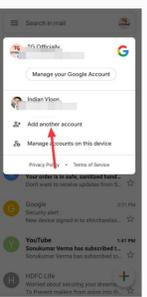
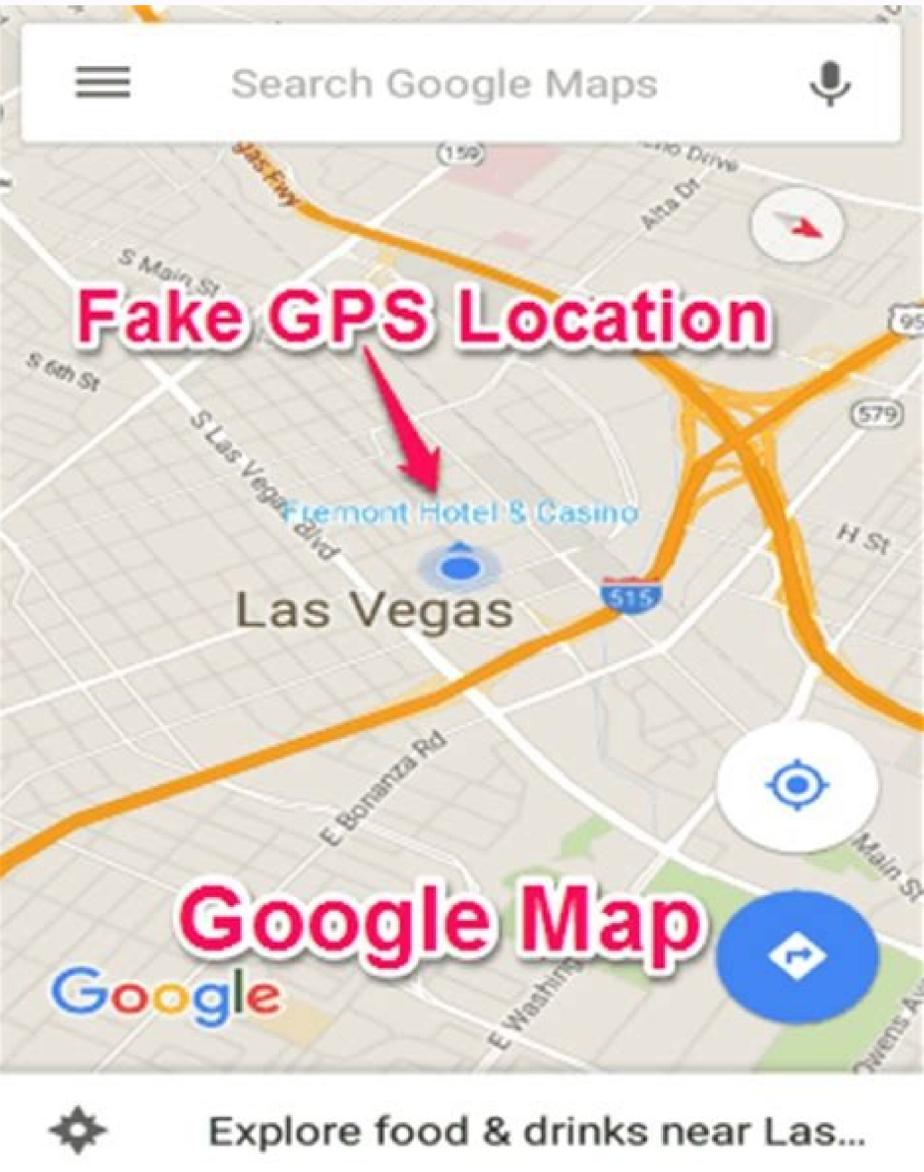
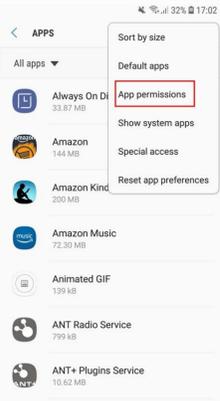
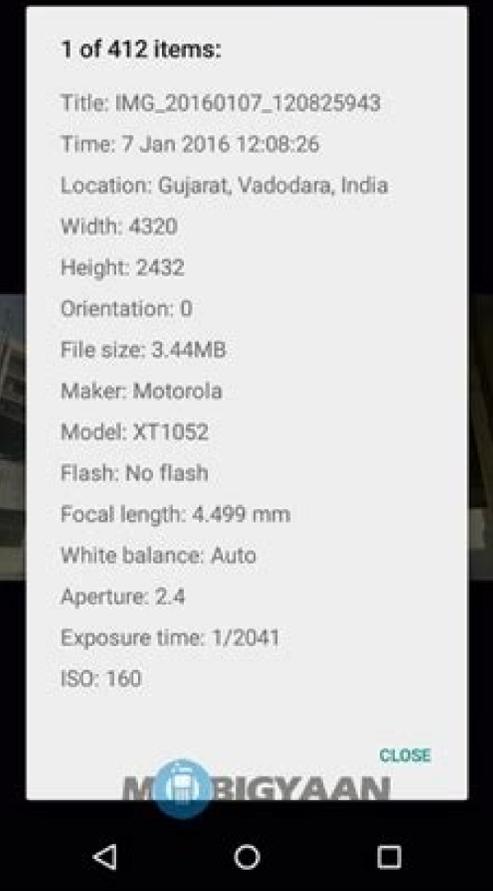
