



## What is *your* Digital Footprint?

*Your digital footprint is the data you leave behind when you use online services. What does your digital footprint say about you?*



Blog posts, comments or photos shared on social media, Skype calls, app use and email records. It's all part of your online history and can potentially be seen by other people or tracked in a database.

There are two main types of digital footprint: **passive** and **active**.

A passive digital footprint is data you leave behind without knowing when using the internet. For example, your IP address, approximate location, or browser history.

An active digital footprint is created when you deliberately submit information. The most obvious example is sharing information on social media, but email also contributes to your active footprint.

Whether you create your digital footprint unintentionally or intentionally, the data you leave behind can be passively or actively collected by other interested parties.

While you might remove a comment you shared in anger within minutes of posting, by then the damage is already done. Others may already have reposted it, or taken screenshots and shared your comment. Even 'liking' or sharing a Facebook post will add to your digital footprint.

Although your digital footprint can be lightly removed by using legislation such as The Right to be Forgotten, some interactions can never be erased.

So, think before you contribute to the digital environment.

Here are our top tips:

- Use privacy settings – Control who sees what about you.
- Delete old accounts – Do you still have an old MySpace account out there?
- Don't overshare on social media – Consider the possible implications of what you are about to share.
- Google yourself – What's your digital footprint like? What type of information have you unintentionally left behind you?
- Remember, posting is permanent.