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## Technology Times August 2022 Issue

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**Dan Foote**  
Owner/President

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## Google is letting you request personal info to be removed for search. Here’s what you need to do

*The tech company now lets users put in an ask to prevent their phone number, address and more from appearing in search.*

by Madeline Merinuk

Over the years, it has become increasingly challenging to keep personal information off the web — but thanks to Google's updated policies, you're now able to take more control of your online presence in search.

Google published a blog post last April, by Google Global Policy Lead for Search, Michelle Chang, explaining how and why a policy change expansion came about, plus what it means for users.

The blog post mentions that users can now request personal information — such as phone numbers, email addresses and home addresses — to be removed from search. The policy expansion also enables people under the age of 18, or their parent or guardian, to request the removal of their images from Google Search results.

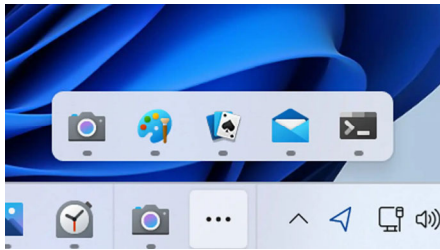
But according to Google, being able to request the removal of personal information from the web for safety purposes isn't a new feature.

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## Windows 11 is getting a much-needed upgrade for multitaskers



Are you using an old, low-resolution monitor or a smaller-screened laptop? Do you keep a bajillion apps open in Windows 11 all the time? Are you some combination of both of these hypothetical users?

Then first, thank you for assisting in our intro paragraph, and two, Windows 11 might get a lot easier for you to use in the near future. A tweak to the Taskbar in a development version of Windows 11 means apps that don't fit in the taskbar will be much easier to find.

Windows 11 defaults to icon-only view on the Taskbar, which a lot of people don't like anyway. But if you manage to get more icons than can fit — 20 if I set my resolution to 720p, including things like Start and Search — the leftovers are all squished into one icon, which only changes if you use something like Alt-Tab to manually select one of the overflow apps.

As the Windows Insider blog describes (via [Ars Technica](#)), a new Dev Channel version of Windows replaces this single app icon with an ellipses icon (...), which shows a pop-up with all your extra apps in a button. In practice it's kind of like the "stacks" feature on macOS, which shows a popup with a folder's contents, except this is a dynamic list of running programs. Items in the overflow menu can be clicked and right-clicked just like the standard Taskbar, giving access to all the usual windowing features.

This and other improvements are part of Windows 11 build 25163, which is coming...sometime. Microsoft has been less predictable lately in terms of when new builds and features will arrive. But those who tend to forget to close their various applications will certainly appreciate it when it arrives.

By PC World

## How to check to see if someone is spying on your computer, whether it's a PC or a Mac

By Kim Komando

We all know the feeling. You're scrolling through your phone, and there it is. An ad that you can tie back to a recent conversation with a friend. How is it possible?

Bad habits could spill even more of your secrets. If you go the easy route and use your Facebook or Google account to log in to other sites and apps, knock it off. Maybe it's not advertisers or Big Tech tracking. Here's a check to see if there's something very sinister going on — a copy of everything you do on your PC or Mac is being gathered and sent to who knows who.

### 1. Check the Task Manager or Activity Monitor

Malware comes in various forms that often behave differently. Some are impossible to miss — like ransomware — and others keep a low profile. Spyware is subtle in comparison to other types of malware. It hides in your system, keeping track of every password you type, every video call you make and every email you send.

While these pieces of software are sneaky, they do leave behind breadcrumbs.

Your first stop is the Task Manager if you're on a Windows PC or your Activity Monitor on a Mac. Both give you an overview of everything happening on your machine.



#### PC users: Follow these steps

Open the Task Manager by hitting **Ctrl + Shift + Esc**. Under the Processes tab, you'll see the apps and background processes running on your PC.

Look through the list. If you see a name you don't recognize, do a search to see what turns up. Sometimes, these programs and background processes are legitimate and of no concern, even if you don't know the name at first glance.

To close out an app or process, right-click and hit **End task**.

#### Mac users: Follow these steps

- ◆ To open the Activity Monitor, hit **Command + Spacebar** to open Spotlight Search. Then, type **Activity Monitor** and press **Enter**. Check over the list for anything you don't recognize.

To close out a program or process, **double click**, then hit **Quit**.

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## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

*"Request personal info to be removed for search on Google"*  
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### Best Secure Router August 2022

#### TP-Link Archer C5400 v2 SPECIFICATIONS

**Speed:** 802.11ac 5GHz down: up to 2,167 Mbps, 2.4GHz down: up to 1,000 Mbps

**Connectivity:** 4 x LAN, WAN, USB 3.0, USB 2.0

Are you in the market for one of the best wireless routers and don't mind a quirky design? If a '90s-inspired sci-fi design sounds like it will fit right in your home, then the TP-Link Archer C5400 v2 might be the best secure router for you. It's not exactly the most modern-looking mesh router out there, but it's unique in that it can bridge consumer and enterprise users by offering high-end functionality at a reasonable price point and with a relaxed setup.

Its security credentials are boosted by TP-Link Homecare which offers parental controls and built-in [antivirus](#). Free for the first three years, it lets you manage network access and protects from malicious attacks.