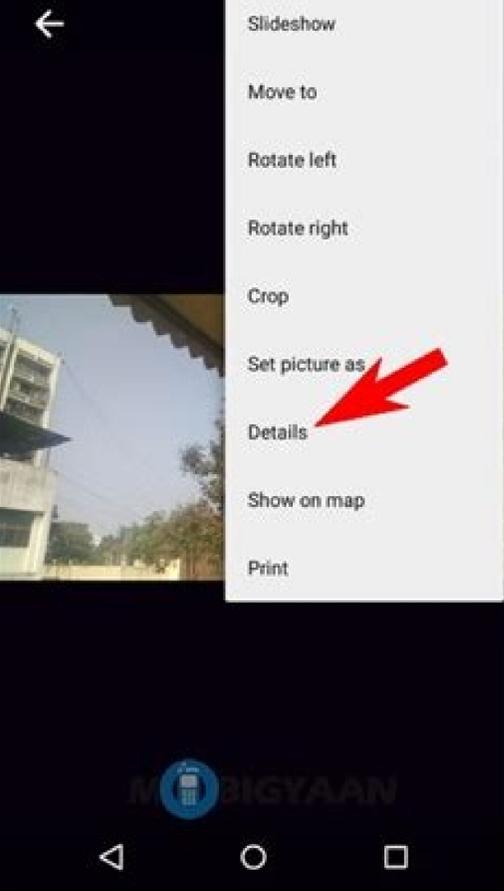
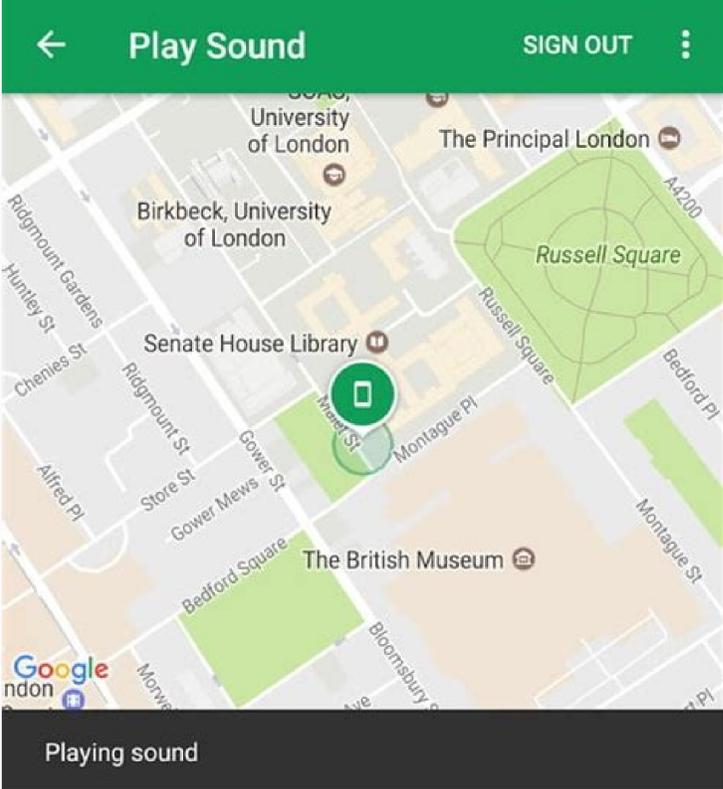


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To stop the sound, press the power key on the device.

