Trust issues... Someone’s always watching: A layman’s guide to the internet and how to protect yourself.

The internet:

If you have been living under a rock for the last 20 or so years or just want to know what all the cool kids and hipsters are up to these days most likely you’ll have to access the abyss of the unknown known as the internet. It’s honestly not as daunting as you think to navigate the digital landscape once you have the basic fundamentals of how it works.

Firstly you must know the internet exists both physically and intangibly or better known as virtually. Physically the internet is a network of computers and connection of tubes that traverse the span of the ocean from Virginia all the way to France, fibers weighted along the ocean floor that each carry 53 tbs (or for you real slackers terabytes) of data in each tube in an 8ft protective housing.

This physical presence is what gives the internet its power to unite society for better or worse across the world in the virtual aspect. Virtually the internet works like how you behave in a restaurant, and you better not be cheap and leave a good tip! **You** the client or restaurant patron requests a service or an inquiry with the **Server** or basically the super computer this wealth of knowledge flows from. Two things to note there is a big difference between **Inter**net and **intra**net. **Inter**net being the connection of computers on a public network while the latter being a connection of computers on a private network and server.

Your life in a digital world:

Man how do you access this wonderful digital age you might wonder, well of course you would have to go through the money grubbing middle men better known as **Isp**s or **i**nternet **s**ervice **p**roviders, yeah you know the guys... comcast, fios, rcn or whoever you choose to charge you for an intangible form of communication and choose wisely because data can get expensive...how they measure these invisible megabytes the world may never know.

Alright now we have to get a bit political because at this current time in the unregulated wildlands known as the internet certain governmental bodies have made it priority to not only compromise your information stored online and collect your digital footprint...every facebook post and like on instagram but have even proposed to as going as far as selling this information to corporations to further legitimize the premise of modern day consumers being cattle that will eat anything these entities devoid of conscience will feed you...but don’t worry that’s where this guide will come in handy.

It’s all about security baby:

Ok couple things to note when browsing online. In this day and age when checking out the address bar you will notice the website address is usually prefaced by **https://** this is an abbreviation for **h**yper **t**ext **t**ransfer **p**rotocol **s**ecurity, i know its a mouth full but a good thing because it means the website you are using is protected and the data is encrypted although still free game for collection and auction.

Now this section is only for the brave of heart... for those of you that don’t want to be unsuspecting prey to greedy corporations and indiscriminate data mining of your personal information. Well I’ll tell you if you continue reading you’re not alone because you have several options, firstly if you use a common browser like google chrome you have the option to browse the web in incognito mode. Incognito mode doesn’t save your search history when browsing online, although because of google’s obsessive compulsive need to collect information data is still being stored.

If you’re sick and tired of private information being collected against your will, well it’s time to put the big boy pants on and upgrade your services to that of a **Vpn,** or **v**irtual **p**rivate **n**etwork, at this current time in the digital landscape choosing a vpn to host your internet needs is the most secure way to ensure your data stays private. A quick google search will bring up the most popular such as express vpn, nord vpn and cyber ghost pro. Basically you choose a vpn provider which will bypass your data collecting isp and provide you with limitless, safe and truly secure internet browsing.

For those of you really dedicated to the fight against government surveillance check out an application that’s been a constantly evolving development called **TOR** which is an acronym for **T**he **O**nion **R**outer, like its namesake tor operates in varying degrees of layers, each layer hiding the **ip address** ( your computer’s fingerprint) of the client or as we discussed earlier restaurant patron, who’s order or request is then bounced across the globe to other ip addresses without any way to trace the origin of the initial request. Just think of being the bartender at your favorite bar on a busy Saturday night being swamped by specialty drinks and losing track of the orders, I know that’s so much simpler!

Like learning about anything else in this new technology driven world a quick google search is your best resource in keeping up to date on privacy and internet security trends. Happy surfing!