



TECHNOLOGY SAFETY PLAN

Abusers seek control and that extends to your use of technology – monitoring what you’re doing, websites you visit, with whom you communicate, etc. To keep yourself safe from abuse when it comes to technology, below are a few important tips.

If you’re unsure how to do these things or fear that doing them would put you in danger, please contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE (7233) or thehotline.org.

Consider using a safer device – Abusers will often try to track and or spy on you through your phone and computer. A good idea might be to continue using your existing phone to maintain the appearance of normalcy, while purchasing a pay-as-you-go phone for other communication needs.

You could use a friend’s computer or one at the library for things you don’t want the abuser to see (such as getting help).

Consider turning off location tracking – Your abuser may track you at all times through location sharing on your phone, just like Leslie’s soon-to-be-ex when she went to the bank to set up an account for her daughter and he showed up 15 minutes later. They might also track your phone or car through roadside assistance or safe driver services and apps.

You will likely need to be ready for their questions about why you turned location tracking off. You could try one of these as your answer, depending on what you’re comfortable with: “I heard on the radio that a lady was tracked by a stalker that way.” “Oh, why is it important that we have that turned on?” “Oh, is yours turned on as well?”

Delete apps you don’t recognize – Abusers can use apps they’ve downloaded to your phone to track you and your online/social media habits. Delete any apps you don’t recognize and keep your phone in a place where your abuser can’t access it.

Stay safe online – If you’re using a computer to which your abuser has access, don’t go to websites or other resources you don’t want your abuser to know about. Clear the cache if you need to, but be aware that your abuser may question you about that.

Change passwords – Change passwords to social media and email accounts. Keep the new passwords safe. Unfortunately, some abusers are tech savvy and will still be able to gain access to your passwords, so use safer devices when you can.



Create a new email account – An email account of which the abuser knows nothing can give you a place to communicate and get some of the help you need. Turn on log in alerts so you know when someone else logs in.

Lock down social media – Ensure your privacy settings on social media don't allow prying eyes to see what you post or allow others to share your posts. Don't post anything you'd be afraid of your abuser seeing.

Document – Keep track of the things that don't add up, the times your abuser knew what you were up to without you telling them, the times they made strange comments about things they knew too much about.

Involve the authorities – You're responsible for your safety. Report incidents that make you feel unsafe. This helps create a paper trail that may be helpful later.

Trust your gut – If something doesn't feel right, it's not. Look into it. Listen to what your gut is telling you and take actions to keep you safe.

Note: If you have a friend in an abusive situation, do not post info about them without their permission. Do not tag them or send them resources you think could be helpful unless you've cleared it with them first.

A few extra tips

Some abusers may use tracking devices attached to the car. You can have your local law enforcement agency, a private investigator, or mechanic check that out for you. Before you remove it, document it and create your physical safety plan.

Consider how else your abuser may be using technology to spy on you. An electronic gift from them that you keep with you, webcams, Google Home or Alexa, computer's built in camera (which can be remotely accessed and controlled). Think about a physical safety plan and consider how to avoid being monitored through these devices.

Get help from the National Domestic Violence Hotline (800-799-7233 or [thehotline.org](https://www.thehotline.org)) to create your Safety Plan.

For help breaking free from abuse and to stop living in fear so you can find the peace, joy, freedom, and happiness you deserve, sign up for **Stop Emotional Abuse: No more walking on eggshells**, a complete, online, abuse recovery program at programs.stopemotionalabuse.net.