Can't find it? Lock it to protect your data.



Location tracking can be very handy — it’s convenient when an app can tell you, say, where the nearby restaurants or gas stations are — but it’s also a privacy issue. Do you want all your wanderings registered by Google? Are you comfortable knowing that Mark Zuckerberg’s minions know where you are at all times? (Well, not that Mark Zuckerberg has minions, but you know what I mean.)In this article, we’ll take a look at how to stop location tracking on your Android phone (and your Google account) and how to delete your location history from your OS and from some of the more popular apps. As always, note that versions of Android can differ, and many manufacturers use overlays as well, which can change the locations of various commands — but they should be similar enough for you to be able to find your way. For these instructions, I’ve used a Pixel 6 phone running Android 12, but I’ve included some directions for those with earlier versions of Android.**Stop Google from tracking you, period.**You probably know that Google can track your location and movements through its Google Maps app. But you may not realize that your Android phone is also tracking your movements and activities through several other built-in apps.If you really don’t want your phone to be tracking any of your movements and activities, there is a way to turn tracking off for all (well, most) of them. You just need to be aware that you’re probably going to render many of your apps (such as ride-share apps, weather apps, and, of course, mapping apps) less usable — or in some cases, completely unusable.**Stop Google tracking using a browser**First, we’re going to stop Google from saving your data.Go to “My Google Activity” you’ll see the buttons for three types of activity: Web & App Activity, Location History, and YouTube History. You can visit each individually by selecting the appropriate button. Under “My Google Activity” you’ll see the buttons for three types of activity: Web & App Activity, Location History, and YouTube History.A more efficient way, though, may be to go to Activity Controls, found in the left-hand menu. This page will show you all three controls on the same page; in addition, you can control ad personalization.Google’s activity controls let you turn off tracking.“Web & App Activity” covers anything you’ve done on Google apps and services. You can turn tracking off completely, or choose to keep it on but stop it from saving your history or activity when you use your Chrome browser. You can also turn off “Include audio recordings,” which determines if all your audio interactions with Google and / or Google Assistant are saved.The other relevant category is, of course, “Location History,” which saves information about where you’ve gone with your device. Also, look for “Devices on this account” and click the down icon to the right; you’ll get a list of all the devices that you have that are currently following your location — since that may include old phones that you are no longer using, this is a good thing to check.We might as well mention that you can also disable your “YouTube History,” which includes both your search and watch history, and “Ad personalization,” which uses your history to choose which ads you’ll see. Okay — you’ve now prevented any more data from being gathered. But you may want to delete all or some of the information that’s already been collected.Go back to the My Activity page and click on “Delete activity by” in the left-hand menu. You’ll get a pop-up window that lets you delete your activity based on time period: the last hour, last day, “All time” (in other words, all dates), or “Custom range” for a specific date range.A pop-up window lets you delete your activity based on time period.If you choose “Custom range,” you’ll be able to choose a date range. If you choose “All time,” you can then filter that info depending on services (such as ads, Chrome, Google Play Store, etc.). When you’re ready, click on “Next.”You can filter your info depending on services.You’ll then get a preview of some of the activities that will be deleted. If you’re okay with that, select “Deletes.”The last step before you delete your activity.Incidentally, if you want to make sure that nobody but you can delete your histories, then select the “Manage activity” link under each category in Activity Controls, and look for “Manage My Activity verification.” If you enable that feature, Google will ask for a password any time you want to look at or delete any history in your account.And if you don’t want to worry about manually deleting your stuff, you can enable auto-delete in each category (you’ll see the option within each category on the Activity Controls page). You’ll have the option to automatically delete your activity after either three, 18, or 36 months.You can now auto-delete your location history.**Stop Google tracking on an Android device**Go to Settings. In the search box on top, type in “Activity controls” and tap it when it comes up.If you have more than one Google account, select the one you want to manage.Here, as with the browser version, you can turn off or pause the monitoring of various activities, including setting auto-delete and managing a timeline of your activity.**Android’s Activity Controls** are very similar to those on the web.You can select an auto-delete option on your mobile device.