

B1 TEENS

My Digital Footprint

Online identity, privacy and the present perfect with for, since and ever/never

B1 Intermediate | Grammar | Reading | 40 min

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Lesson Objectives

- [ok] Read a text about digital footprints, online privacy and data tracking
- [ok] Learn vocabulary related to the internet, privacy and personal data
- [ok] Use present perfect with for, since, ever, never, already, yet and just
- [ok] Distinguish between present perfect and past simple
- [ok] Discuss online habits, privacy concerns and digital responsibility
- [ok] Write about personal digital experiences using the present perfect

1 Before You Read

- > Have you ever googled yourself? What did you find?
- > How many apps on your phone have access to your location right now?
- > Do you think companies know too much about you? Why or why not?

2 Reading: You Are Being Watched

You Are Being Watched

Every time you go online, you leave a trace. Every search, every like, every photo you upload becomes part of your digital footprint. And unlike footprints on a beach, these ones don't wash away.

Your digital footprint is the trail of data you create while using the internet. It includes everything -- the websites you have visited, the messages you have sent, the videos you have watched, and the products you have searched for. Companies have collected this data for years, and they use it to build a detailed profile of who you are.

"I have used social media since I was eleven," says Sofia, 15, from Madrid. "I have never really thought about what happens to my data. But recently I learned that Instagram has tracked my location, my interests, and even how long I look at each post. It's quite creepy."

Privacy expert James Porter has studied digital footprints for over a decade. "Most teenagers have already shared thousands of pieces of personal information online," he explains. "They have posted photos, filled in forms, accepted cookies, and given apps permission to access their contacts -- often without realising it."

So what can you do? Porter suggests three steps. First, check your privacy settings regularly -- many people have never looked at them. Second, think before you post. Third, use strong, unique passwords -- hackers have stolen millions of passwords in recent years.

Your digital footprint is permanent. You have already started building yours. The question is: what kind of footprint do you want to leave?

3 Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Example
digital footprint	the trail of data you leave online	"Your digital footprint follows you."
trace	a mark showing something existed	"Every click leaves a trace."
upload	to put a file on the internet	"She uploaded 200 photos."
trail	a path left behind	"Your browsing history leaves a trail."
data	information stored digitally	"Companies collect data about users."
profile	description based on collected info	"Advertisers build a profile of you."
track	to monitor someone's activity	"Apps track your location."
privacy	right to keep info secret	"Online privacy is harder to protect."
settings	options to control how something works	"Check your privacy settings."
permission	allowing someone to do something	"The app asked for permission."

Word	Definition	Example
cookie	small file stored by a website	"Websites ask you to accept cookies."
hacker	person who illegally accesses systems	"Hackers stole millions of passwords."
permanent	lasting forever	"What you post is often permanent."
employer	person/company that gives you a job	"Future employers check social media."
creepy	making you feel uncomfortable	"It's creepy they know so much."
realise	to become aware of something	"I didn't realise how much I shared."

Useful Collocations: digital footprint • personal data • privacy settings • accept cookies • track your location • strong password • social media account • give permission

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Grammar: Present Perfect (for, since, ever, never, already, yet, just)

In the Text, You Saw...

for + period: "James Porter has studied digital footprints for over a decade."

since + point: "I have used social media since I was eleven."

never: "I have never really thought about what happens to my data."

already: "You have already started building yours."

Word	Use	Example
for	duration (how long)	I have lived here for three years.
since	starting point	She has been online since 2019.
ever	questions (any time)	Have you ever been hacked?
never	negative (no time)	I have never changed my password.
already	sooner than expected	She has already deleted her account.
yet	questions/negatives	Have you updated yet?
just	very recently	I have just changed my password.

Present Perfect vs Past Simple

Present Perfect = no specific time: "I have visited 50 websites today." (today is not finished)

Past Simple = specific time: "I visited that website yesterday." (yesterday is finished)

Present Perfect = life experience: "Have you ever been hacked?"

Past Simple = specific event: "I was hacked last month."

