

# 6 webcam security tips everyone should know

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Webcams are incredibly useful, but if not properly protected, they can also be a gateway to privacy breaches. Threats ranging from cyberattacks to unauthorized surveillance are real, but you can prevent intruders from accessing your webcam and invading your personal space.

## 1. Use a webcam cover to protect privacy



In 2016, The Guardian reported that Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, as well as former FBI director James Comey, covered their laptop webcams. On tape, Comey said,

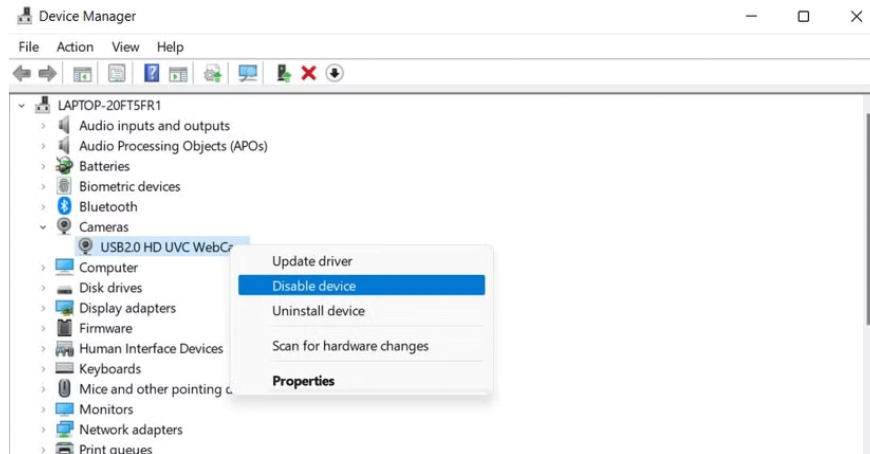
*I put a piece of tape on my camera because I saw someone smarter than me put tape on their camera.*

This simple yet effective method will block unauthorized surveillance, even if someone gains access to your device. Therefore, to protect your privacy, you should always cover your camera when not in use.

If your device doesn't have a built-in cover, you can use opaque tape. However, a sliding cover is a better alternative, as it allows you to easily open the camera when needed.

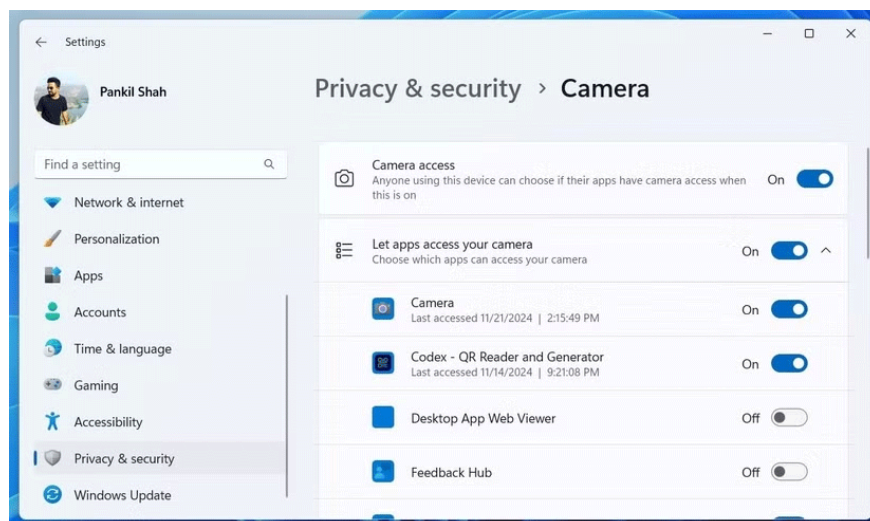
## 2. Disconnect or disable webcam when not in use

If you're uncomfortable covering your webcam, you should get into the habit of unplugging your external webcam when you're not using it or disabling your built-in webcam. This ensures that even if your device is compromised, hackers won't be able to access your webcam and spy on you. When you're ready to use it, plug it back in or turn it on.



If you're using an external webcam, unplug it from your computer. You can disable the built-in webcam through Windows Device Manager or System Preferences on macOS.

## 3. Block suspicious apps and websites from accessing your Webcam



Your webcam can be compromised by apps, malware, or websites that secretly access it. Once these apps have access, they can activate your webcam at any time to spy on you. Therefore, you should regularly review your device's permission settings and revoke camera access for suspicious apps.

You can revoke camera access for suspicious apps in your operating system's app permissions settings and deny access to websites in your browser settings.

## 4. Pay attention to what's displayed in the background

If left unchecked, your background during video calls can reveal personal, sensitive data, or private information. This can reveal your private life, damaging your reputation with colleagues, friends, or clients. Therefore, you should do a quick check before joining a meeting.

Make sure no sensitive content is visible. Use software features to blur or replace the background, and consider using a virtual background to hide what's behind you.

## 5. Update webcam driver to stay safe

Hackers can also exploit vulnerabilities and bugs in outdated webcam drivers to infiltrate your device and access your camera. While most operating systems automatically update drivers when installing a new operating system update, you'll need to manually check for new drivers on the manufacturer's website, especially if you're using an external webcam, and install them.

By updating your drivers, you ensure that you're using the latest security patches from your operating system or manufacturer, which helps protect both your webcam and your privacy.

## 6. Watch for signs of webcam hacking

The longer a webcam breach goes on, the more your privacy is at risk. That's why you need to be able to recognize the signs of a webcam hack when hackers secretly activate it to spy on you. One key sign is if your webcam light suddenly turns on, even when you're not using any camera apps.

If your webcam appears to be in use when you try to access it, or if you find unusual photos or videos on your device, this could be a sign of a hack. If you're ever in doubt, you can review your webcam's activity log to detect any unauthorized access and verify that your webcam has been compromised.

Here are some steps you can take to enhance your webcam privacy and protect your personal life. If you haven't already prioritized webcam security, start following the tips above to prevent any accidental privacy breaches you'll regret later.

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