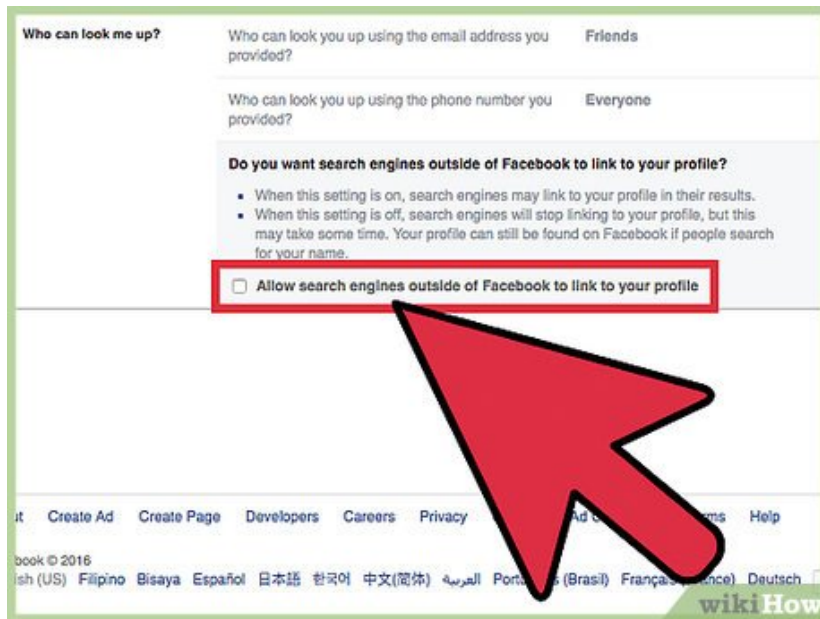


How to Delete Your Name from Search Engines

As people become more reliant on the Internet, personal information is becoming more easily accessible. If you've typed your name into a popular search engine, you might have been surprised to find more information out there than you...

Part 1 of 7:

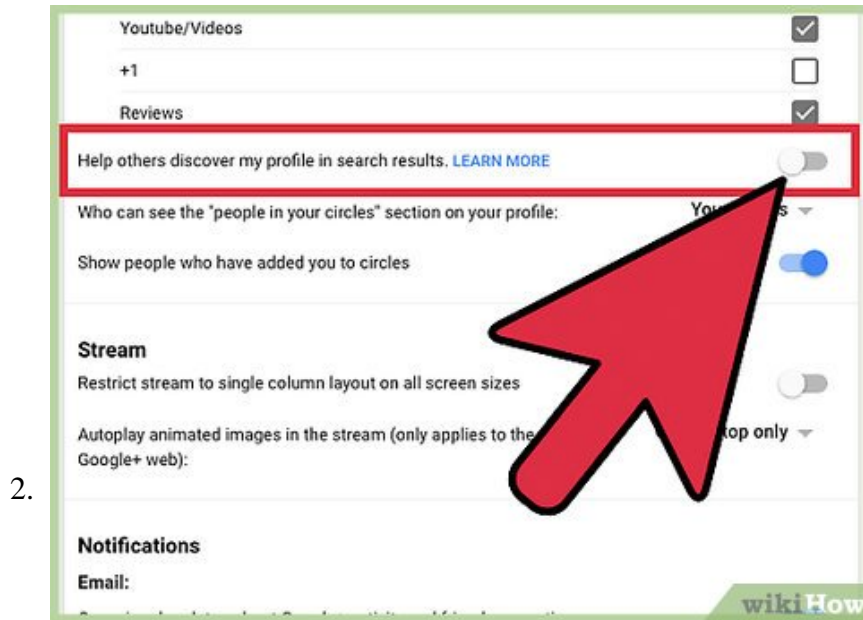
Securing Your Social Networks



1.

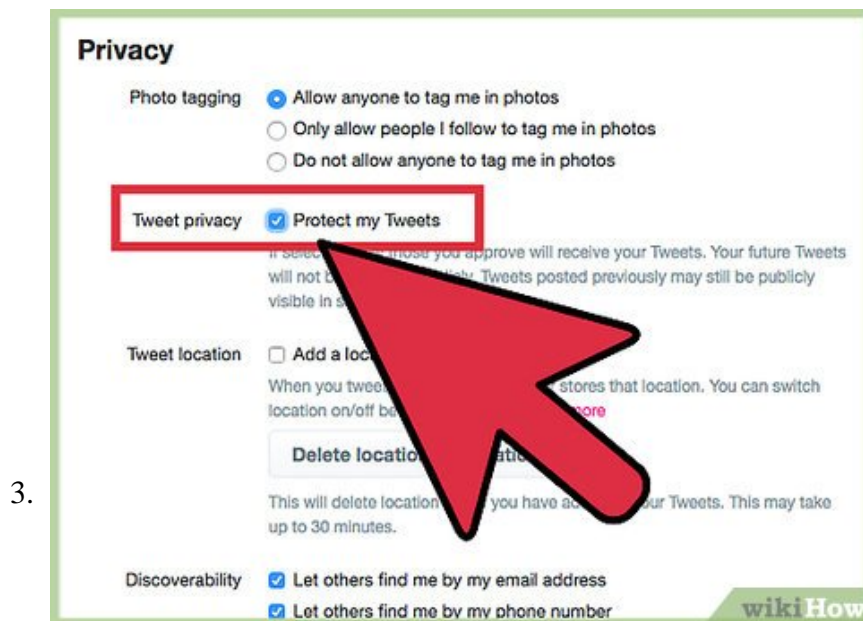
Make your Facebook profile private. Facebook is one of the first things that will appear on a search of your name, so setting your profile private can be very effective. Your changes may take a few days to take effect.

1. Log into your Facebook account and click the ? (looks like a upside down triangle) button in the bar at the top.
2. Select "Settings" and then click the "Privacy" tab on the left.
3. Find the "Do you want other search engines to link to your timeline?" option. Click "Edit" and then uncheck the box.
4. Find the "Who can see your future posts?" option. Click "Edit" and make sure it's set to anything other than "Public".



Make your Google+ profile private. Chances are that if you have a Gmail or YouTube account, you have a Google+ profile as well. Google+ profiles will appear towards the top of Google search results.

