

What does Facebook's fine print say about your privacy?

A closer look at Facebook's fine print

SCAN TO EXPLORE



str.sg/fbfineprint



Facebook's data policy has come under fire after it emerged last week that more than 50 million users' information was harvested for political messaging. Facebook said that it will update its data policy to be more transparent about what data it collects and how it uses the data. What does Facebook's fine print now say about users' privacy? Security and legal experts talk to Senior Tech Correspondent Irene Tham.

Things you do and information you provide.
We collect the content and other information that you provide when you use our Services, including when you sign up for an account, create or share, and message or communicate with others. This can include information in or about the content that you provide, such as the location of a photo or the date a file was created. We also collect information about how you use our Services, such as the types of content you view or engage with or the frequency and duration of your activities.

Things others do and information they provide.
We also collect content and information that other people provide when they use our Services, including information about you, such as when they share a photo of you, send a message to you or upload, sync or import your contact information.

1 You are not private on Facebook

- Even the highest privacy settings do not prevent Facebook from collecting information about you. These settings only affect the way you share with people on the social network.
- Facebook collects information about your posts, pictures, location of pictures, the types of content you view on the social network and how long you dwell on such content.

2 You lose your privacy when friends tag you

- Facebook collects information about your friends and the groups you are connected to, to build your profile. What they upload about you and the information they tagged you with contribute to your detailed profile.

3 You give up more personal data when you respond to Facebook ads

- Your credit or debit card information, billing and shipping details are collected when you buy something on Facebook or when you respond to an ad from a third-party, says Mr Ryan Flores, a researcher at cloud security solutions firm Trend Micro. Third-party apps are also allowed to access users' usernames and their public profile information.

Your networks and connections.
We collect information about the people and groups you are connected to and how you interact with them, such as the people you communicate with the most or the groups you like to share with. We also collect contact information that you provide if you upload, sync or import this information (such as an address book) from a device.

Information about payments.
If you use our Services for purchases or financial transactions (e.g. when you buy something on Facebook, make a purchase in a game or make a donation), we collect information about the purchase or transaction. This includes your payment information, such as your credit or debit card number and other card information, and other account and authentication information, as well as billing, shipping and contact details.

Device information.
We collect information from or about the computers, phones or other devices where you install or access our Services, depending on the permissions you've granted. We may associate the information we collect from your different devices, which helps us provide consistent Services across your devices. Here are some examples of the device information that we collect:

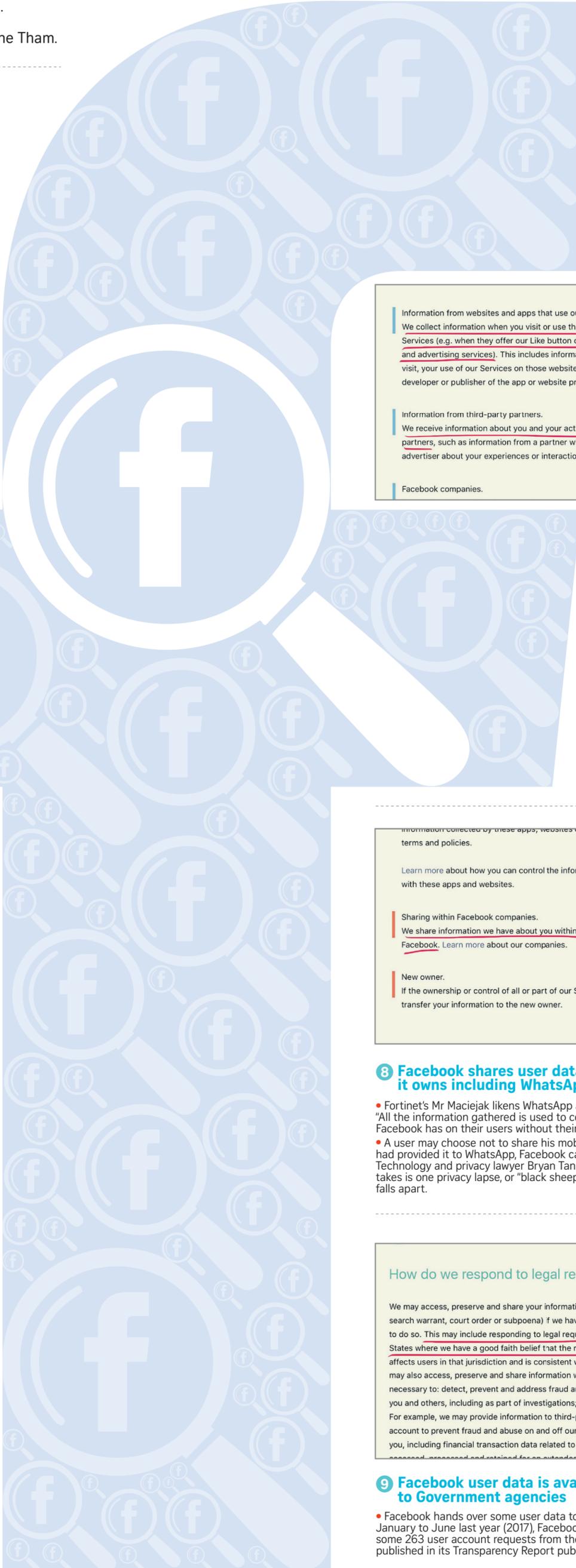
- Attributes such as the operating system, hardware version, device settings, file and software names and types, battery and signal strength, and device identifiers.
- Device locations, including specific geographic locations, such as through GPS, Bluetooth or WiFi signals.
- Connection information such as the name of your mobile operator or ISP, browser type, language and time zone, mobile phone number and IP address.

