Only)**.
  - b. On Android: Tap **Hide**.
3. Tap **Quick Setup**.
4. Input a 4-digit passcode. Be sure to remember your passcode to avoid data loss.
5. Re-enter the passcode and tap **Continue**.
6. Tap **Finish**.

Source: [Snapchat Support](#)


For additional support: [Snapchat Support My Eyes Only](#)

## □ Saving Photos and Videos to My Eyes Only Album

To move Snaps (shorter than 10 seconds) from Memories to My Eyes Only

1. In your device, open the Snapchat app.
1. From the camera screen, swipe up to open Memories.
2. At the top, tap the **Memories selector icon** (i.e., two over-lapping rectangles or cards).
3. Tap the **Snaps** and **Stories** you want to move to My Eyes Only.
4. At the bottom, tap **Hide Snaps (My Eyes Only)**.
5. Tap **Move**.
6. If prompted, input your passcode.

To save to Snaps to My Eyes Only by default on iOS

1. In your device, open the Snapchat app.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Scroll down to find the 'My Account' heading, then tap **Memories**.
4. Toggle on **Save to My Eyes Only by Default**

Source: [Snapchat Support](#)

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## If You Suspect You're Being Monitored Through the App




## □ Turning off Location Tracking

Snapchat can use your precise location for Snap Map or for tagging locations in snaps and stories. To disable your precise location on Snap Map for friends (i.e., you won't be visible to anyone on Snap Map), enable Ghost Mode. Note that your location will still be shared

with Snap while Ghost Mode is turned on. To disable your precise location for both friends and Snapchat as a whole, turn off location tracking in your device's settings. Overall, it is important to keep in mind the photos/videos you share on your account as it could reveal recognizable locations.

### To turn on Ghost Mode (to stop friends from knowing your location, but not Snapchat)

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Scroll down to locate the 'My Privacy & Data' heading and find the 'Who Can See' section.
4. Tap **See My Location**.
5. Toggle on **Ghost Mode**.

Source: [Snapchat Support Ghost Mode](#)

For additional support: [Snapchat Support My Location and Ghost Mode](#)

### To change location sharing permissions for iOS

1. In your iPhone, tap **Settings**.
2. Tap **Privacy & Security**.
3. Tap **Location Services**.
4. Locate Snapchat and change its location permission either to:
  - a. 'Only While Using' (share your location with Snapchat while you're using the app). Your location on the Snap Map will expire after 24 hours if choosing this location permission.
  - b. 'Always' (stop location sharing with Snapchat completely).

## To change location sharing permissions for Android

1. In your Android smartphone, tap **Settings**.
2. Tap **Location**.
3. Tap **App location permissions**.
4. Tap **Snapchat** and change its location permission either to:
  - a. 'Only While Using' (share your location with Snapchat while you're using the app). Your location on the Snap Map will expire after 24 hours if choosing this location permission.
  - b. 'Always' (stop location sharing with Snapchat completely).

Source: [Snapchat Support](#)

## □ Change Who Can View Your Location on Snap Maps

If you prefer not to turn off Snapchat's access to location services in your device's settings, you can share your location on Snap Maps with only select friends. Snapchat has two ways to categorize select friends: 'My Friends, Except...' and 'Only These Friends...'.


'My Friends, Except...' means that you share your location with all friends, except the friends you add to this list. 'Only These Friends...' means that you share your location with specific friends that you choose. In this category, these friends are not notified when they are selected.

### Safety Tip:




Be aware that regardless of the location permission you choose, any Snaps that are submitted to the Snap Map can still appear on the Map.

## To enable the 'My Friends, Except...' feature

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 

3. Scroll down to locate the 'My Privacy & Data' heading and find the 'Who Can See' section.
4. Tap **See My Location**.
5. Tap **My Friends, Except...**

### To enable the 'Only These Friends...' feature

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Scroll down to locate the 'My Privacy & Data' heading and find the 'Who Can See' section.
4. Tap **See My Location**.
5. Tap **Only These Friends....**


Source: [Snapchat Support Select Friend Location Sharing](#)

For additional support: [Snapchat Support Snap Map](#)

## Limiting the Visibility of Your Activity Status

When using Snapchat, your activity on the app is displayed on your profile with a green dot called 'Activity Indicator' as well as a Snapscore. A [Snapscore](#) is a numerical value that records your activity on Snapchat by counting the number of snaps you've sent, the number of snaps you've received, and the number of posts on your stories. Your snapscore is visible to all your friends therefore, all those who are not your friends will not be able to view it. The Activity Indicator appears as a green dot on your profile if you have been active on Snapchat within the last 24 hours.

