

How to Prepare Your Digital Life for Your Death

By Eric Ravenscraft, pcmag.com, Updated May 21, 2021

Death is inevitable. Don't make it harder on those you leave behind. Here's how to let loved ones manage passwords, sensitive data, and social media profiles after you die.

Death is as somber as it is inevitable. But as we live more of our lives online, it's more important than ever to make sure loved ones can access digital accounts when we're gone. Don't be the guy who locked cryptocurrency exchange customers out of \$250 million after his death because only he knew the password.

There are a number of ways loved ones can request access to your accounts once you're gone, but they don't need that stress. Several online services allow you to designate legacy contacts or grant access after a period of inactivity. Here's how to make sure those you leave behind can manage your affairs after you head to the great beyond.

Create a Password Manager Emergency Kit






Created for Sherlock Holmes on July 19th, 2017.

1Password Account

SIGN-IN ADDRESS
bakerstreet.1password.com

EMAIL ADDRESS
holmes@agilebits.com

SECRET KEY
A3-F5HJNM-7T85AC-KRSBV-VC83W-7NTCN-457SS 

MASTER PASSWORD
 

Need help?

Contact AgileBits at:
support@1password.com



Setup code

Scan this code from the 1Password apps to set up your account quickly and easily.

Password managers house the keys to all your digital accounts, including bank numbers, credit card numbers, and any other important information you might need to leave behind. These services also make it easy to pass them on to your loved ones.

1Password, for example, has you create an Emergency Kit when you sign up, which includes all the information someone would need to log into your account. Print it out or download a copy

to a USB drive and place it somewhere safe, like a lock box, where your loved ones can access it in the event of your death.

If you use Keeper, open your online vault, then navigate to Account > Manage Account Emergency Access. There, you can add up to five email addresses as emergency contacts. The site also allows you to set up a seven-day waiting period, so if you don't use your account in that time, your contacts are notified.

You can do the same in the Dashlane desktop app by navigating to Contacts > Emergency > Add New and entering the email address of an emergency contact. Then set a span of time before your contacts can request access to your vault and automatically get approved.

Add a Facebook Legacy Contact

Memorialization Settings Your Legacy Contact

Choose someone to look after your account after you pass away. They'll be able to:

- Manage tribute posts on your profile, which includes deciding who can post and who can see posts, deleting posts, and removing tags
- Request the removal of your account
- Respond to new friend requests
- Update your profile picture and cover photo

Your legacy contact can only manage posts made after you've passed away. They won't be able to post as you or see your messages. [Learn More](#)



[Remove](#) · [Message](#)

Ensuring your loved ones have access to your financial information is important, but what about social media? Preserving profiles may seem trivial, but our lives are increasingly lived online, so these accounts are the modern version of physical photo albums, letters, and other keepsakes.

Facebook lets you select a legacy contact who will memorialize your account and keep a pared-down version of your profile active after your death. A memorialized account will show a banner on your profile indicating that you're deceased, remove your account from public search results, and turn off birthday reminders. Friends will still be able to post messages on your timeline, if privacy settings allow it.

To set up your legacy contact, navigate to Settings > General > Memorialization Settings > Edit. In the box that appears, type the name of the person you want to be your legacy contact and click Add. This will need to be someone you're already friends with on Facebook. You can alert