**Turn location tracking on and off from the Quick Settings tray**If you want to be able to turn location tracking on or off as you need it, you can do that, too. One way to arrange this is to use the Quick Settings tray (which is what you see when you swipe down from the top of your screen). The tray holds a variety of icons for the most often-used Android features; there is a “Location” icon that lets you toggle the location feature on and off.Swipe down from the top of the screen. If you’re using Android 12, you’ll see a series of bubbles for things like Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, flashlight, etc. If you’re using Android 11 or earlier, it will be a line of icons. Either way, that’s your Quick Settings tray. Look for the Location icon (usually, it looks like an upside-down drop of water).**Not there?** With Android 12, swipe across to see more bubbles; otherwise, swipe down. Still missing? Look for a pencil icon; on a Pixel, it will be on the bottom of the tray, but some Android interfaces will have it on top. Tap on the pencil, and the menu will open further. You can now see all the icons that are available. What you want to do is make sure the Location icon is in the easily visible part of the tray.If your Location icon is in the bottom section, hold and drag it up to the visible group. You’ll now be able to quickly swipe down from the top of your screen and toggle Location on and off — for example, if you want to use Google Maps for directions, you can toggle Location on, and then turn it back off when you’re finished.**There is a location button in your Quick Settings tray.**If the Location button isn’t immediately visible, you can move it up.**Stop location tracking on Android devices**If you don’t feel the need to block Google from recording all your activities, and simply want to stop the phone from recording your location, it’s easy to do — as long as you pay attention to the details: Swipe down from the top of the screen so that you see your Quick Settings menu, and long-press on the Location icon — or swipe down, tap the Settings icon, and choose “Location.”You’re now on the Location page. Find the “Use location” feature at the top and toggle it off. You’d think that would be it, wouldn’t you? But you’d be wrong. What is meant by “Use location” in Android depends on which sensors are following the location of the device: besides GPS, it could be Wi-Fi, mobile networks, or other sensors. So before you leave this page, look a little further down. If you’re using Android 12, look for the “Location services” button, otherwise, look for the “Advanced” button and tap on that. Either way, you’ll have several categories that you can toggle on or off. These can be (depending on your Android version and your phone’s manufacturer):Google Emergency Location Service. This tells emergency services where you are if there’s a problem; for example, if your car goes off the road and the ambulance needs to find you. You can turn this off if you want, but read the fine print: “If ELS is off, your mobile carrier may still send device location during an emergency call.”Google Location Accuracy. This uses Wi-Fi and other services to help pinpoint your location. If you want to turn off “Use location,” you need to make sure this is turned off as well. Any app that requires “precise location” (which I’ll explain in a bit) needs this to be turned on.**Google Location History.** This leads you to a page where you can pause your device’s collection of your location history. That doesn’t get rid of what’s already been saved; there are instructions for that a little later in this article Google Location Sharing. If you’re sharing your location with family members or friends, you can manage it here.**Wi-Fi scanning.** This lets apps and services scan for local Wi-Fi networks, even if you have Wi-Fi turned off.**Bluetooth scanning.** This lets apps and services search for Bluetooth devices even if Bluetooth is off. Both this and the Wi-Fi scanning are meant to improve location features.If you can’t see these last two, go back to the Location page and look for a “Wi-Fi and Bluetooth scanning” link. On your Location page, select “Location services” to see additional options.It’s a good idea to keep your Emergency Location Service turned on.**Disable location tracking for any specific app**You can find out which apps actually use location tracking and just disable it for those that you feel don’t need it.Go to the Location page (by long-pressing the Location icon in your Quick Settings tray).Tap on “App permission” (or, if you’re using Android 12, look for “App location permissions”).You’ll find here a list of all your current apps that have permission to access your location either all of the time or only while in use. Tap on any to change the permission to either allow all of the time, allow only while in use, ask every time, or deny. You can also decide whether the app will be allowed to use “precise location” — in other words, use more than GPS to determine where you are. For that, “Google Location Accuracy,” also found on the Location page. Sometimes when you turn off permissions in the Android Settings, the app itself will continually try to get you to restore that permission. It’s irritating, but unless the app lets you say, “No, leave me alone,” you will either have to live with it or get a different app.