## To turn off your activity status

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Scroll down to locate the 'Privacy Controls' heading.
4. Tap **Activity Indicator** and toggle it off.

Source: [Snapchat Support](#)


## Read Receipts

There is no function on Snapchat to hide when you or others have read your snaps. However, you can be mindful of which messages you do and do not open from others. Additionally, keep in mind that all messages sent on Snapchat can only be viewed once. If the sender enables it, Snaps can be replayed, but it will notify the sender. Once you close a chat, all messages and snaps will disappear forever.


## Hiding Your Birthday Charm on Your Profile

When you click on someone's profile, you can view their birthday. Additionally, on their birthday, Snapchat will show a birthday cake [charm](#) next to the profile. Snapchat accounts that can't view your birthday or other charms are unfriended or blocked accounts. Note that it can take up to one hour to activate the changed Birthday Party setting.

## To hide your birthday charm

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Tap **Birthday**.
4. Under the 'Birthday Party' heading, toggle off.

### To hide any charm


1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. Think of a friend and tap on their **Friendship Profile**.
3. Scroll to the bottom and tap on the desired charm to hide.
4. Tap the **More options icon** (three vertical dots). 
5. Tap the **Hide Charm** button.
6. Tap **Hide**.

Sources: Snapchat Support [Charm Visibility](#)

## □ Hiding Who Can See Your Private/Shared Stories

When you friend people on Snapchat, they will be able to access the content you post to your stories. However, you can have the option to hide your story from specific Snapchat accounts or create new [Private Stories](#) (showing a padlock icon) or [Shared Stories](#) where you can select which friends can view specific stories. Keep in mind you can make multiple private and/or shared stories and customize who can view your content in each of them.

### To change who can see My Story

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Scroll down to 'Privacy Controls' heading.
4. Tap **View My Story**.
5. Tap either **My Friends** or **Custom**.

Note that some Snapchat accounts may have the 'Everyone' setting enabled, meaning that the Story is viewable by anyone with a Snapchat account.

## To create Private Stories that only you and chosen friends can view

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. Tap your profile.
3. If this is your first time creating a Private Story, tap **New Private Story** or **New Shared Story**.

If you already snapped a Private or Shared story before, tap **+ New Story**.

4. Tap the friends you'd like to view your Private or Shared Story.
5. Input a name for the Private or Shared Story.


Source: Snapchat Support [Changing Story Viewers](#) & [Private and Shared Stories](#)

For additional support: [Snapchat Creating Stories](#)

## Turning Off the Feature to Suggest Your Account to Others

Snapchat suggests your account to those who you share mutuals called [Find Friends](#) (previously called [Quick Add](#)). Turning off 'Find Friends' stops Snapchat from suggesting your account to your friend's mutuals.

### To turn off the Find Friends

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. In 'My Profile', tap the **Settings icon** (gear icon). 
3. Scroll down to the 'Privacy Controls' heading.
4. Tap **Who Can See Me In Find Friends**.
5. Tap on accounts who can see you in 'Find Friends'.

Source: Snapchat Support [Find Friends](#) & [Privacy Settings](#)

# If You're Receiving Harassing or Threatening Messages



## □ Control Who Can Message You

Snapchat is set so that only your friends (those who you add and add you back) can message you. If you are experiencing harassing or threatening messages, you can remove them from your friends list under [Removing Friends](#). However, if you cannot remove a Snapchat profile from your friends list, you can mute their notifications to manage what you can see from them. Note that muting still allows the friend you've muted to send you Snaps, Chats and/or calls. Also, muting does not notify the friend that you've muted them.