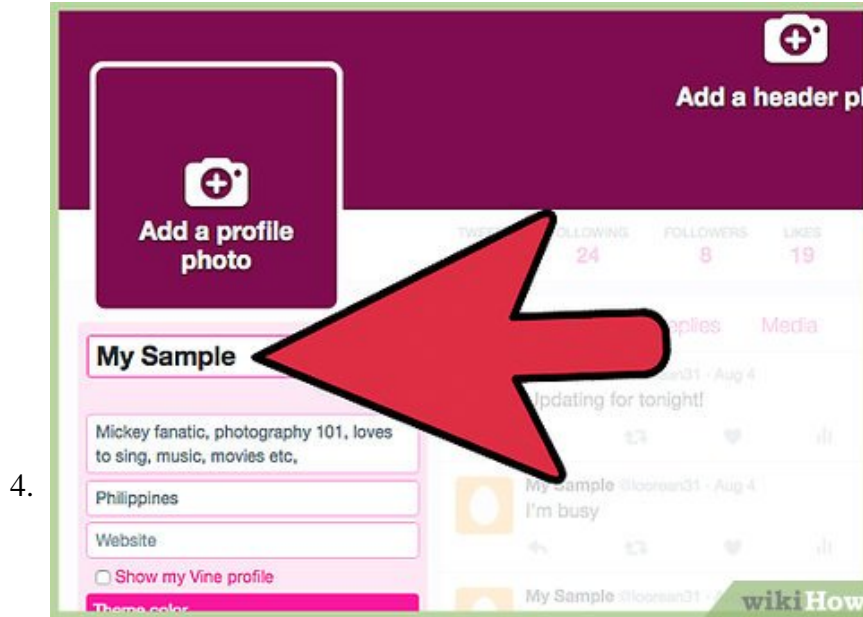
1. Log into your Google+ profile at plus.google.com.
2. Click the "Home" menu in the upper-left corner and select "Settings".
3. Uncheck the "Help others discover my profile in search results" box in the "Profile" section. This will stop search engines from crawling your page. It may take several days for this change to take effect.



Make your tweets private. If you use Twitter, you can set your tweets to private. This will prevent others from reading your tweets unless they are authorized by you. This will make it much harder to gain new followers.

1. Log into your Twitter account and click your profile icon.
2. Select "Settings" and then click the "Security and privacy" tab on the left.

3. Check the "Protect my Tweets" box in the "Privacy" section. You'll still need to remove your old tweets if you don't want them appearing.

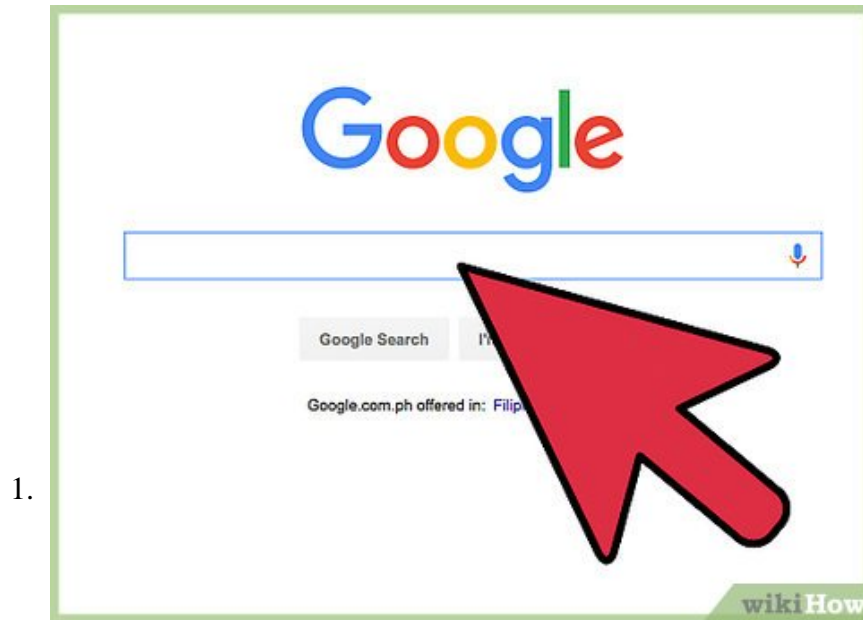


Change your name on social networks. There's a good chance that the people you care about on your social networks know who you are, so changing your name will help hide your profiles from search engines. Change your name to a nickname that your friends and family will recognize you as, but others won't search for.

1. Facebook - You can change your name from the "General" section of the Settings menu. Click "Edit" next to your name. You can only change your name every 60 days.
2. Google+ - Open your Google+ profile page and click your name. Enter in your new name. This will change your name for all Google products connected with that profile, such as Gmail and YouTube.
3. Twitter - Log into Twitter and open your profile. Click the "Edit profile" button and then change the name underneath your picture.

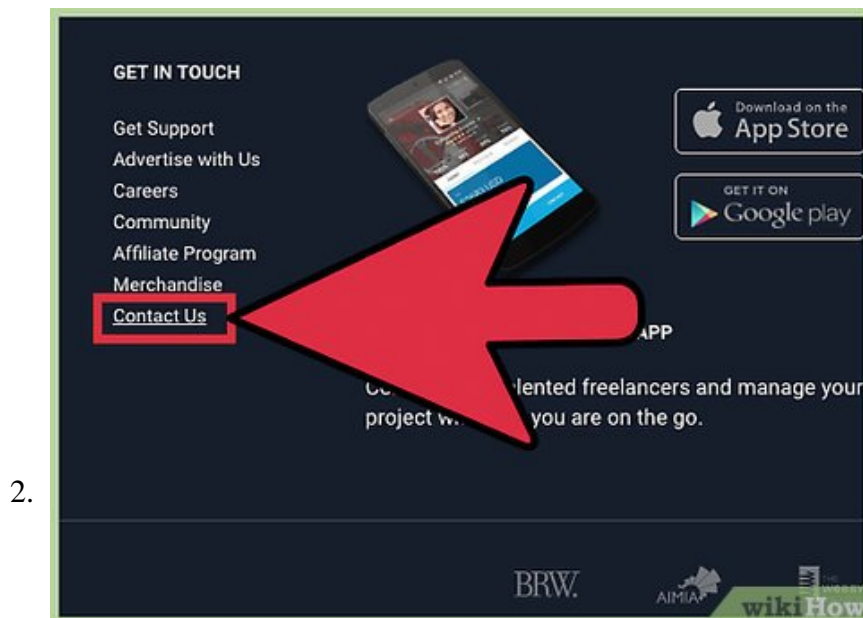
Part 2 of 7:

Contacting Site Owners



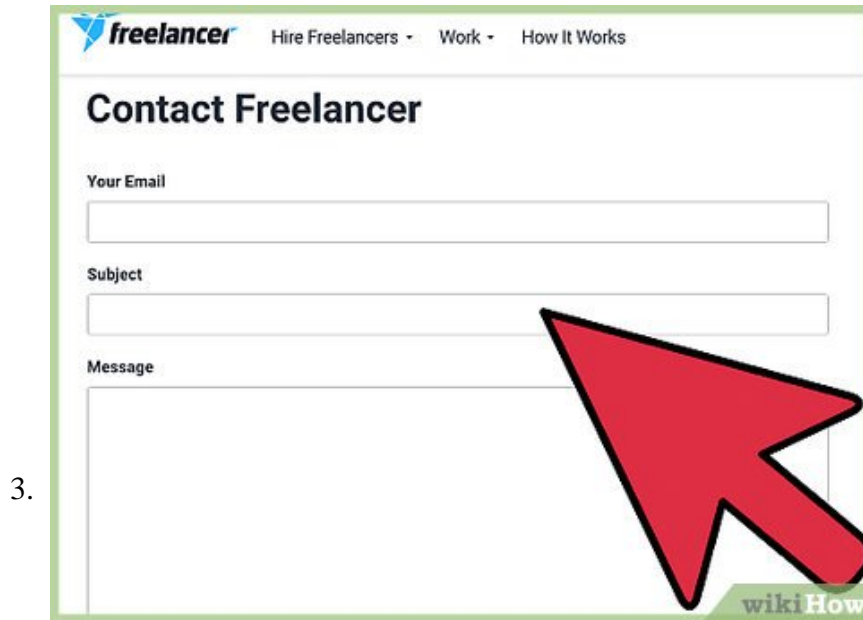
Perform searches on yourself. You'll be able to attack your problem much easier if you know where to focus your efforts. Perform web searches on your name using a variety of different search engines. Add modifiers like your location to help narrow down the results. Note the top results for each one.

1. Using multiple search engines will help you find everything that's out there, as different engines crawl the web in different ways.
2. Remember, it's not the search engine that is causing your name to appear, it is content on the web.



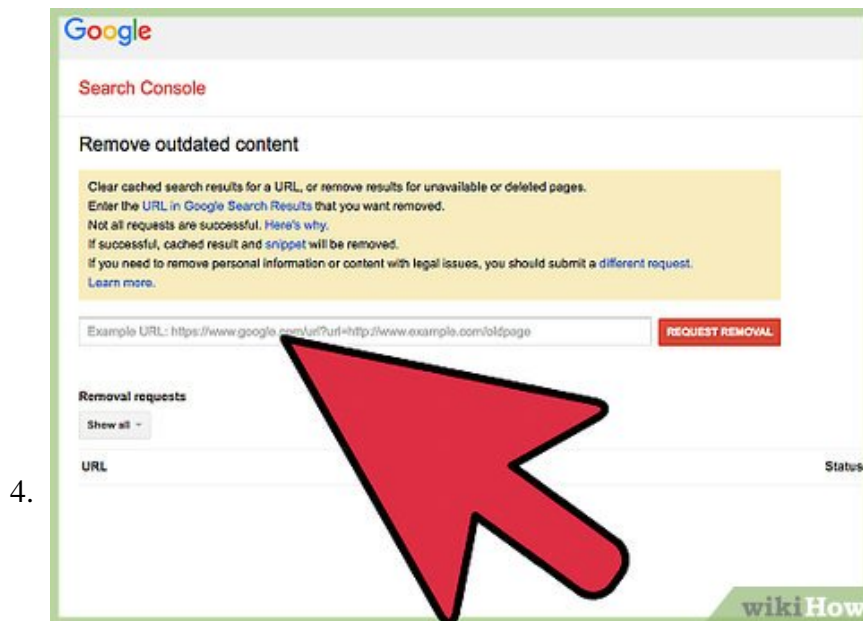
Find the site's contact information. Many websites will have contact information in the "Contact" section, or in the footer of the page. Use this contact information to send a request to the site owner to remove the content with your information.

1. You can use WHOIS, a domain registry database, to attempt to find contact information if none is listed. If the domain was privately registered, your request will be sent to a proxy company, and may or may not be forwarded to the actual owner.



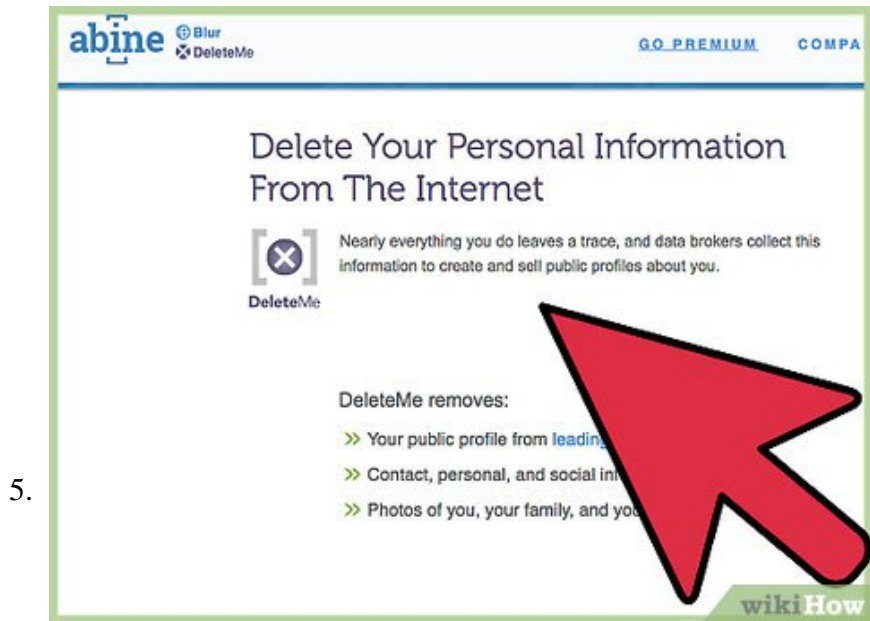
Send a polite message. If something attached to your name is posted on a domain you can't control - for example, a blog post on someone else's blog - a polite, concise email can go a long way. Simply ask them **nicely** to remove your name from their site. Keep in mind that they are under no obligation to do as you ask; this is why politeness is absolutely crucial to getting them to fulfill your request.

