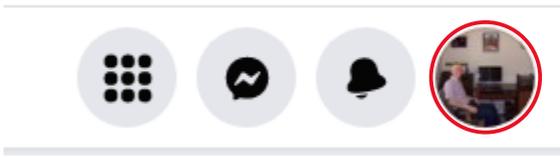Facebook's Privacy Checkup

Facebook provides the Privacy Checkup feature that leads you through various privacy and security settings so you can customize what items in your profile are visible to other Facebook users and in some instances entities outside Facebook. This handout goes through the Privacy Checkup procedures and indicates some recommended settings to improve your privacy and security. This includes reducing the ability of someone setting up a fake Facebook account, pretending to be you, and then sending friend requests that appear to be from you. This is referred to a "spoofing". This is likely what has happened when you receive a friend request from someone who is already a friend of yours. Users will often refer to this as being "hacked".

You can prevent your Facebook account from being spoofed by changing the Facebook privacy setting to make your friends list viewable by "Only me" (i.e., not by "Public"). This is accomplished in step 5 a) below.
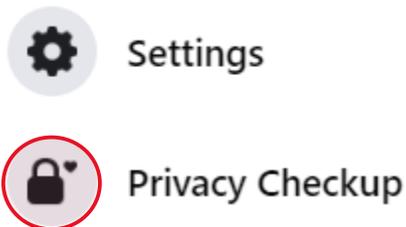
1) On your Facebook Home page, on the far, upper right, click your profile picture.

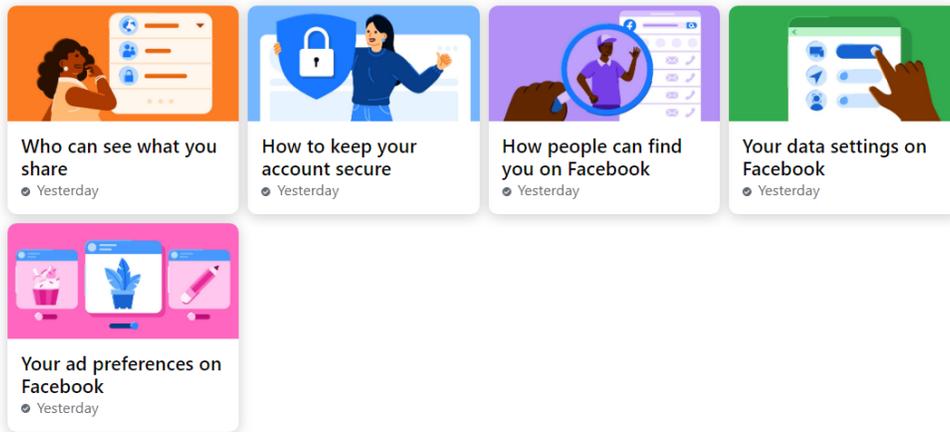2) Next, click the "Settings & Privacy" cog wheel icon.
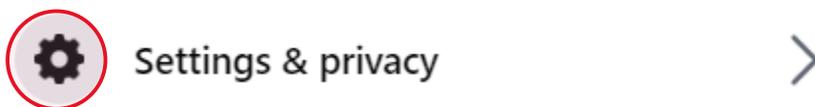
3) Then click the "Privacy Checkup" padlock icon.

4) Privacy Checkup consists of the 5 areas as shown below.

5) Click on each of these items and follow the steps indicated to see what the options are and make changes to improve privacy and security.

a) "Who can see what you share"
- You may choose to hide your phone number and e-mail address by setting both to "Only me". Do this by clicking on the setting for each and then selecting "Only me". The other settings in the "Profile Information" list are up to you. However, scroll down to the bottom item, "Who can see your friends list on your profile?" and set it to "Only me".
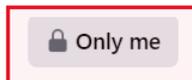
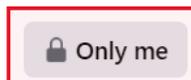b) "How to keep your account secure"
- This item will provide tips on passwords, setting up two-factor authentication, and notifications when someone signs into your Facebook account. These notifications should be turned on (blue color). If gray, click on them to turn them on.

c) "How people can find you on Facebook"
- The best security option is to set both the Phone number and Email searches to "Only me".

d) "Your data settings on Facebook"
- This pertains to apps and websites from other companies you have used Facebook to log into. If you have done this they will be listed and you can remove them, if desired.

e) "Your ad preferences on Facebook"
- Here you can choose which of your Profile Information advertisers can use to reach you. Listed are "Relationship status", "Employer", "Job title" and "Education". Click the slider button to turn on or off. This only affects advertising and not who can see this information. Finally, you can select who can see the organizations you have liked on Facebook.