### Safety Tip:



Before limiting their messaging options, make sure to take [screenshots](#), pictures, [screen recordings](#) and documentation of the messages as you will not have access to the view account once the company responds to the report. Keep in mind that screenshots and screen recordings taken inside the chat of your friends will be notified of this action.

### To mute a friend's Story so you don't see it at the top of the app

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. From the Camera screen, swipe right to open the Chat screen.
3. Find a friend you'd like to mute, then press and hold on their name.
4. Tap **Story Settings**.
5. Toggle on **Mute Story**.

To mute a friend's chat and/or call notifications from appearing on your home screen

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. From the Camera screen, swipe right to open the Chat screen.
3. Find a friend you'd like to mute, then press and hold on their name.
4. Tap **Chat and Notification Settings**.
5. Tap **Notification Settings**.
6. Toggle on **Mute Chats** and/or **Mute Calls**.

Source: Snapchat Support [Contact Changes](#) & [Muting Friends](#)

## □ Removing Friends

Removing a friend stops their ability to view your Snapscore, your birthday, your Stories, as well as the ability to snap you.

### Safety Tip:



Removing an account does not notify the owner, however, your former/current partner may notice they have been removed which could potentially increase any risks to your safety, we recommend that you consult with a support worker at your transition home or a support organization beforehand.

### To remove friends

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. From the Camera screen, swipe right to open the Chat screen.
3. Find a friend you'd like to remove, then press and hold on their name.
4. Tap **Manage Friendship**.
5. Tap **Remove Friend**.

Source: [Snapchat Support](#)

## □ Blocking Accounts

Blocking an account stops their ability to view your snapscore, your birthday, your story as well as the ability to Snap you or find your account through the search function. If the account has problematic content, you can also refer to [Reporting Accounts](#). Keep in mind that blocking accounts removes their messages and comments from your account.

### Safety Tip:



Before blocking, make sure to take [screenshots](#), pictures, [screen recordings](#), and documentation of the messages as you will not have access to the view account



once the company responds to the report. Keep in mind that screenshots and screen recordings taken inside the chat of your friends will be notified of this action. Blocking an account does not notify the owner, however, they may notice they have been blocked which could potentially increase any risks to your safety, we recommend that you consult with a support worker at your transition home or a support organization beforehand.

### To block a friend

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. From the Camera screen, swipe right to open the Chat screen.
3. Find a friend you'd like to remove, then press and hold on their name.
4. Tap **Manage Friendship**.
5. Tap **Block**.

Source: [Snapchat Support](#)

## □ Saving Chat Messages and Snaps in Chat

Saving a Chat Message or a Snap to chat allows you to save the content to your chat. This stops it from disappearing after you close the chat. Saved messages will have a gray background, which lets both you and the friend you're chatting with know that the message is saved. This means that the saved Chats will also notify the person you're chatting with. This also applies when you save a Snap or Friend's Story in Chat. Saved Snaps and Friend Stories will show up in Chats as Chat Media. In the Chat with your friend, either of you can delete this saved content.

### To save a Chat message

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. From the Camera screen, swipe right to open the Chat screen.
3. Locate the message you'd like to save and tap it.

### To save a Snap or Friend's Story in Chat

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. Press and hold on a Snap or Friend's Story in Chat.
3. Tap **Save in Chat**.

Source: Snapchat Support [Save Chats](#) & [Save Snap or Friend's Story](#)

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



## □ 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 Snapchat account. If you are blocked by the person you'd like to report, report their account on [Snapchat's support site](#).

### Safety Tip:



Before reporting the account, make sure to take [screenshots](#), pictures, [screen recordings](#), and documentation of the profile as you will not have access to the view account once the company responds to the report. Keep in mind that screenshots and screen recordings taken inside the chat of your friends will be notified of this action.

### To report on an account

1. In your device, open the Snapchat App.
2. Find account you'd like to report, then tap on their name.
3. At the top, tap the **More options icon** (three horizontal dots). •••
4. Tap **Report**.

Source: [Snapchat Support Report Account](#)

For additional support: [Snapchat Support How To Report](#)

*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](https://techsafebc.bcsth.ca).*