1. You may have heard that it is illegal to publish information about someone that is defamatory or slanderous. In truth, determining whether content is defamatory or slanderous is an extremely nuanced legal matter; additionally, there is a loophole regarding slanderous content online in which website owners are not responsible for user-submitted content. For you, this means that again, they are not under any legal obligation to remove said content. Depending on the website, though, sending a polite email request just might get the job done.



Use the Google site removal tool after the content has been taken down. If the site owner cooperates and removes the content, it may still appear in Google's search results. While this will eventually go away,

you can speed up the removal process by filing to have that URL removed from the search results. Fill out the form here to have the URL processed for removal.

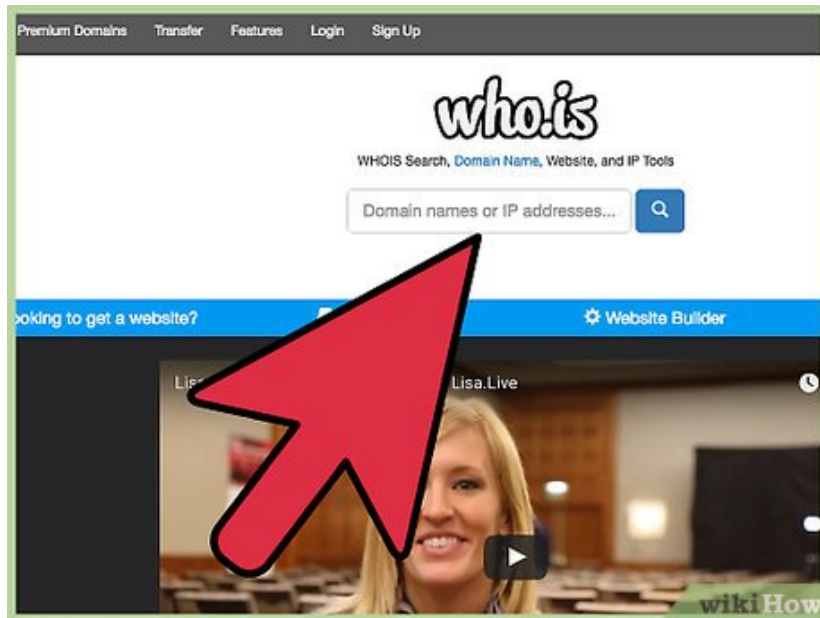


Contact "people finder" and "411" websites. There are a variety of online directories that may have information about you, including your name, phone number, and address. You'll need to send information removal requests to each of these directory sites. Some of the most popular directory sites include Intelius and Spokeo.^[1]

1. You can use services such as Abine's DeleteMe to automatically contact all of these directory sites with removal requests. This will cost you money, but can be much more time-effective if you want to be thorough.

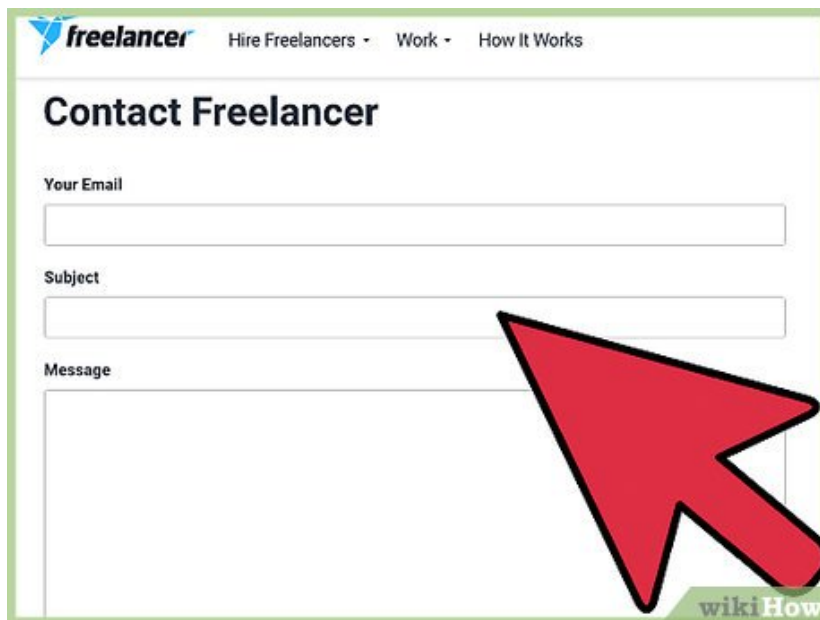
Part 3 of 7:

Contacting Hosting Companies



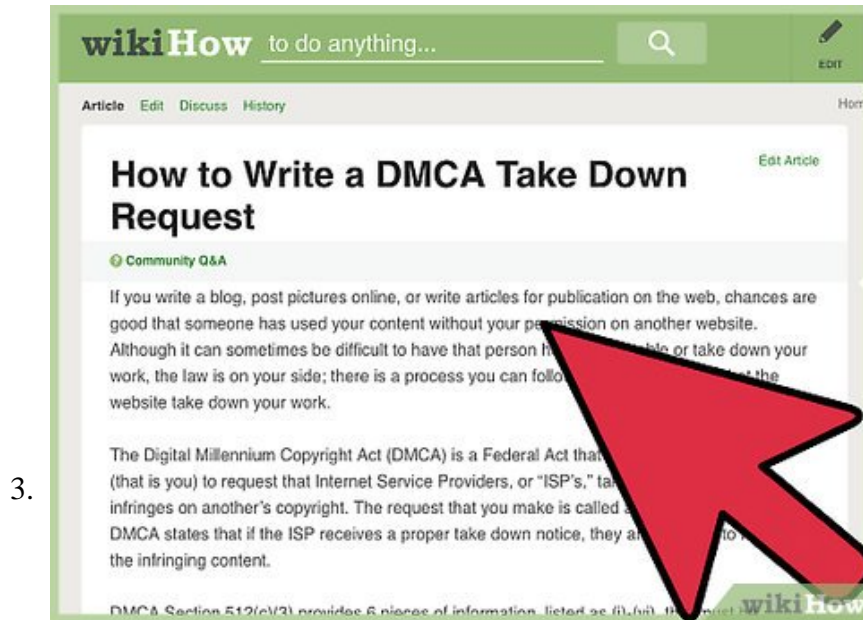
1.