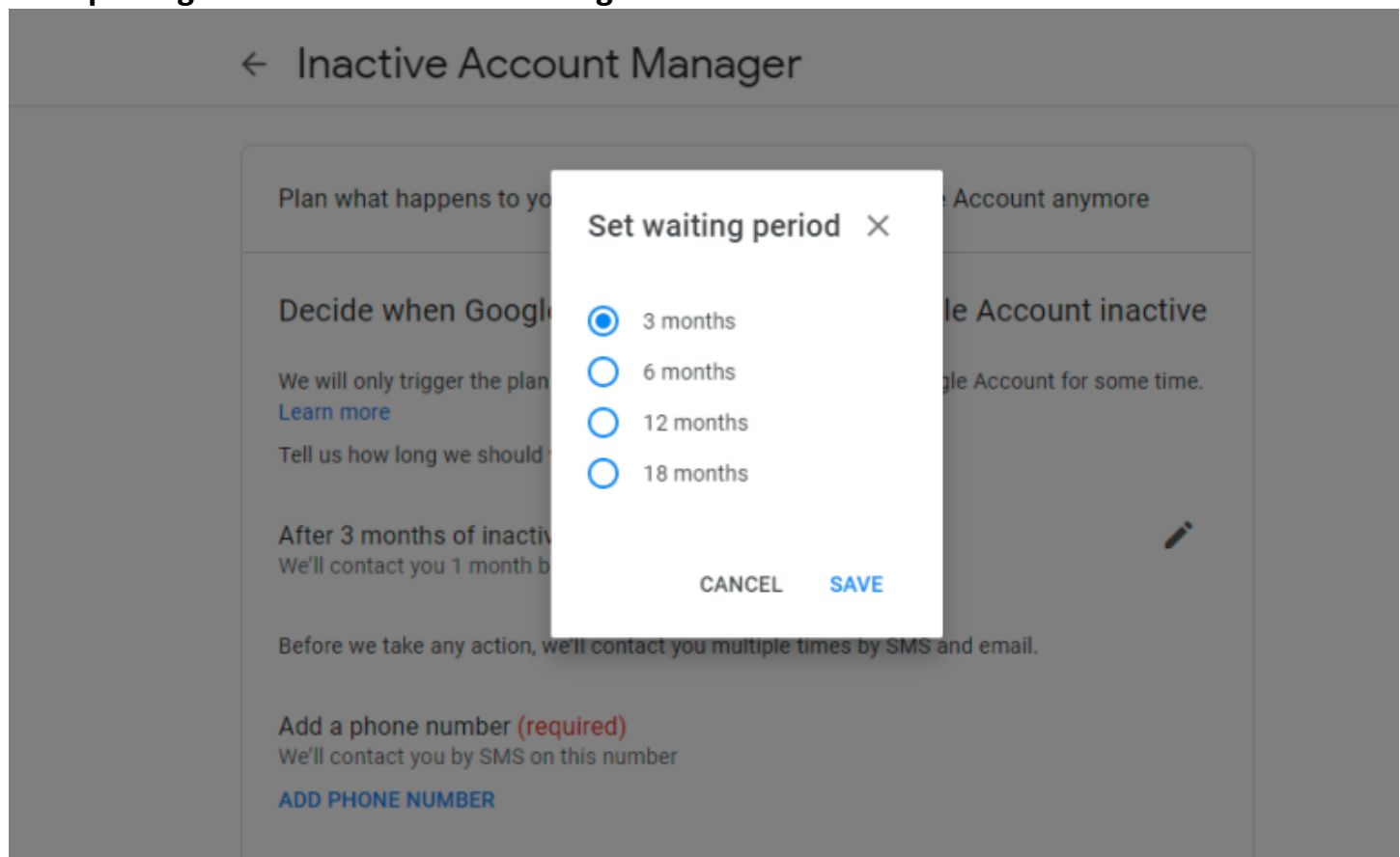
them that they've been selected, or not. They'll be added as a legacy contact whether or not you send them a message.

A legacy contact will be able to accept new friend requests, change your profile and cover photo, write a pinned message once it's been memorialized, and more. To memorialize an account, someone will need to contact Facebook directly by heading to this page. While anyone can report an account for memorialization, only the person designated as a legacy contact before the person's death will be given any access. Facebook will not appoint posthumous legacy contacts.

You can also opt to have your account deactivated after you die; under Memorialization Settings, scroll down and click Request that your account be deleted after you pass away, and opt in in the pop-up window.

On Facebook-owned Instagram, you can't designate a legacy content; friends or family members will have to request that Instagram memorialize your account after the fact. Twitter and LinkedIn offer similar services.

Set Up Google's Inactive Account Manager



Google offers an Inactive Account Manager that automatically turns over control of your account to a designated person after a set period of inactivity.