Security settings can be fine-tuned by logging into the router, where it's possible to configure security type (such as WPA/WPA2 Mixed Enterprise, WPA/WPA2 Mixed Personal, WPA2 Enterprise, WPA2 Personal, and WEP), and edit SSIDs and passwords.



For many years, people have been able to request the removal of certain sensitive, personally identifiable information from Search, per the blog post. **This applies to cases of doxing** — when personal info, like addresses, are shared publicly with malicious intent — or for information like bank account or credit card numbers that could be used for financial fraud.

"The availability of personal contact information online can be jarring — and it can be used in harmful ways, including for unwanted direct contact or even physical harm. And people have given us feedback that they would like the ability to remove this type of information from Search in some cases," the blog post reads.

Now, Google is making it possible for you to protect your personal information further by allowing removal requests for additional types of information that may pose a risk for identity theft, such as confidential log-in credentials, when it appears in search results.

Read on to learn how to take advantage of this new policy expansion from Google. How can I remove my phone number and other personal information from Google Search?

The process, overall, is fairly simple and straightforward. You can visit this site to start. You'll come to a page where, after clicking on the first pencil icon on the right, it will first ask you whether you want to a.) Remove information you see in Google Search or b.) Prevent information from showing in Google Search. Select whichever applies to you. From there, confirm the details of where you want the information to be removed from, or where you would like to prevent the information from going.

Google then provides step-by-step instructions on how to proceed, depending on what your removal requests and preferences are.

Once your request is submitted, you'll get an automated email confirming your request. Please note that Google may follow up asking for additional information: for example, a web address if there's one missing from the original request submission.

When all of the information is submitted and the request has been processed, Google will notify you of any action taken.

#### Will Google guarantee the removal of my personal information?

While your ask might be granted with no issues, there's of course a possibility Google will deny the request. According to the blog post, when Google receives removal requests, they will "evaluate all content on the web page" to ensure that they're not "limiting the availability of other information that is broadly useful, for instance in news articles."

Additionally, if the content appears as a public record on the sites of government or official sources, they won't proceed with the removal.

Google stresses that it's "important to remember that removing content from Google Search won't remove it from the internet" — which is why some may wish to contact a site that houses any personal information directly.

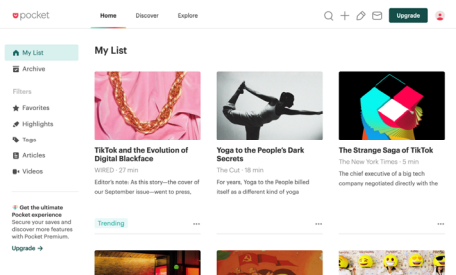
Ultimately, this policy expansion was made to adapt to ever-evolving internet updates and protect Google users personal safety. "We believe these updates are an important step to deliver on that goal and give people the tools they need to protect their safety and privacy online."



## Productivity Tools

### An app to save things for later like [Pocket](#)

I'd love to read articles or watch YouTube videos all day. We all would. Sometimes, though, you have to do something else—even though your friend just sent you a really, really interesting article. That's where read-it-later apps come in.



They let you quickly save something you intend to read, so that you can come back to it when you have time. I think that Pocket, above, is the app of choice in this class. It's free to use, offers extensions for every major browser, and also has great mobile versions that sync your articles for offline reading. There's even built-in support for highlighting, then reviewing your highlights later.

Instapaper is a close second, and it even lets you send articles to your Kindle. These aren't your only choices, though—check out our list of the best read-it-later apps for some more options. It's also worth noting that some people use bookmarking apps or even note taking apps for the same purpose, and that's great—they both make it easy to save things for future reference.



#ProtectTheClick!

*"How to check to see if someone is spying on your computer"*  
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## 2. Know what to expect

One telltale sign of a malware infection? Processes start on their own. Don't write it off if an app launches itself out of the blue. Take it as a warning sign.

Let's say you only have a couple of apps that open when you start up your computer. If a different window briefly appears before flicking out of existence, it could be a spyware program loading. They're designed to disappear, so you don't notice them, but they might briefly show themselves in this way. By keeping tabs on what should happen when you start your computer, you'll have a better idea when something odd is happening.

### How to change startup apps on a PC:

- Click the **Start** menu.
- Select **Settings (cog icon)** and click **Apps**.
- In the left menu, click **Startup** at the bottom.

The Startup panel displays the apps installed on your machine. If Windows has measured the impact of that app on your PC, you will see a rating next to it. Options include No impact, Low impact, Medium impact, and High impact.

An app with a high impact can slow down your startup time. Go through the list and determine which apps you don't need immediately after startup. Toggle each slider next to the app to turn it on or off.

### How to change startup apps on a Mac:

- Click on the **Apple menu**, then **System Preferences**.
- Click **Users & Groups**. Select your **User Account**, then click **Login Items** on the top right.

Here you'll see a list of the applications that open automatically when you log in. To prevent an app from running automatically, click **Remove a login item**. Then select the app's name that you want to block and click on the **Remove button** below the list.

You can use the checkbox to hide items you still would like to launch. Hit the **plus symbol** under the list and find it on your computer to add a new item.

## 3. Stay up to date

I know. Updates are annoying. They always pop up when you're busy, and you don't want to deal with bugs and other issues the latest version of Windows or macOS introduces. Still, keeping your system up to date is one of the best ways to keep up with the constant flood of junk looking to root its way into your computer.

**Questions? Call 907-885-0501 to  
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