Determine the host. You can use the WHOIS search to find the host of the website. The host has the power to remove pages, especially if they violate the host's terms and policies. Chances are that most hosts don't allow slanderous or defamatory content, and you can use this to remove your information. Contact the host when the site owner isn't responding or is refusing to remove content.



2.

Send the request to the host. Send a polite but strong message to the host's contact address. If you can, describe the specific policies that the content you want removed is violating. If the host is trustworthy and your claim is legitimate, this will usually be enough to cause action.



Send a DCMA takedown request. If someone is illegally posting your copyrighted content, you can submit a DCMA takedown request to the host. While this won't work for your name or information, since that isn't copyrightable, it can be effective at keeping your work from being spread illegally. Some hosting companies have contact links dedicated to copyright violations, while others will need to have messages sent to the standard contact addresses.

1. See How to Write a DMCA Take Down Request for detailed instructions on how to word and send the request.

Part 4 of 7:

Taking Legal Action



Know when this is necessary. If the site owner and the host are refusing to remove your content, you may have to resort to legal measures. This will be most effective if either the site owner or the hosting company are in the same country as you.

1. Remember, this method will only be useful if the content that is posted is actually illegal (slanderous, defamatory, copyright). It is not illegal for someone to just post your name on a website.



Contact a lawyer to draft an "intent to sue" notice. This is the cheapest option, and is often good enough to scare the recipient into taking down the content. You only need a few hours of the lawyer's time to perform this, so it shouldn't cost too much. Send the notice to both the site owner and the hosting company.



Get a court order. This is the most expensive solution, and should only be attempted if you are absolutely sure the content is illegal. You'll have to pay legal fees, unless you are able to win your case and have the

site owner or host pay them. Consult with a lawyer to determine if this is the correct course of action for you. You'll have a very hard time even getting a court date if the host is from a different country.

1. See How to Get a Court Order for more information on filing a court order.

Part 5 of 7:

Improving Your Search Results

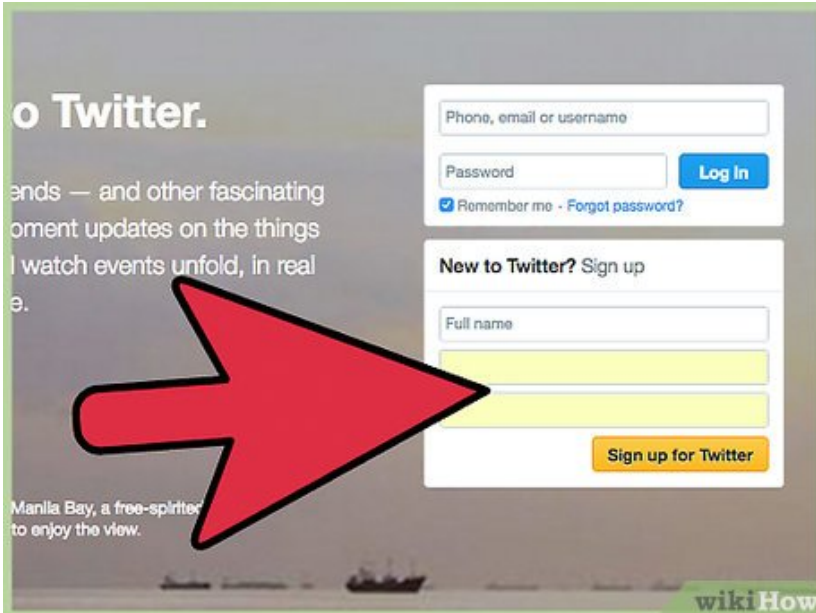
1.



The screenshot shows the WikiHow article page for "How to Get Rid of Your Bad Reputation". The article is marked as "Expert Reviewed". It features a table of contents with three parts: "Assessing Your Reputation", "Improving Your Reputation", and "Maintaining a Good Reputation". The first part, "Assessing Your Reputation", is highlighted. A large red arrow points to the beginning of the article text, which starts with "You are not born with a reputation. Instead, you develop your reputation over time through your behavior and relationships with others. If you treat people...".

Know when to take this approach. If you just can't get someone to take down negative information about you, the best course of action is to try to bury it in good content. This means you may be actively taking the opposite approach of removing your name, since you'll want lots of results for your name that are positive.

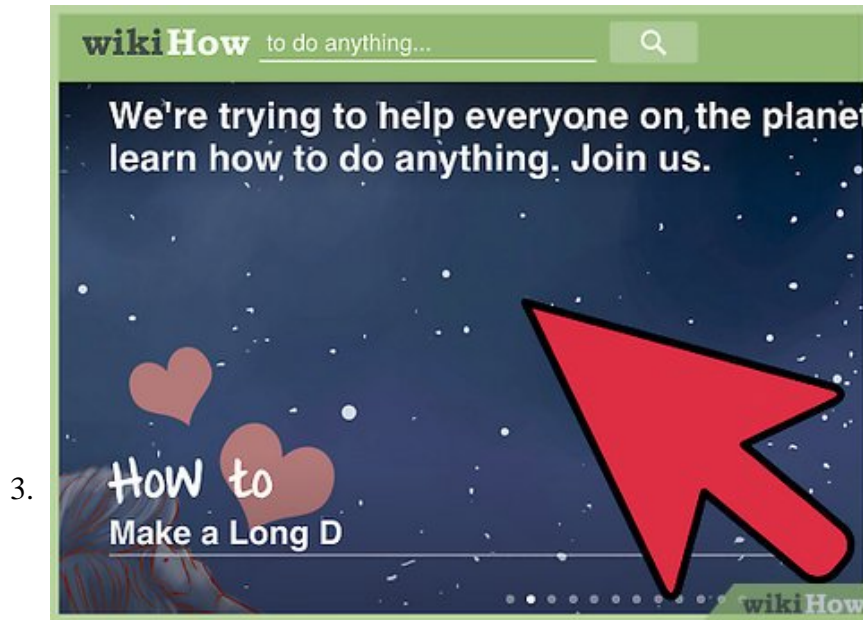
2.



