TikTok - Checking for Account Compromise and Increasing Security

Compiled by the Clinic to End Tech Abuse

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Who is this guide for?

Anyone who would like to strengthen their security and privacy on TikTok or suspects their account may be compromised (e.g., because they have seen or think there have been unauthorized log-ins). It is especially for anyone who is concerned that an abusive person may be secretly getting access to their account.

What does this guide cover?

- [How to view which devices, including unauthorized devices, have logged into your TikTok account](#)
- [Turning on two-factor authentication for extra security](#)
- [Setting privacy controls such as only allowing authorized users to view your account and preventing TikTok from notifying other people about your account](#)

Aspects to take into account

- Actions like turning on two-factor authentication can be visible to the abuser or will log them out of your account
- We strongly recommend that you talk to a domestic violence or other appropriate organization to make plans for your safety before you make an action like enabling two-factor authentication if you are worried about violence or threats
- We have marked changes that could be visible to an abuser with the following sign:
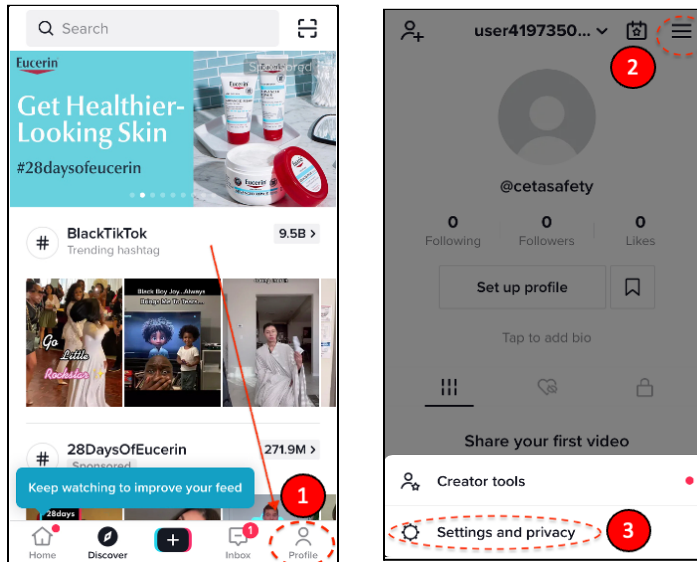
Be careful!

This action could be visible to an abuser
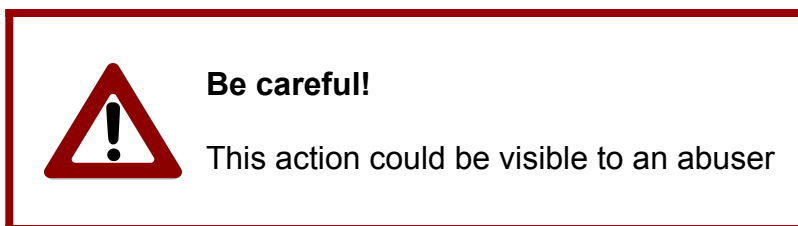
- Images of the TikTok app are included below for educational purposes only

Viewing and Managing Devices Logged Into Your Account

These steps will show you how to view which devices (phones, laptops, etc.) are signed into your account and log out unrecognized devices.
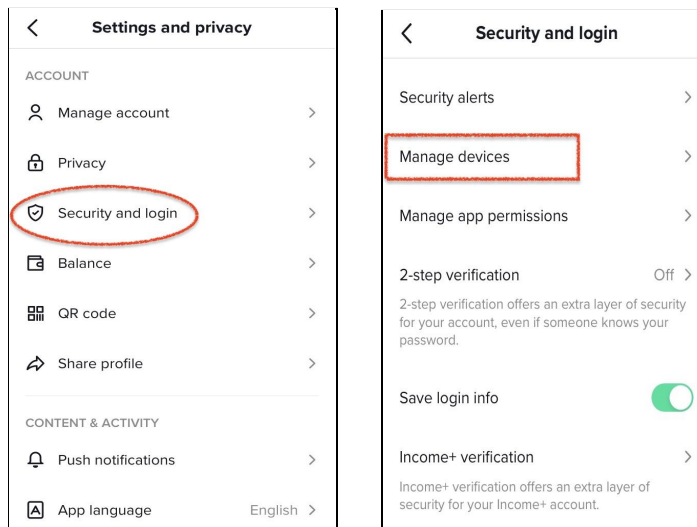
Step 1 - Open the TikTok app and go to the settings menu

From the home page of the TikTok app, tap on **Profile** from the menu bar along the bottom. Then, on the screen that appears, tap on the **three bars** in the upper right hand corner. In the menu that opens at the bottom, tap **Settings and privacy**.

