

Browser Settings for Privacy

Many internet services track your search activity and the websites you visit. Our August “Guru” article explained how websites use your internet address to track your web activity. This month, we’ll explain how to reduce the likelihood that the websites you visit are tracking what you do.

Here are three ways you can prevent website tracking:

1. Enable Built-in Browser Privacy Features

All popular browsers, including Firefox, Edge, and Chrome, offer privacy features that block tracking. To enable this protection, click the menu button in the upper right corner of the browser window and then “Settings” in the drop-down list. (See picture at right.) From there, you’ll find various options and privacy settings.

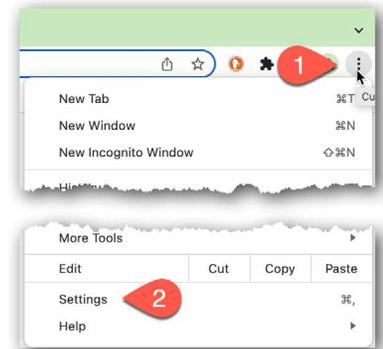
Mac’s Safari browser blocks tracking by default. You can adjust these settings by clicking on the Safari Menu > Preferences > Privacy.

2. Add the DuckDuckGo Browser Extension

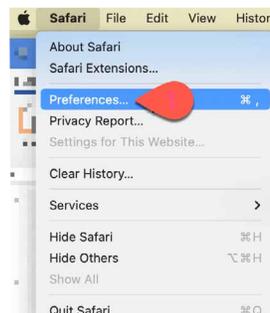
Yes, it has a funky name, but DuckDuckGo’s browser extension¹, which is available for Safari, Edge, Chrome, etc., provides both a private search “engine” (à la “Google”) as well as website tracking prevention. You can download the extension at duckduckgo.com, along with instructions on how to add the extension to your browser.

DuckDuckGo’s search engine isn’t as robust as Google, but it doesn’t track what you search for.

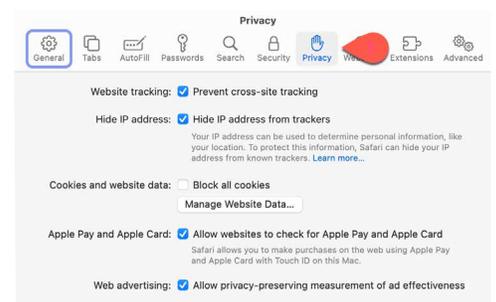
When I visited Papa John’s website to order a pizza, DuckDuckGo blocked four trackers. (See picture at right).



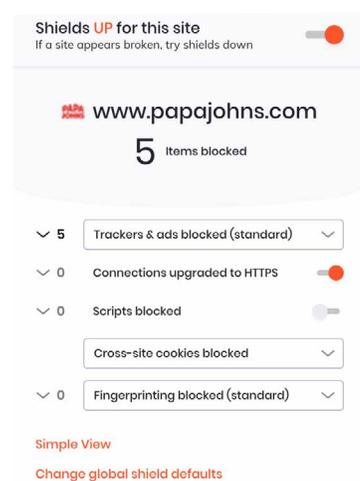
Click the Menu button and then Settings in Firefox, Edge, or Chrome.



Select Preferences in the Safari menu...



...then select Privacy to list the extensive options.



The Brave browser blocked five sites from tracking my visit to Papa Johns.

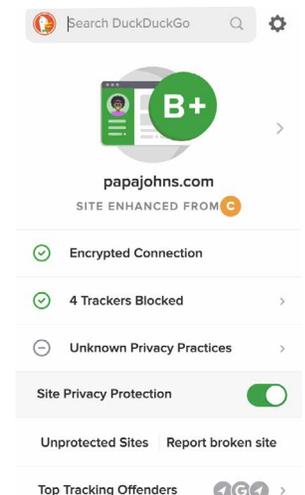
3. Install the Brave Browser

The Brave web browser looks like Chrome, but it keeps your web activities private. Brave blocked five tracking attempts on Papa John’s website (see picture at left).

Brave is available for Windows and Mac computers at brave.com. It also offers a search engine that’s pretty good—and private.

If You Need Help

If you need help adjusting your browser settings, visit the PSRC website at <https://www.princetonsenior.org/technology-lab/>, fill out one of our nifty tech help requests, and we’ll be in touch.



The DuckDuckGo browser extension blocked four trackers and provided other privacy information about the Papa John’s website.

¹ “Extensions” are browser add-ons, such as ad-blockers, grammar-checkers, and so on, that enhance your browser’s capabilities.