The screenshot shows the Twitter sign-up page. It features a login form with fields for "Phone, email or username" and "Password", and a "Log In" button. Below the login form is a "New to Twitter? Sign up" section with a "Full name" field and a "Sign up for Twitter" button. A large red arrow points to the sign-up form.

Sign up for every major social network. Since the goal of this is to bury a negative piece of content, you'll want to create as much neutral and positive content as possible. This includes social networks, as these are often ranked highly in search results. Sign up for every major social network and make sure your accounts are set to be publicly-viewable.

1. Sign up for Facebook, Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, Vine, Pinterest, Instagram, and any other popular networks.



Create profiles and post on public forums. Create accounts on sites like Quora, GitHub, Stack Exchange, and other public sites (even wikiHow). All of these will contribute to your search results. Once you've created a profile, make some helpful posts on popular threads to increase the chance that your name will be linked to it in a search result.



Register your real name as a domain name. This URL will shoot to the top of any search for your name because it is an exact match.

1. It also helps to include a link to this domain on your public social media profiles. The more a URL is linked to from an outside source, the higher up it will appear in search results.^[2]
2. Use this opportunity to market yourself or your business. Include some positive information, especially if you are trying to bury content that doesn't put you in a very good light.

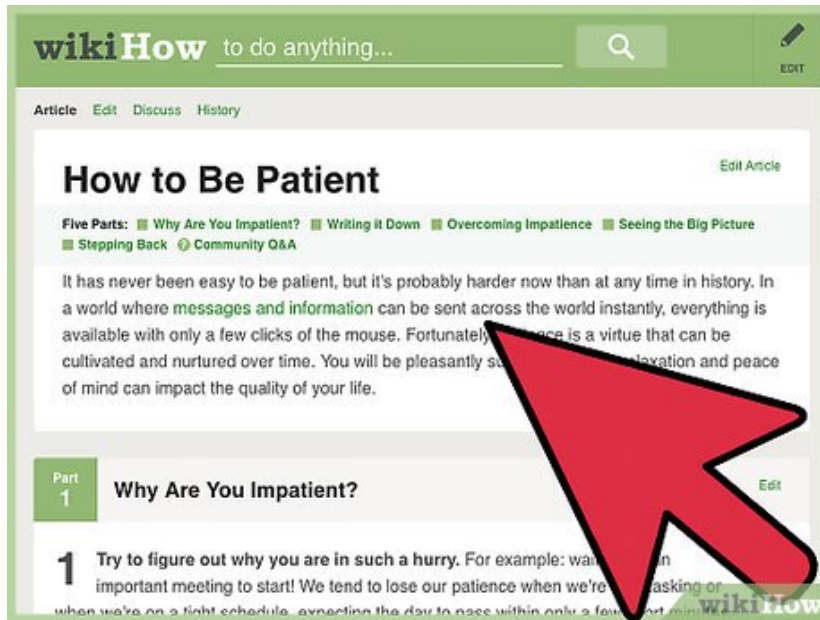


Start a blog. If you really want to make a dent on your search result, a popular blog will go a long way. This will take a lot of time, but is probably the most effective way to bury a bad article or page. You can start a blog for free using Blogger, WordPress, or a variety of other services. Try to post at least once a week to start building up content.

1. See How to Start a Blog for some tips on getting your blog started.



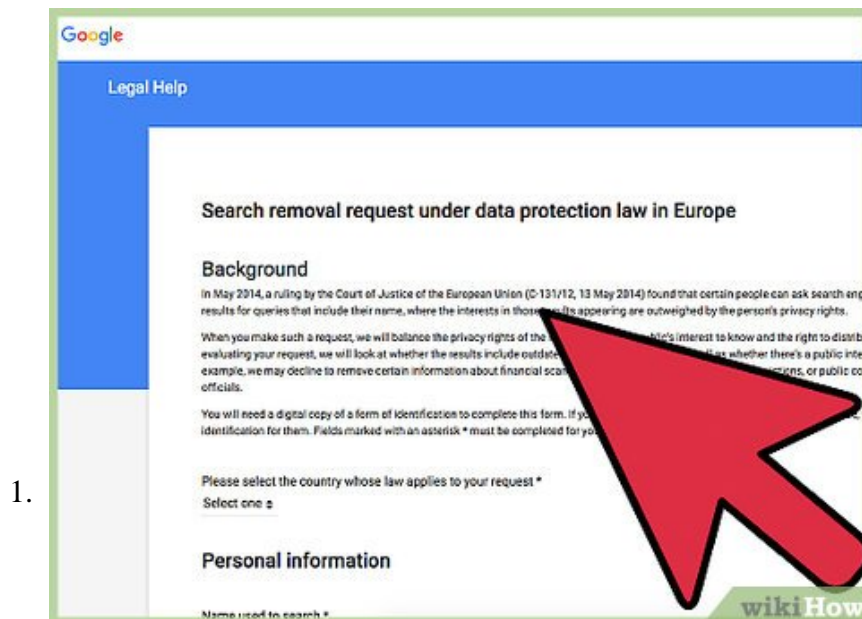
Ask happy customers for positive reviews. If you run a business and are trying to bury a bad review, ask your satisfied customers to consider leaving a review on Yelp or Google+. Enough good reviews could quickly drown out a negative one.



Be patient. It may take weeks or months for your content to overtake the negative piece, especially if it is popular. Even if you go with a paid service, it will likely take a significant amount of time for the search result rankings to change.

Part 6 of 7:

Using the "Right to be Forgotten" (EU)



Visit the search removal page for Europe. If you reside in the European Union, you may have Google review your data and decide if it is eligible to be removed from the search results. To do this, you'll need to fill out a form indicating what results you want removed. Not all requests will be granted, and public information such as criminal convictions, malpractice, and financial scams will likely not be removed.

1. Go to the form page to begin submitting the request.

Personal information


Name used to search *
This should be the name that, when used as a search query, produces the results you would like to delist. If you wish to submit multiple names (if your name differs from your current last name), please put a "/" between the names. For example, "John Smith / John Doe".