4 Your mobile phone betrays your exact location to Facebook

- Your exact coordinates are collected when you turn on Facebook's "Nearby Friends" feature, which tells you when your friends are located within a mile of you, or its "Nearby Places" feature, which recommends amenities near you. Facebook builds a history of your precise location even when you're not using the app. To safeguard your location data on the Apple iPhone, for instance, go to phone settings, tap on "privacy" and "Location Services" and set location sharing to "never" for Facebook.

5 Facebook Messenger collects call details

- Cyber security firm Fortinet's security research director Mr David Maciejak says the Facebook Messenger app collects users' data including contact names, start time for each call, call duration, call history and SMS metadata. Facebook also knows your mobile number but says it does not sell users' information and never will.



6 Facebook tracks your Web surfing

- Your surfing is tracked when you visit a website or an app that uses the Facebook "Like" button or "Log In" feature, or uses any of Facebook's measurement and advertising services. Developers using the Log In feature used to be able to access consumers' Facebook posts along with other profile information. Since last week, default sharing is limited to a person's name, profile photo and e-mail address. Third-party app access to an account's data will also now be cut off when the consumer hasn't used the app for three months.

Information from websites and apps that use our Services.
We collect information when you visit or use third-party websites and apps that use our Services (e.g. when they offer our Like button or Facebook Log In or use our measurement and advertising services). This includes information about the websites and apps that you visit, your use of our Services on those websites and apps, as well as information the developer or publisher of the app or website provides to you or us.

Information from third-party partners.
We receive information about you and your activities on and off Facebook from third-party partners, such as information from a partner when we jointly offer services or from an advertiser about your experiences or interactions with them.

Facebook companies.

7 Facebook tracks your online and offline purchases

- Facebook works with data brokers such as Acxiom, Epsilon and Experian to make sense of Facebook users' online and offline behaviour for targeted advertising. Such analyses allow Facebook to make potentially sensitive inferences such as the presence of children in households, and whether consumers suffer from allergies or are affiliated to certain religious groups. But over the next six months, it will be shutting down this service known as Partner Categories.

Information collected by these apps, websites or integrated services is subject to their own terms and policies.

Learn more about how you can control the information about you that you or others share with these apps and websites.

Sharing within Facebook companies.
We share information we have about you within the family of companies that are part of Facebook. Learn more about our companies.

New owner.
If the ownership or control of all or part of our Services or their assets changes, we may transfer your information to the new owner.

8 Facebook shares user data with companies it owns including WhatsApp and Instagram

- Fortinet's Mr Maciejak likens WhatsApp and Instagram to "spyware" saying: "All the information gathered is used to connect the dots and enrich the files Facebook has on their users without their knowledge."
- A user may choose not to share his mobile number with Facebook. But if he had provided it to WhatsApp, Facebook can receive the withheld data. Technology and privacy lawyer Bryan Tan of Pinsent Masons MPillay says all it takes is one privacy lapse, or "black sheep", and the whole connected system falls apart.

How do we respond to legal requests or prevent harm?

We may access, preserve and share your information in response to a legal request (e.g. a search warrant, court order or subpoena) if we have a good faith belief that the law requires us to do so. This may include responding to legal requests from jurisdictions outside of the United States where we have a good faith belief that the response is required by law in that jurisdiction, affects users in that jurisdiction and is consistent with internationally recognised standards. We may also access, preserve and share information when we have a good faith belief that it is necessary to: detect, prevent and address fraud and other illegal activity; to protect ourselves, you and others, including as part of investigations; or to prevent death or imminent bodily harm. For example, we may provide information to third-party partners about the reliability of your account to prevent fraud and abuse on and off our Services. Information that we receive about you, including financial transaction data related to purchases made with Facebook, may be ~~received, processed and retained for an extended period of time when it is the subject of~~

9 Facebook user data is available to Government agencies

- Facebook hands over some user data to the Singapore Government. From January to June last year (2017), Facebook acceded to about 60 per cent of some 263 user account requests from the Singapore Government. This was published in its Transparency Report published online.