Common Mistakes

~~I have used social media since three years.~~ --> **...for three years.** (for + duration)

~~I have visited that website yesterday.~~ --> **I visited that website yesterday.** (past simple with specific time)

~~Did you ever been hacked?~~ --> **Have you ever been hacked?** (present perfect with ever)

5 Match the Halves

#	Beginning	Ending
1	I have had this phone	for two years.
2	She has been on TikTok	since she was twelve.
3	Have you ever	shared your password with anyone?
4	He has never	checked his privacy settings.
5	They have already	deleted their old photos.
6	I haven't updated my profile	yet.
7	She has just	created a new account.
8	We have used this app	since January.
9	Have you finished	your homework yet?
10	I have never met	anyone famous online.

6 Comprehension Quiz

1. What is a digital footprint?

Answer: The trail of data you leave online

2. How long has Sofia used social media?

Answer: Since she was eleven

3. What did Sofia find creepy?

Answer: Instagram tracking her location and interests

4. What does James Porter suggest about passwords?

Answer: Use strong, unique passwords

5. "I have used social media ___ I was eleven."

Answer: since

6. "He has studied privacy ___ ten years."

Answer: for

7. Which sentence needs Past Simple?

Answer: I changed my password last week.

8. Which is WRONG?

Answer: I have visited that site yesterday.

7 Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: for | since | ever | never | already | yet | just | have

1. I have had this account _____ three years.

2. She has been on Instagram _____ 2020.

3. Have you _____ been the victim of a scam?

4. He has _____ read the terms and conditions.

5. They _____ already updated their privacy settings.

6. I haven't changed my password _____.

7. She has _____ deleted her old posts.

8. We have lived in this city _____ five years.

Answers: 1. for | 2. since | 3. ever | 4. never | 5. have | 6. yet | 7. just | 8. for

8 Speaking & Writing

Discussion Questions

Have you ever posted something online that you later regretted?

How long have you had your current phone? How many apps have you installed?

Have you ever checked what data your apps collect about you?

Do you think privacy is more important than convenience? Why?

Has social media changed how you see yourself? In what way?

Example Dialogue

A: Have you ever checked your privacy settings?

B: No, I've never looked at them. Have you?

A: Yes, I have. I've just changed mine actually. I've had this account since I was twelve, and I've never thought about privacy until now.

B: That's quite scary. I've already posted hundreds of photos. I haven't deleted any yet.

A: You should check your settings. A friend of mine was hacked last month because his password was too weak.

Writing Task

Write 80-120 words about your online life. Use at least 4 present perfect sentences with for, since, ever, never, already, yet or just:

Option A: Describe your digital footprint -- what have you shared, how long have you been online, what have you never done?

Option B: Write advice for a younger student about online safety. What should they do? What haven't they thought about yet?

9 Digital Footprint Audit -- The Game

This interactive game is available in the online version. Answer 10 real-world scenarios about privacy, passwords, permissions and online behaviour!

#	Scenario	Best Action
1	App asks for contacts, camera, location access	Check which permissions are needed, deny the rest

#	Scenario	Best Action
2	Stranger sends 'You won a prize!' link	Delete it -- it's probably a scam
3	Friend asks for your password	Say no -- passwords are personal
4	Want to post a funny photo of a friend	Ask your friend's permission first
5	Website asks to accept cookies	Accept necessary, decline optional
6	Haven't changed password in two years	Change it to something stronger
7	See someone's personal address posted online	Report it as a privacy violation
8	Old social media account from age 11 exists	Delete it or update privacy settings
9	Signing up for a new website -- best password?	Mix of letters, numbers and symbols
10	Classmate screenshots your private message	It's a violation of your privacy

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Review Checklist

- [ok] I can understand a text about digital footprints and online privacy
- [ok] I can use vocabulary related to the internet, privacy and data
- [ok] I can use the present perfect with for, since, ever, never, already, yet and just
- [ok] I can tell the difference between present perfect and past simple
- [ok] I can discuss online habits and digital responsibility
- [ok] I can write about my digital experiences using the present perfect

Congratulations!

You have completed this lesson: My Digital Footprint