



## Think of the Internet as you would a shopping mall

Generally, a mall is not considered a dangerous place. We go there to shop, run errands, and meet people, but we also take precautions while there. We wouldn't leave our car unlocked in the parking lot or walk around with our wallet hanging out of our purse. We wouldn't tell a sales clerk our Social Security Number or give our address to a stranger we just met.

The same applies when we are on the Internet. We need not fear our every mouse click, but we should take precautions to ensure our safety.



## Understanding Internet threats

Before we can learn how to protect ourselves, we need to understand what the threats are on the Internet. Click the buttons in the interactive below to learn common **Internet safety terms** that pertain to our computers and identity theft.

\* **View video and read the information on Malware, that follows the video, to answer quiz questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**

▶ Play the video by clicking the link: [Internet Safety: Your Browser's Security Features \(gcfglobal.org\)](https://www.gcfglobal.org/Internet-Safety-Your-Browsers-Security-Features) Scroll down the webpage until you see the video: **Spam and Phishing**

## Internet safety and privacy

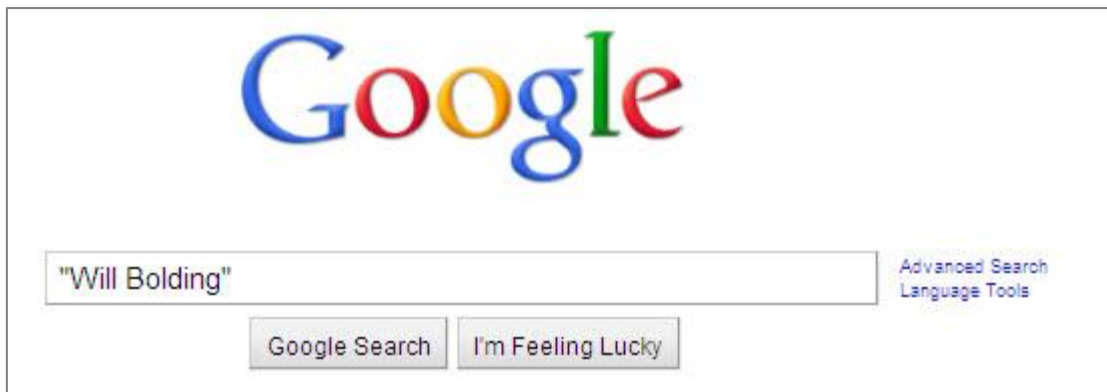
In the past, Internet safety generally referred to threats to computer hardware or identity theft, but now with the Internet becoming more and more social, **privacy** has become a significant safety concern. Privacy violations can especially affect our **mental and physical well-being**, thus creating distress or harm from the following:

- Undesired advertisements that can be annoying
- Embarrassing or humiliating photos or videos
- Legal entanglements from libelous posts
- Cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking
- Identity theft
- Offline or real-world crimes

## Googling yourself

Do you know how much **anyone can quickly find out about you** and your background just by conducting a simple web search? Most people don't know that **personal records** such as their **address, phone number**, and sometimes even **pictures** can be easily accessible to anyone online.

While this information may not be harmful, in some situations you could put yourself at risk by not knowing what is out there. For instance, someone only needs to find out your home phone number, and they can find your address and directions to your house just by doing a simple online search. Google yourself regularly to find out which websites and public databases share information about you.



## Make the most out of your search

Enter search terms such as **your name, email address, home and work address, and phone number** in a **variety of ways** to get the most accurate and complete results. Also, putting **quotes around your search terms** tells the search engine to find a specific phrase just how you wrote it. This will make your search more efficient.

- **First** name and **last** name: "Will Bolding"
- **First, middle, and last** name: "Will Edward Bolding"
- **Last** name followed by a **comma** and then your **first** name: "Bolding, Will"
- **Last** name followed by a **comma**, your **first** name, and **middle** name: "Bolding, Will Edward"
- **Street address**: "2521 Street Address Lane"
- **Phone number** (using no spaces or hyphens searches all instances of your number): "9195554444"
- **Email address**: "boldingsoccer@email.com"

## Removing your information from websites

**You can ask a website to remove your information.** Keep in mind that they are not always obligated to comply with your request. If the information posted about you is a direct threat to your safety and you need help negotiating with a website to remove the content, you can contact [WiredSafety.org](http://WiredSafety.org). They will be able to advise you on your specific case.

**You can also pay an outside service** like [Reputation.com](http://Reputation.com) to remove your personal information online. For most people, this kind of service is unnecessary, but keep in mind that it is an option.