Step 2 - Navigate to the devices menu

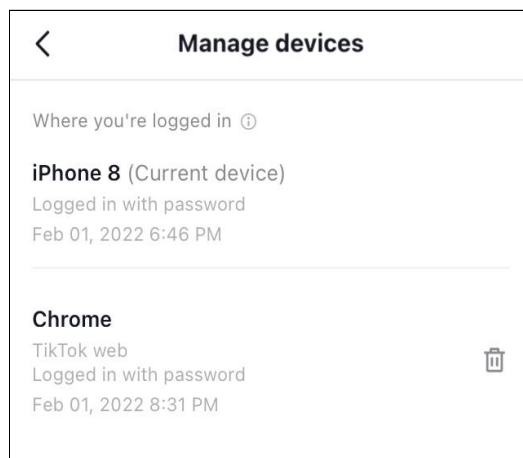Now, tap on **Security and login** > **Manage devices**.

Step 3 - Inspect and remove unauthorized devices

⚠️ **Be careful!**

This action could be visible to an abuser

You should see a list of devices that are currently logged into your account, including the current device. All other devices should have a small trash can icon next to them.


If you do not recognize a device, tapping on their respective trash can icon will allow you to log that device out of your TikTok account.

Turning on 2-Factor Authentication

What is two-factor authentication and what does it do?
It is an extra security step that provides more protection for an online account. By turning it on, every time you try to log into your account, you will be required to provide a password as well as a second piece of information that only you should know.

Be careful!

This action could be visible to an abuser
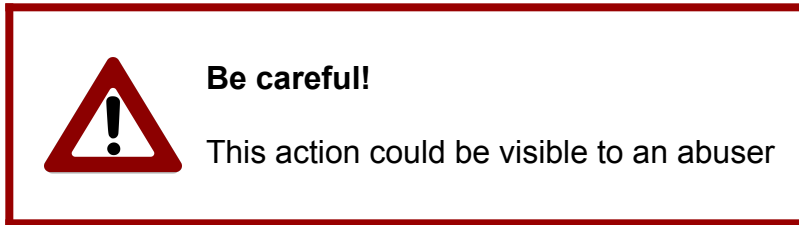
If you go to **Profile** > **Settings and privacy** > **Security and login** > **2-step verification**, TikTok will ask you to select at least 2-step verification methods (i.e., two different ways in which you would like to receive the second piece of information required every time you sign into your account).
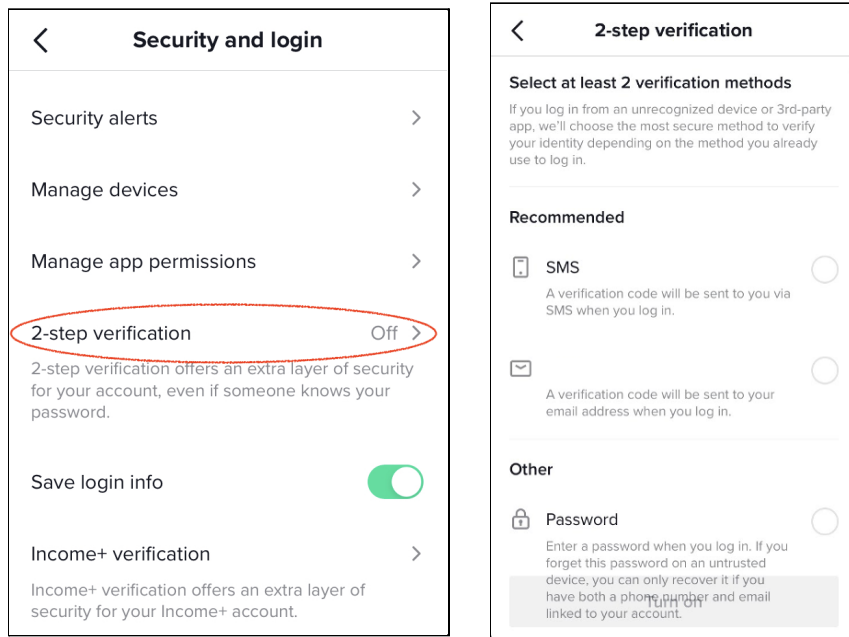
TikTok recommends the following 2-step verification methods (neither of them will require you to install any new apps):