Full name of requester *
Your own name, even if you are making the request on behalf of someone else who you are authorized to represent. If you are representing someone else, you must have the legal authority to act on their behalf.

If you are submitting this request on behalf of someone else, please provide your relationship to that person (for example, "I am the father of..."). We may ask for documentation confirming that you are authorized to act on their behalf.

Contact email address *
(The email address where we will contact you with updates about your complaint)

Search results you want removed from the list of results produced by Google



2.

Fill out the form. You'll need to include your name as well as the name that retrieves the results you want to remove. You'll also need to include specific URLs for search results that you want to get rid of. Each URL you add will need an explanation as to why you think it should be removed (outdated, irrelevant, objectionable, etc.).

URLs for results you want removed *

[Add additional](#)

For each URL you provided, please explain:
(1) how the linked URL relates to you (or, if you are submitting this form on behalf of someone else, how it relates to that person)
(2) why the content on this URL in search results is distributed unlawfully, inaccurate, or outdated.

documents in support of your request.


We will not be able to process your complaint without this information. *

For example:

http://example_1.com
This URL is about me because... This page should not be included in search results because it is outdated.

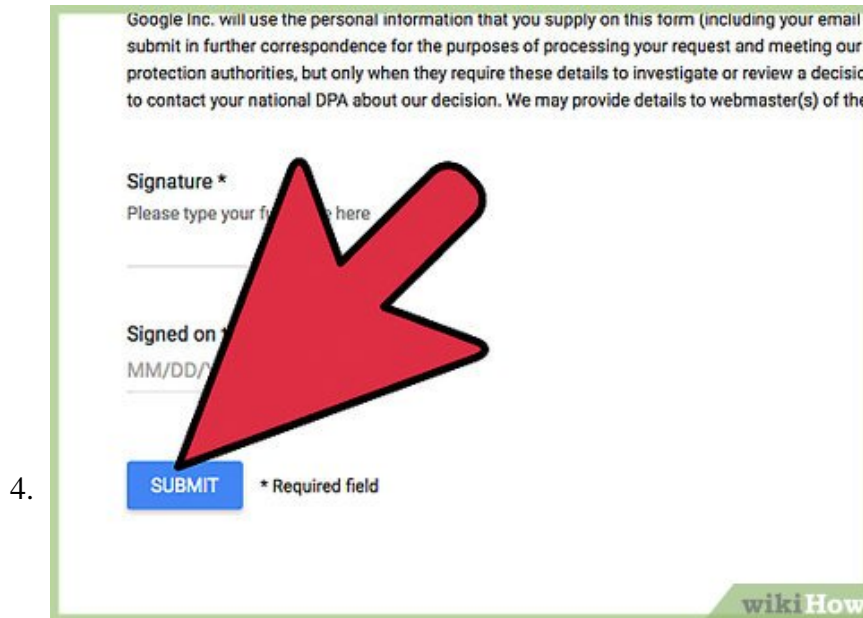
http://example_2.com
This URL is about me because... This page should not be included in search results because it is inaccurate.

To prevent fraudulent removal requests from people impersonating others, trying to steal your information, we need to verify identity. Please attach a legible copy of a document that verifies your identity (such as a passport or other government-issued ID is not required if you are authorized to represent). A passport or other government-issued ID is not required if you are authorized to represent.



3.

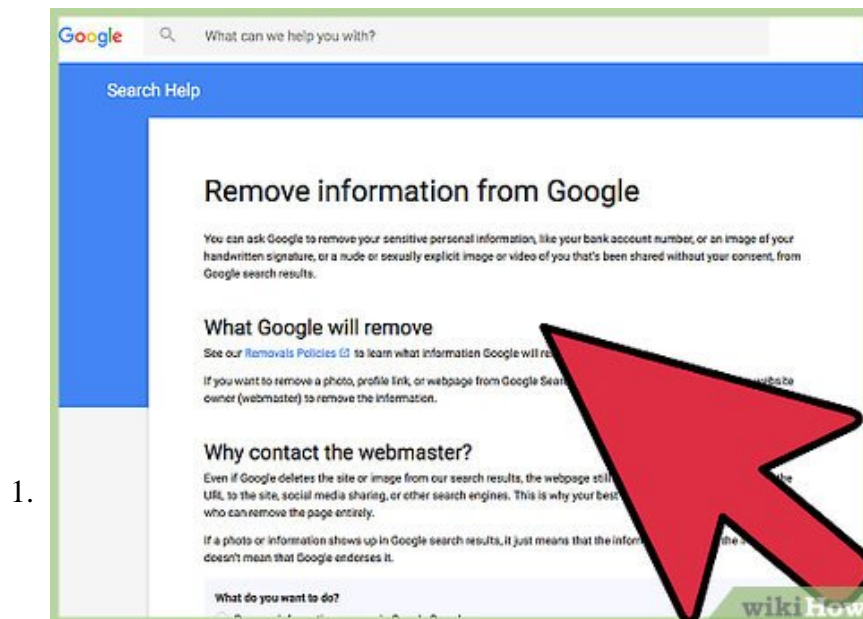
Include a document that can be used to verify your identity. This doesn't have to be a scan of your passport or ID, but it should have enough information to verify that you are the person making the request.



Wait for your request to be approved or denied. If the information is deemed not of public interest, then the results will be removed from Google search results. It may take a while for your request to be reviewed, and even longer for it to be processed.