**App permissions classify apps by which permissions you allow them to have.**When you click on a specific app, you can change its permission level.**Delete your location history** While you can turn off location tracking from your Android phone’s settings, once a service has collected your location info, getting rid of that history takes a little work. If you want to delete your location history, the first place you need to go is Google; after that, apps that collect this information include Facebook and Twitter.**Delete your Google location history on Android**While you can delete location history collected for your Google timeline in the My Activity area (see above), you can also get rid of it easily in Google Maps.Go to your Google Maps app.Tap on your profile icon in the upper left corner.Tap on “Your Timeline.”Select the three dots in the upper right corner. Tap on “Settings and Privacy.”Scroll down to “Delete all Location History.” You’ll get a pop-up window that asks you to check a box saying that you understand that some of your apps may not work properly. Check the box and select “Delete.”You also have the option of deleting your location history within a date range or setting the app to automatically delete your location history after three, 18, or 36 months.**You can delete your entire location history or just within a range of dates.**Google will always give you a last chance to back out.**Delete your Google location history on a browser**Go to on the three parallel lines in the upper left corner of the side panel. (If you don’t see the panel, look for the small arrow in the upper left corner and click on it.) Select “Your timeline.”Look for the gear icon on the lower right side of the screen. Click on it, and then on “Delete all Location History.” You can also set the automatic deletion feature here.**Look for the gear in your Timeline** to delete your location history.As with the mobile app, you’ll get a pop-up window that asks you to check a box saying that you understand that some of your apps may not work properly. Check the box and select “Delete Location History.”You’ll be asked to confirm the history deletion.**Delete your location history on Facebook**Facebook does keep a separate history of your locations, and if you want to delete that history, you can do it through the mobile app or the browser.Using the Android appIn the Facebook app, tap the hamburger (three parallel lines) in the top right corner.Scroll down and tap on “Settings & Privacy.”Tap on “Settings.”Scroll down and tap on “Location” (which is under the “Permissions” subhead). This will take you to the “Location Services” page.You can now choose to let Facebook access your phone’s location all the time, while using the app, or never.If you want to allow Facebook to save a history of your locations (or stop it from doing so), tap on “Location History” to toggle it on or off. It’s here that you can also delete your existing location history.In Facebook “Settings & Privacy,” select “Settings.”Location Services lets you choose when Facebook can receive your location data.Using a browserIn Facebook, click on the small arrow next to the Notifications icon in the upper right corner. Click on “Settings & Privacy” > “Privacy Shortcuts.”Click on “Manage your location settings.”Select “Manage your location settings” under the “Privacy” category.On the “Location Settings” page, click on the “View your Location History” button. The “Location Settings” page lets you view your history, delete it, and stop recording it.Then click on the gear in the upper left corner. As with the mobile app, you can now either delete that specific day or delete your entire location history.You can delete that day’s history or all your history.On the “Location Settings” page, you can also turn your location history on or off for your mobile devices. Delete your location history on TwitterTwitter makes it relatively simple to turn off its location tracking within the Android app.Tap on your personal icon in the upper left of the homescreen. Tap on “Settings and privacy.” Tap on “Privacy and safety.” Scroll down until you see “Location information” and tap on it. You can then toggle off the boxes that give Twitter permission to collect your GPS and other location information. And don’t forget to tap on “Explore settings,” which gives Twitter the option to show nearby content.Scroll down until you see “Location information.” There are two location settings to toggle off here, and one to tap on.You can delete your Twitter location history as well, but only from your browser. Go to your Twitter account, click on “More” in the left column and on “Settings and privacy.” In the left-hand menu, click on “Privacy and safety.” Scroll down and select “Location information.” Uncheck “Personalize based on places you’ve been.” Then click on “Add location information to your Tweets.” Uncheck “Add location information to your Tweets.” Then click on “Delete all location information.” And if it asks; yes, you are sure.**Update August 25th, 2020, 2:37PM ET:** This article was originally published on April 12th, 2019; it has been updated to include the update from Android 9 to Android 10, along with changes to various web-based applications.**Update November 30th, 2021, 3:55PM ET:** Updated to reflect changes in the Android operating system and in Google, Facebook, and Twitter apps.

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