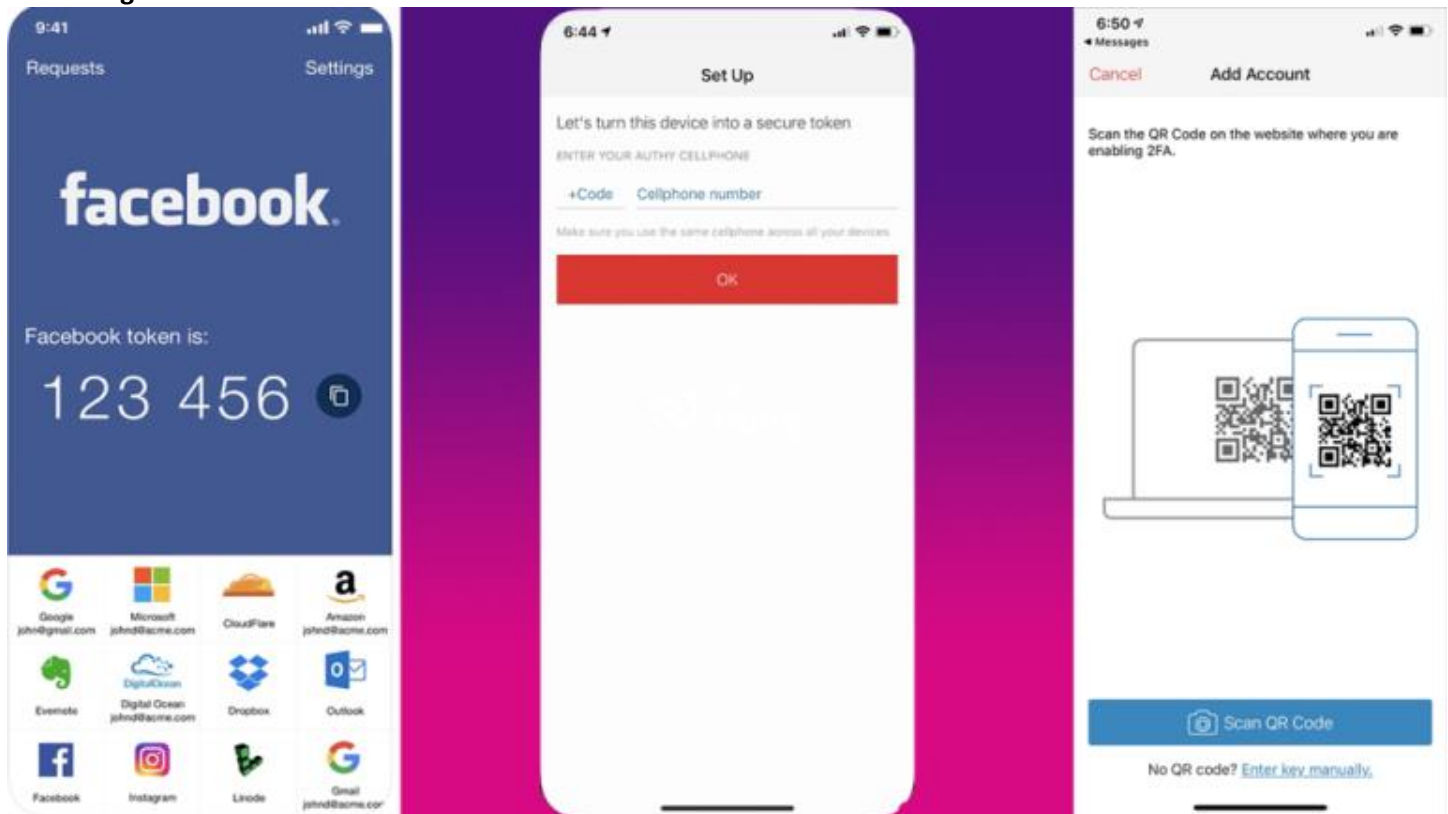
To set it up, [head to this page](#) and click Start. Next, decide how long you want to wait before Google declares your account inactive (by default, this is set to three months.) Below that, add or verify your phone number and another contact or recovery email. Google will attempt to

contact you multiple times via this number or email before it turns your account over to someone else. When you're done, click Next.

On the third step, click **Add Person** and enter the email address of the person you'd like to give control of your account to and click Next. Then, click the checkbox next to each Google service from which you want them to be able to download data. You can allow access to everything or pick and choose specific services, like YouTube. Once you're done, click Next. You'll then be able to add your contact's phone number to help confirm their identity. Click Save.

Below this section, click Set Autoreply. This will let you set up an automatic message that will go out to anyone who emails you after your account is marked inactive. Fill out the Subject and Message field with the message you want people emailing you to receive. You can also click **Only send a response to people in my Contacts**. When you're done, click Save, then click Next. The last step will let you delete your Google account three months after it's marked inactive. Enable this if you want, click Review Plan, check your choices, and click Confirm Plan.

Don't Forget About Two-Factor Authentication



If you have **two-factor authentication** set up on important accounts, your loved ones will need access to your phone, in addition to your username and passwords, to intercept secondary codes. One option is to add a trusted person's fingerprint or face to your phone.