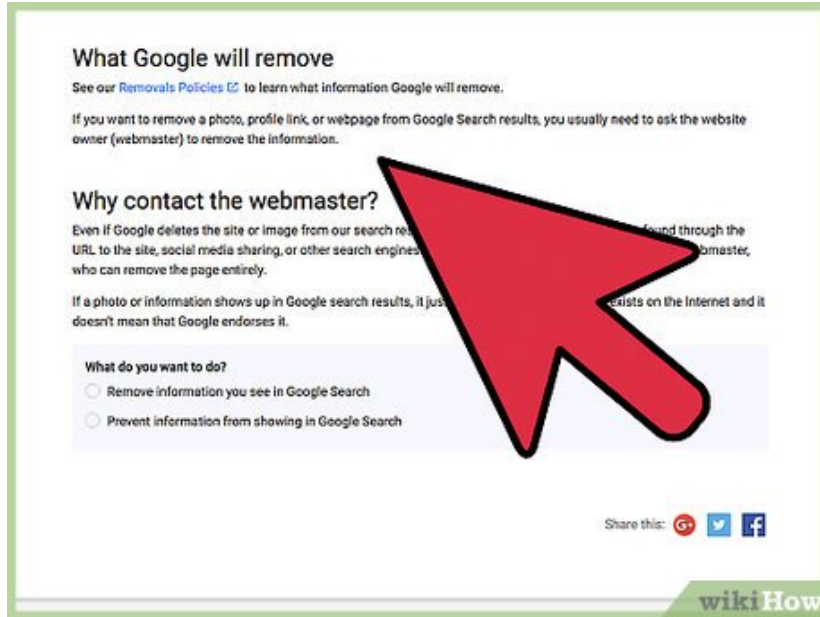
Part 7 of 7:

Removing Personal Identity Information



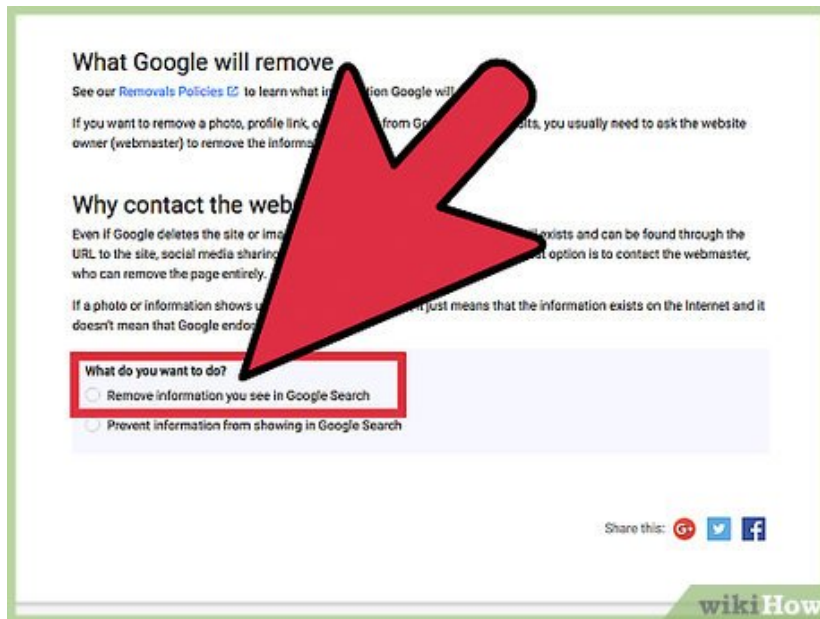
Know what you can remove from Google. Google doesn't remove much from their search results, but you can file for removing special case information. This includes social security numbers, bank account or credit card numbers, an image of your signature, personal pictures uploaded without your consent, or the name of your business if it was associated with adult spam.

1. Remember, this will not remove the content from the web, and it can still be easily accessed by visiting the site. If you want this content removed, you'll need to contact the site owners.



2.

Visit Google's information removal tool. If you feel that you fall into one of the above categories, you can fill out a form to request that the offending URL be removed from Google's search results. Go to this Google support page to get started.



3.

Select "Remove information you see in Google Search". You'll be prompted to select whether the page containing the content is still online or not.

4.


doesn't mean that Google endorses it.

What do you want to do? [Remove information you see in Google Search](#)

Let us know where you saw the information you want to have removed.

The information I want removed is:

- In Google's search results and on a website
- Only in Google's search results



wikiHow

Select the type of content you want removed. You'll be shown a list of all of the types of content that Google will remove from the search results. Once you select the type of information, a detailed form will appear.

5.


- Remove information you see in Google Search
- Prevent information from showing in Google Search


Let us know where you saw the information you want to have removed.

The information I want removed is: [In Google's search results](#)

Have you contacted the site's webmaster?

- No, how do I do that?
- No, I couldn't find any contact information
- No, I prefer not to due to the nature of the information shown
- I want to remove information about myself under European data protection law
- Yes, but they haven't responded

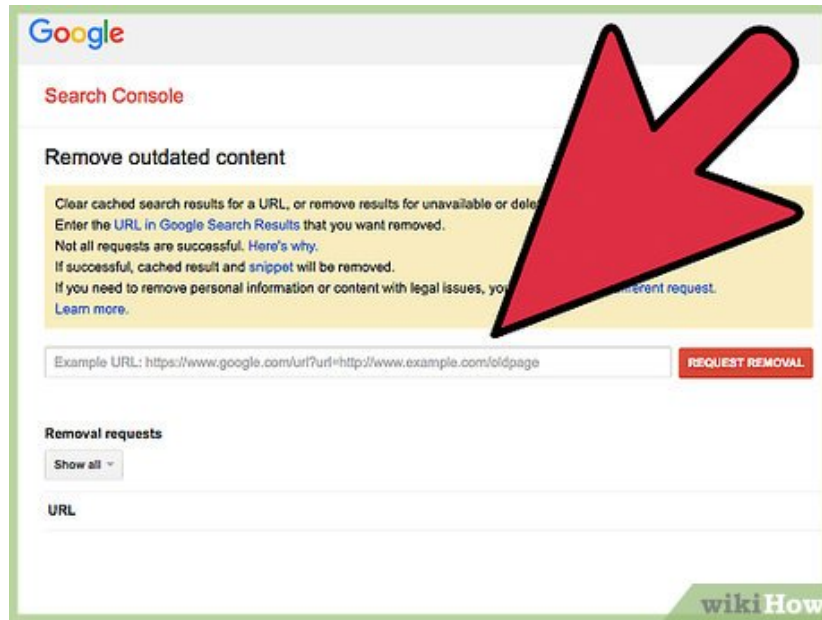


Share this: 

wikiHow

Fill out the form. You'll be asked to provide the site URL, as well as your contact information. You'll also need the URL of the search results page that it appears on. Once you have filled out the form, it will be submitted for review.

6.



Wait for Google to remove the information. If Google verifies that the site is displaying your personal information without your consent, it will remove that URL from its search results. Note that this will not remove the content from the internet, and it can be easily linked and shared through social networks. If you want the content off the internet, you'll need to go through the site owner, the host, or the legal system.

You finished reading the article "**How to Delete Your Name from Search Engines**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.