- **Text message (SMS):** if you choose this option, then every time you try to log into your TikTok account, an SMS (text) message with a code will be sent to your mobile phone

- **Email:** if you choose this option, then every time you try to log into your account TikTok, an email with a code will be sent to the email associated with your TikTok account

You can select the 2-step verification method of your preference.

Important: if the abuser can access your email, unlock your phone or see your phone screen, they may be able to get the code sent to you. Keep this into account when deciding your 2-step verification method.

Managing Visibility and Safety Settings For Your Account

Step 1 - Go to the privacy menu

From the **Settings and privacy** menu (see Step 1 in [Viewing and Managing Devices](#) above), tap on **Privacy**:
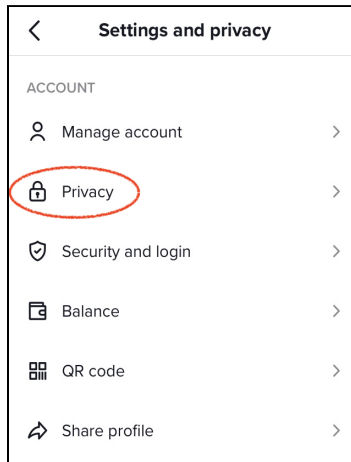
Step 2a - discoverability: setting your account to private

In the following screen, the first option under *Discoverability* is **Private account**. If you set your TikTok account to private, TikTok will not allow other users who are not following you to see the content you post. By default, TikTok accounts are not set to private (except for users aged 13-15).

If you tap on the **toggle button** that appears to the right of **Private account**, you can set your account to private (the switch will turn green).
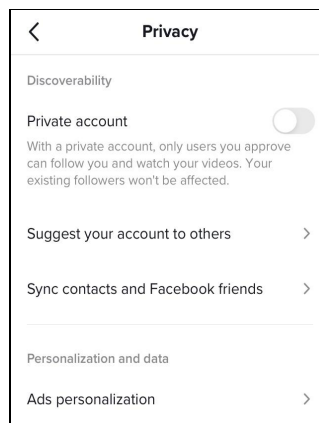
Important: If you are concerned about an abusive person viewing your posts, turning on private mode may help prevent this. Keep in mind that anyone currently following your account will still be able to see your posts, including an abuser or a mutual contact.

Step 2b - discoverability: preventing TikTok from suggesting your account to others

Tap on **Suggest your account to others** under *Discoverability*. This feature allows you to control who TikTok suggests your account to without your knowledge. Even if your account is set to private, TikTok may still suggest it to others, although they will not be able to see its content until you accept their follow request. All items on the list are enabled by default:
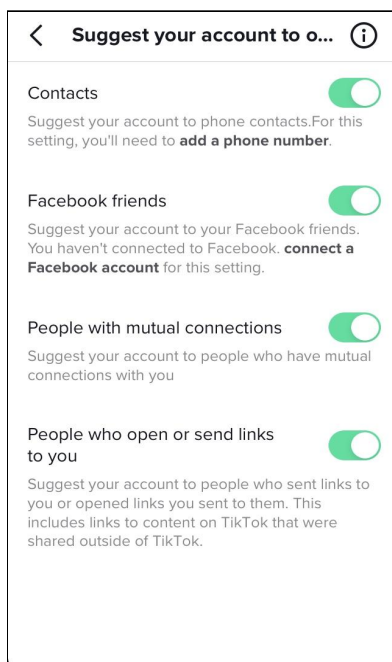
Disabling the items on the list may help prevent TikTok from alerting a potential abuser to the existence of your TikTok account.