



Tips for Tech Savvy Seniors

An Introduction to Social Media

Beginners Guide: Part 1

Social media sites can help you communicate and share information with others. Get to know some popular social media apps and learn about which services you can use and when.

What is social media

Social media is a part of the internet that can help you stay in touch with friends and loved ones. Things you'll use social media for include:

- Share your digital photo and video collections with friends and family (and the world, if you've a mind), and view the collections that other people have shared.
- Let people know what you're up to, and see what they're up to.
- Instantly communicate with somebody who's also online, either through voice, video or text.
- Share short observations about the world that are immediately disseminated with those who care to listen.
- Play online games with friends and strangers alike.

Facebook and Twitter

Facebook is the world's largest social media app, with two billion users. On Facebook you can:

- Set up a **profile** so people can find you on the network.
- Send people a **Friend request**, to link your profile with theirs so you see each other's updates.
- **Post** public messages that everyone can see.
- Let just your friends or even close family know a bit of personal news.
- Post **photos** and **video clips**, just for your friends, or publicly if you choose.
- **Comment** on posts by your friends, or respond to comments they've made, creating a conversation.
- Quickly give all your friends an update on your **location** or **status**.
- Join a **group** that's of interest, including hobby groups and community interest groups.
- Search for individuals, organisations, and groups that might have their own **Facebook Page**.
- **Delete** or **edit** comments and posts you've made on Facebook, in case you have second thoughts!

Twitter is faster and simpler than Facebook, and is built around the idea of a **tweet**, which is a 280-character message that, by default, everyone on Twitter can see.

Your Twitter home page, called the **Feed**, shows tweets from people you **Follow**, and your tweet will appear in the **Feed** of anyone who **Follows** you. You can search for someone by name or email address, and Follow them without needing their permission.

For privacy, you can set your Twitter to a **protected mode** so that all Followers must be approved by you.

YouTube and Flickr

YouTube is by far the world's most popular video sharing site. It allows users to **upload videos** they've created. Visitors to the site can then watch videos in their **web browser**.

- There are millions of videos to watch on YouTube.
- Videos can be **Liked** by users, and so will be promoted to the front page or marked as **Trending**.
- The **Explore** option lets you search YouTube via category, including things like **News** and **Learning**.
- If you set up a free **YouTube account** you can upload videos to your own channel.
- You can set these videos to **private** or **public**.
- **Subscribe** for free to YouTube **channels** to get alerts for when new videos are uploaded.

Flickr is a photo sharing and organising site. You can create an account to **upload your own photos**, which can be shared with the entire world or just a limited group of people you select. **Browse** for interesting photos by using the **Search** feature.

Microsoft Skype

Skype is an app designed for communicating directly with people over the internet. It can let you keep in touch with people via **Instant Messaging (IM)**, **Voice chat**, and **Video chat**.

- **Download** the Skype app from the **Microsoft store** to set it up on your computer.
- Create a **Skype account** so you can call or message other Skype users.
- You can **voice chat** or **video chat** for free with friends who also have Skype, though it will use some of your internet data.
- It's possible to call a regular phone from Skype, if you purchase some **Skype Credit**.
- To make video calls, your computer needs a **microphone** and **webcam**. These are usually built-in to a laptop and can be purchased as add-ons for a desktop PC.
- Skype also supports **instant messages** so you can send someone a quick text over Skype, to see if they are ready to start a video chat.
- Skype has a lot of other features, such as the ability to send files or set up a group call.

There are alternatives to Skype, including **FaceTime** for people who use Apple devices, and **Google Chat**, which works with a Google account and a web browser or mobile app.