

Study: We're getting less friendly on Facebook

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(AP) -- Whether it's pruning friends lists, removing unwanted comments or restricting access to their profiles, Americans are getting more privacy-savvy on social networks, a new report found.

The report released Friday by the Pew Internet & American Life Project found that people are managing their privacy settings and their online reputation more often than they did two years earlier. For example, 44 percent of respondents said in 2011 that they deleted comments from their profile on a [social networking](#) site. Only 36 percent said the same thing in 2009.

The findings come a day after the Obama administration called for stronger privacy protections for people who use the Internet, mobile

devices and other technologies with increasingly sophisticated ways of tracking them. Pew's findings suggest that people not only care about their privacy online but that, given the tools, they will also try to manage it.

Along those lines is "profile pruning," which Pew reports is on the rise. Nearly two-thirds of people on social networks said last year that they had deleted friends, up from 56 percent in 2009. And more people are removing their names from photos than two years ago. This practice is especially common on [Facebook](#), where users can add names of their friends to photos they upload.

Among other findings:

- Women are much more likely than men to restrict their profiles. Pew found that 67 percent of women set their profiles so that only their "friends" can see it. Only 48 percent of men did the same.
- Think all that time in school taught you something? People with the highest levels of education reported having the most difficulty figuring out their privacy settings. That said, only 2 percent of social media users described [privacy controls](#) as "very difficult to manage."
- The report found no significant differences in people's basic privacy controls by age. In other words, younger people were just as likely to use privacy controls as older people. Sixty-two percent of teens and 58 percent of adults restricted access to their [profiles](#) to friends only.
- Young adults were more likely than older people to delete unwanted comments. Fifty-six percent of social media users aged 18 to 29 said they have deleted comments that others have made on their profile, compared with 40 percent of those aged 30 to 49 and 34 percent of people aged 50 to 64.

- Men are more likely to post something they later regret. Fifteen percent of male respondents said they posted something regrettable, compared with 8 percent of female respondents.

- Possibly proving that with age comes wisdom, young adults were more likely to post something regrettable than their older counterparts. Fifteen percent of social network users aged 18 to 29 said they have posted something regrettable. Only 5 percent of people over 50 said the same thing.

Pew's phone survey of 2,277 adults was conducted in April and May 2011. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points. The data about teens came from a separate phone survey Pew conducted with teenagers and their parents.

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