

5 Things You Should Never Reveal On Social Networking Sites

Networking websites are getting more popular by the day. Chances are you have an account on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn. So, here's a word of advice: be careful! Rob Douglas is an information security consultant and editor of the website **IdentityTheft.info**. He says that many people on social networks unknowingly put themselves at risk. These sites often give us the impression that we're talking with trusted friends, family members or colleagues – but there could be identity thieves, burglars or stalkers watching your every post. So, here's what he says you should never reveal, courtesy of the *Bottom Line Personal*.

- **First up: Addresses and birth dates.** This is what identity thieves and burglars look for. So, if you're throwing a party and need to provide directions to your home, do it through emails sent directly to those invited. If the site prompts you for your address or birth date, give slightly inaccurate or incomplete information – or leave it off altogether. You don't **HAVE** to share that information.
- **Next no-no: The years you graduated from high school and college.** This information helps scammers pretend to be former classmates, which is a common way they win your trust. Also, potential employers could use your graduation date to estimate your age, and decide against hiring you if they feel you're too old, or too young. Yes, this violates age discrimination laws, but Douglas says it would be impossible to prove.
- **Another thing you should never reveal on social networking sites: Travel plans.** If you mention when your vacation is, you may unwittingly tell a burglar that your home is soon to be vacant, and fair game.
- You should also avoid mentioning **schedules of any groups you belong to** - like a book club that meets at Starbucks every Monday at 7pm. Again, this'll let people know that you're out, or alert stalkers to your whereabouts.
- **Don't discuss your health-care providers!** Douglas says that if a scam artist learns where you receive medical treatment, he may try to get your insurance information. This could be sold to someone who doesn't have health insurance, who could then try to pose as you to get treatment.



So Beware And Be Warned!

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