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# What You Don't Know About Sharing Photos



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The visiting family members have left, the Christmas tree is out on the curb and the New Year's Eve party confetti is all vacuumed up. If only sharing your holiday photos was as easy to manage.

After watching friends and relatives struggle to navigate the complications of photo sharing using Facebook, Apple's Photo Streams and [Google](#)'s social network, Google+, I'm here to help. In this column, I've organized tips and tricks that might surprise even the most share-happy shutterbugs, and will serve as a helpful guide for people who want to feel more in control and comfortable while sharing photos. While there are numerous alternative methods for photo sharing, including thousands of apps, I zeroed in on Facebook, Photo Streams and Google+.



People can share albums from Google+ with anyone, including people who don't use the network, by generating a link that can be sent to others.

## *Sharing With Friends Who Don't Use the Network*

Here's an all-too-familiar scenario: You spend hours uploading, editing, captioning and "tagging" (identifying people by name) photos to create an album on Facebook, only to be asked by the one person who doesn't use it if she can see the album. If you're like most people, you say you'll send the photos along, eventually. Then you change the subject to something more pleasant, like the cavity you recently had filled.

Unbeknownst to many users, Facebook, Google and Apple enable sharing with people who don't use their services. Not surprisingly, these out-of-network sharing

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options are buried in an effort to force people into using the services. So where are

they?

In Facebook, after creating an album, open the page that shows the album's title and contents, select the small gear icon to the right of the album title and click "Share Album." A Web link to the album will appear that you can copy and send to anyone, even if they don't use Facebook or aren't one of your Facebook Friends.



Facebook

Facebook's iOS and Android apps enable uploading multiple photos to existing albums, using the icon, above, or new albums.

groups of people within Google+. But they can also share with friends outside the network by adding their email addresses into the line that says, "Add names, Circles, or email addresses." This enables sharing with friends who don't use Google+ or don't have Gmail accounts.



Apple

Any Apple device running the company's newest operating system, iOS 6, can create and view Shared Photo Streams. These are collections of photos on your iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch that you can share with friends via email. If your friends also use iOS devices, they can use them to view the Shared Photo Stream.

People who want to see these photos but don't have an Apple device can still do so, as long as the album creator moves a slider labeled "Public Website" to the "on" position. This public album link is included in an email invitation, but it's easily overlooked because it appears below a much larger blue button labeled "View this Photo Stream," which only works on iOS devices. Be sure to click on the text at the very bottom of the email invitation that says, "You can also view this photo stream on the web."

When people use Google+ to share photos, they're immediately encouraged to click once and share to "Circles," which are select

Entire albums can be shared outside of Google+: Within Albums, select one and click the "More" drop-down menu to find "Share album via link."

### *Sync Mobile Photos as You Go*

Facebook, iCloud and Google+ allow people to wirelessly synchronize their mobile photos with their accounts, saving them privately

A Shared Photo Stream as seen through a public album link.

until they're ready to be shared.

To set this up on Facebook, you can use the mobile app or the website. From the app, select Photos on the left-side panel, then Sync at the bottom right of the screen. Tap the gear in the top right to set whether your phone will sync over Wi-Fi or cellular or just over Wi-Fi. From Facebook.com, open your Timeline, select Photos, "Synced From Phone" at the top, then follow instructions to share images. People can sync up to two gigabytes of images.

Anyone who buys an Apple or Android device is prompted during setup to turn on Photo Stream or Instant Upload, as the companies call their respective offerings. Shared Photo Streams don't count against your overall iCloud storage, nor do they work against your count of photos in Photo Stream, which syncs the last 1,000 images across your iOS devices. Google+ stores its synchronized mobile photos under a section called Instant Upload; these remain private until shared with others. Google+ has an overall limit of 5 gigabytes, but standard-sized photos like those captured on smartphones don't count against this limit.

### *Other Helpful Tips*

Facebook Camera is the free app that first made it possible for people to upload multiple photos to Facebook via iOS. Now, the main Facebook app also enables uploading multiple photos on Android or iOS, and images can be added to new or existing albums by selecting New or tapping a small album icon. Facebook also makes it simpler to post several photos at once in a status update using your Web browser: Users can now click a small "+" icon that appears beside uploaded photos to add more. Also, it's now possible to drag and drop images right into the status box for sharing with Facebook friends.

If you're ready to share your Apple Photo Stream with a broader network of friends, these can be uploaded to Twitter or Facebook, but the steps are practically hidden from view. Do this by opening Photo Stream and clicking the small, blue arrow to the right of the Stream you want to share. Make sure it has a link associated with it by switching the Public Website slider to "on," then hit "Share Link" and select your preferred social network destination. Apple's own message system, iMessage, is also a sharing option here.

Photo sharing should be more intuitive, and Facebook, Apple and Google are obviously still figuring out the best ways to pack multiple features into their websites and mobile apps. With any luck, your friends and family will have an easier time viewing your photos than you did sharing them.

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